

Dg 151



516 Ravenhill Road,
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Records held on **HIA151** resident of St Joseph's Home Termonbacca

Information Recorded in St Joseph's Termonbacca Register

Name,	Stated as HIA151
Reg. No.	[REDACTED]
Where Born,	[REDACTED]
Date of Birth,	[REDACTED]
Where Baptised,	St Eugene's Cathedral, Derry
Mother's Name,	[REDACTED]
Father's Name,	[REDACTED]
Father's Occupation,	[REDACTED]
Recommended By,	Rev. Fr. Campbell C.C. [REDACTED]
Admitted,	21/03/1956
Left,	5/07/1965
Observations,	Parents Living

Information taken from black discharge book;

672 **HIA151** admitted on 21st March 1956. Father in **[REDACTED]** and mother in **[REDACTED]**
[REDACTED] recommended by Fr W. Campbell, No payment provided.

Taken by mother 7th July 1965



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Extracts taken from St Joseph's Termonbacca Discharge Book p81

(Please Note, In this book information was recorded about your other family members, under Data Protection I'm only allowed to give you the information that relates to you. There is information recorded about your brothers in this extract.)

Age of Discharge, 14

HIA151 Taken by mother who has a home in [REDACTED]

1975 HIA151 is going to [REDACTED] to do teaching training. For the past two years HIA151

has gone to night classes and got his O'Levels.

1980 HIA151 visited

Taken from the Sacramental Register for St Josephs Home Termonbacca

Reg No. [REDACTED]

Admission,	21 st March 1956
1 st Confession,	27 th May 1959
1 st Holy Communion,	29 th May 1959
Confirmation,	21 st May 1961
Church,	St Eugene's Cathedral, Derry.

Discharge Slips; Dated 1948-68

Signed by [REDACTED]

Witne [REDACTED]

Dated, 5/7/65

Admission Slips; Reg no's 500-720

Information recorded is as follows;

Reg no. [REDACTED]

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HIA REF: 151

Witness Name [REDACTED] HIA 151

THE INQUIRY INTO HISTORICAL INSTITUTIONAL ABUSE 1922 TO 1995

WITNESS STATEMENT OF [REDACTED] HIA 151

[REDACTED] HIA 151 will say as follows:-

Personal Details

1. I was born on [REDACTED] in [REDACTED] County Derry. My father was a [REDACTED] in the [REDACTED] and I have one older brother [REDACTED] HIA 146 a younger brother [REDACTED] SND 235 and a sister [REDACTED] SND 95 who unfortunately died in December last year, she was [REDACTED]
2. On 13 October 1955 my father was returning to the [REDACTED] in [REDACTED] and was knocked down by a car and seriously injured. He was flown to a [REDACTED] in [REDACTED] for treatment. My mother was pregnant with my sister at the time and she went into labour at that point. A decision was then taken that we would temporarily go into care. I think the decision to put us in care was recommended by Fr W Campbell. I was three and a half years old. I obtained my papers from Nazareth Care Village and they state that I was admitted on 21 March 1956 to St Joseph's, Termonbacca because my mother was in a [REDACTED] and my father was drinking. I know that my mother was admitted to [REDACTED] at some stage but I don't know if it was in/around this time. I do not think the reason for our admission to care was due to my father's drinking as he was definitely in hospital at this time following his accident.

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St Joseph's Home Termonbacca (21/3/1956 – 5/7/1965)

3. I remember arriving at Termonbacca in a car and I recall cobble stones for some reason and I think it was six or seven years before I saw either of my two brothers again. I didn't even know I had a sister and I only found out years later that she was in Nazareth House.
4. One of my first memories was being stripped and put into a bath and I remember the stinging sensation in the water. There was Jeyes Fluid in the water. I was squealing and being pushed down in the bath by a nun then taken out and thrown across the room and dried with a very rough towel. I do not recall the identity of this nun.
5. I recall eating and praying time were very important. I remember when I first picked up a book and for me it was almost like there was a disconnection from everybody around me.
6. I was a bed wetter and I was beaten for it. I was actually wakened sometimes during the night and beaten and put back to bed still soaking wet until the morning. I do remember being beaten on the soles of my feet which didn't make sense to me. I wondered why you would beat someone on their feet. They beat me with a belt, a slipper or shoe. I do not recall the identity of the nuns who did this. I recall that even by 1969, long after I had left care I was still wetting the bed.
7. I also recall acts of kindness. I remember smiles and some of the Christmas parties that were organised for us. The girls who made shirts at the City Factory were always very kind to us as were various members of the St Vincent de Paul Society. They would always make sure we had a party and presents at Christmas time but it wasn't enough to take away anything that had happened before it.

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8. At some point they moved me to the junior side from the nursery. Three or four weeks ago I actually went to the home with another applicant to the Inquiry and took photographs. It gave me the shivers again. Termonbacca was split into three parts. The nursery was in a two storey block. I assume that is where they took my younger brother SND 235. Downstairs would have been where the dining room was situated. In the dormitory I recall rows of beds and cots.
9. At a point coming off that on the dormitory side there was a room where the nuns slept and beside that was the sick room. There was a chapel and just beyond that was the junior dormitory with rows of beds, either three or four rows with probably four beds in each row. They were iron frame beds.
10. Things started to get worse when I was about six years old. It always started first thing in the morning with the bells ringing in/around 6am. Shortly after that all the bed wetters were taken out and you had to take your sheet with you and go to the bathroom. There were two or three baths and the water was scalding hot and then some days the water was freezing cold. I remember being hit with a strap or a belt just because you wet the bed and it was all an attempt to embarrass and humiliate the bedwetters. I cannot recall the identity of all the nuns who beat me for bedwetting but SR 11 is the first nun I can remember who beat me for this reason. If I am in the house on my own now I lock the front door, the back door, the windows and the bathroom door if I'm going to take a shower or a bath or go to the toilet, so it sticks with you.
11. We were beaten and treated like this by nuns, not the civilian employees in the home. Everyone was made to strip naked so there was an issue with modesty. Everyone was handed a thing like a pillow case with the bottom cut out of it with an elastic band around it, they called it a slip but it was like a skirt. You had to put this on before getting into the bath. At times it would come off the guy who had just come out of the bath and it was handed to the next guy. They used Jeyes Fluid in the bath and it stung every private part of

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your body. I remember my feet stinging more than the rest of my body. I still cannot stand the smell of it even today.

12. At times in the bath they used a scrubbing brush and it would leave your skin raw. At times they used a deck brush with a long handle so that they did not even have to touch you in the bath, they would just push you down into the water with the handle. Sometimes you were laughed at by the nuns. Every now and then the nuns would decide that there were so many bed wetters that they would engage the help of some of the bigger boys who were about fifteen or sixteen years old. If they were in a hurry they threw the towel at you and let you dry yourself. At other times they would have a real go at drying you or dry you with a towel that looked like it had been steeped in cement and felt like sand paper. This also presented an opportunity for some of the bigger boys to give you a beating for causing them the inconvenience of having to bathe you and also as a punishment for wetting your bed. That is how the day often started. I cannot recall the names of the older boys who assisted the nuns at bath time. This continued for a period of five to six years.

13. If you were a bedwetter it often meant you were one of the last in the locker room so everyone else had their pick of the work boots first and I often ended up having to squeeze my feet into boots that were too small for me. I remember being beaten by a nun until I squeezed into small boots and my feet were still sore and swollen from being beaten previously. Sometimes we were sent to pick potatoes and I would take the boots off as it felt easier and then you would get beaten for taking your boots off. You would also get punished if you were too slow walking over to the farm. The nuns would take us there and come back to bring us lunch as you would work there from dawn until dusk. I was nine or ten years old when I was expected to do this manual work.

14. I remember thinking that if I learnt to read and to be smart it would be a way to ease the pressure of daily life in the home. There were some old books in the home that had been donated, some old Irish folk tales and also religious booklets. Reading was a distraction for me, even getting beaten for reading

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was a distraction because at least I was getting beaten for something that I had chosen to do rather than something that was being forced on me. I cannot recall the identity of the nuns who beat me for this reason.

15. I was left handed and I recall when I was about five and at school at Nazareth House I would have started drawing or writing and [REDACTED] SR 9 would give me a crack on my arm and then on my hands and take a pencil or crayon out of my left hand and put it into my right hand. [REDACTED] SR 9 was a teacher in the school. I did not understand at the time why she did this and every time I put the pen or whatever back in my left hand I was beaten again and that went on for a long time. She eventually got me to write with my right hand.
16. There was a walk of a good couple of miles, downhill along the river and up a hill from Termonbacca to Nazareth House School.
17. You often had to work hard cleaning or in the garden or on the farm. You were expected to do these chores even from a very young age, seven or eight years old. I think children this age should not be put to work and shouldn't be beaten on the way to work and shouldn't be degraded when they're working. On Saturdays even if you weren't going to the farm they found enough work for you to do in the home. There was always cleaning to be done. They always seemed to put some of the senior boys in charge and they would give you brushing up or mopping up chores to do or whatever needed to be done. I cannot recall the names of these senior boys. They seemed to spring clean all year and everything had to be taken apart, even if it was spotless it was never spotless enough and that was an excuse again for another beating either by or a nun or one of the older boys. When I was about seven or eight years of age the beatings from the older boys would have started and they showed absolutely no mercy to anyone. Getting kicked for not doing something, getting kicked for lying down because you were kicked and getting kicked because you wouldn't get up because you were kicked, getting punched because you were crying and getting punched because you wouldn't cry. I never reported any of these beatings as they were just an accepted part of life in the home. The nuns would go off to

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prayers, especially at weekends, and leave them to deal with the younger boys without supervision. You did not complain because of the "fear factor". The whole place ran on fear and there was no reporting mechanism in place.

18. The junior dormitory had one nun and my memory is that there were about sixteen to twenty young people that probably were between six and maybe nine years of age.
19. I came across a photograph that appeared in the Derry journal in the 1970's when Termonbacca had an appeal for funds to build more suitable family units. At that point they would have had girls and this photograph actually showed you the senior dormitory. One of our boys **SND 63** was found dead in his flat just before Christmas and he had a file of photographs from Termonbacca in his flat.
20. As it was a religious order there was a ritual of mass and this became a distraction because at least if you were praying you weren't being beaten but sometimes that even wasn't a sufficient safeguard because if you weren't praying loud enough or if you were sitting there at 6am in mass sleeping after being dragged out of bed earlier than everybody because of the whole bathing process you would get a punch in the back of the head or a slap in the face for sleeping. I cannot recall the identity of the nuns who beat me for this reason.
21. I had a fairly decent voice and if you sang in the choir you could get privileges or a reward and some of the nuns would smile at you or compliment your singing voice. It was nice to get that affirmation but again as soon as the mass was over you were no longer the choir boy and you were back to normal.
22. I recall **SND 15** the gardener. He had fists like shovels and every now and then if you stepped out of line **SND 15** would have given you a punch but you could take it from him because you had done something wrong and it didn't happen often. The garden was **SND 15** space and it was always a

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pleasure to help him. He would always give you a smile. I think [SND 15] was in his eighties when he died but he helped the boys in the home.

23. There was another nice man [REDACTED] I am not even sure if he lived on the farm or if he just came up to the farm but his job was to drive the tractor. He and [SND 15] were at least compassionate and not the type of people who took advantage of the fact that you were a home boy. [REDACTED] [REDACTED] is also deceased.

24. Prior to being admitted to Termonbacca I had been involved in a house fire and I got badly burned and I had a really vivid scar on my face. You were literally marked out, if there were special visitors coming the ugly guys never got to approach them. I can laugh about it now but back then they would pick who they considered to be the presentable ones. They were taken out into a line and they were actually looking at who they were going to send to Australia. I'm glad I was scarred and that is why they didn't put me out there so sometimes there is almost a blessing in every curse [HIA 351] is an [REDACTED]

25. Sometimes being able to read got you into trouble because one day during June or July 1962 or 1963 I saw newspaper in the nuns quarters that fascinated me because the headline was "The Day the World Stood Still" and it was the Cuban missile crisis. I was only going to read it and not steal it but I got a punch in the back of the neck from behind and I fell to the floor and I got kicked under the table for being a thief. I cannot recall the name of the nun who hit me on this occasion. I was dragged down the steps by her and thrown into the cellar and the light turned off for wanting to read a newspaper. I don't know how long it was after that until the light got turned on. I remember that [SR 19] seemed to hate me and pick on me.

26. When I got moved up to the senior dormitory in the early 1960's I was still wetting my bed and the punishments kept coming. We had to polish the floors with cardinal red polish and this had to be done every Saturday

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morning. It had to be washed first, then scrubbed with a deck scrubber, washed again and then polished. You got beaten if you were using too much polish or not using enough. Sometimes we did this task later in the day. We all had to line up and the polish went on the floor and the first line of boys got thick cloths made for your feet then you got on the floor and literally piece by piece rubbed this polish into the floor. The corridor was wide enough for three or four of us to get down in a row and start at the top and start moving back, putting the polish on and then the next row it was their job to polish and everybody tried to find ways of getting this done as quickly as possible. After a couple of years they bought a device, it was called a bumper, and it did the work of four boys. It was almost like a prison camp, it was like slave labour doing this task. It left your hands and knees covered in red polish, another reason to get the scrubbing brush out at bath time.

2. [SR 19] used to have a type of roller towel and she would take the towel off the rail which was a wooden rod and use rail to hit me on the top of my head. On one occasion I recall there must have been ten boys actually screaming behind me in the kitchen because she couldn't get enough room to get at me. I think I was nine or ten at the time. She reached down to grab me and pull me up again because I wouldn't get up and she beat me again with this wooden towel rail. I was sent back to the dormitory without anything to eat.

28. We were invited to Christmas parties and you would be presented to the outside world as almost perfect wearing your good clothes, washed behind your ears and neck and your fingernails checked. They put Brylcreem on your hair, you couldn't put it on yourself. [SR 1] was putting Brylcreem on my hair on one occasion. She must have pushed on a pressure point on my head and I collapsed and a doctor was called. I was taken to the hospital as I had concussion or a delayed concussion from being hit with the towel rail by [SR 19]. I was given an x-ray at Altnagelvin Hospital and there were doctors and nurses all around me and I was given treatment and medicine. I was kept in Altnagelvin from 13th to 22nd January 1964. Afterwards I went back and forward to the hospital for a period of weeks to

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drain the blood. I was off school for quite some time as a result of this incident. This happened just before my eleven plus exam.

29. When I moved to the senior part of the boys' home I started to become aware of other things that were happening. Going to sleep at night you would hear footsteps coming up through the rows of beds and you could hear the boys at times whimpering or getting punched and I would say to myself "just pretend you're not here". I was ten or eleven years of age at that stage. I slept in a bed close to a small toilet on the top of the block and I remember my blankets getting pulled back and actually getting grabbed out of my bed and forced up into that toilet and forced to masturbate one of the senior boys. HIA 144

HIA 144 I had absolutely no idea what was going on, I had no idea about sex. I had absolutely no knowledge of what I was supposed to be doing. This guy lay on the floor with his feet against the door in case somebody would push the door open until he was satisfied. It got to a point where I decided to hide under the bed and lifted the pillows off the bed and made a dummy bed. He would wake you first and if you didn't waken maybe somebody else would be forced to do it. I got dragged actually by the foot from under the bed and this boy took things further by making me suck his penis. I remember being sick and he filled a copper dome out of the toilet mechanism with water out of the toilet tank and made me drink it. All I wanted to do was spit the stuff out and be sick all over the place. I was only ten and the boy was probably sixteen or seventeen although at the time I thought he was much older. He also tried to bugger me on one occasion. He made me stand with my hands on the toilet but he was not able to do it. I know now that what he did was try to bugger me and for some reason he couldn't, I was too small or whatever and I think after that he just lost interest. You hear about this whole process of grooming so thank God it stopped. Who do you tell at that age when maybe the consequences of reporting it were more frightening? You were almost inevitably going to be called a liar and you were going to be beaten up by a nun before you were handed back to these guys to do what it was that they wanted to do anyway.

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Life after care

30. I came out of a place that had religion at the centre of everyday life. I was a young adult facing the world, I knew an awful lot about religion and absolutely nothing about faith. Fortunately I am now happily married since 1979 with six sons and three daughters and grandchildren.
31. I went back to Termonbacca in 1980. I wanted to k [REDACTED] HIA 144 I spoke to [REDACTED] SND 15 and he told me that I was not the first boy to come back. [REDACTED] HIA 144 now lives in the [REDACTED] across the street from where my wife's mother used to live. Every now and then I still see him with young boys going in and out of his house. If I went near him I know that I would kill him so I stay away and make sure my relatives also stay away from him.
32. I had a sister [REDACTED] SND 95 who died before Christmas that I never really got to know, a younger brother [REDACTED] SND 235 living in [REDACTED] that I never really got to know and an older brother [REDACTED] HIA 146) that I am only now getting to know but we are really three strangers.
33. I cannot understand how a priest (Father Campbell) can be left to make a decision as to what my future should be without any consultation with any of my mother's six sisters or three brothers. If a priest and/or Social Services placed me there then they had a responsibility not just to place me there in what was considered to be a place of safety but also to put me in a place where I could be monitored, where there would be care and safety, where there would be a right to education, where there would be a right to assist a child through life rather than literally abandon them to a regime that I have no doubt many people outside of that home knew was cruel and abusive.
34. There were ritual degrees of abuse that went on there. Having a scar on my face almost made me worth less than other people. Even in the choir you're

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at the back, nobody needed to see you and all the time what that does is it whittles down your spirit a tiny piece at a time, your soul and your morale and everything else. I came out of there when I was almost fourteen years of age and the day I walked out those gates I promised that nobody was ever going to put their boot on the back of my neck again and from that day to this day I have fought everything that has been thrown at me. I have fought battles for other people. For me this was not an easy fight to take on partly because I knew it would end up very, very personal. It opened a lot of wounds for a lot of people who for many years had buried this stuff but you have to lead by example. I sat down with my family the night before the Spotlight programme was broadcast in October 2009 and told them the reason why I had been involved. At that point my son was thirty years of age. I have six boys and three girls, my daughters were in their twenties. My wife who I had talked to in some way about it actually knows this is what drives me. I still take anti-depressants daily to keep my mood stable.

35. I have been involved in peace and reconciliation working in the city for over thirty five years. I fought my war and I fought my corner and I fought for peace as well and in the process I've had a gun put to my head and I've had my house petrol bombed but I still believe what we need to do is get people to talk and that is what I tried to do particularly with my own children.

36. In 1976 I went back to the [REDACTED] and I did a diploma in community studies and a diploma in foundation studies. I have written about conflicts around the world. I have been invited to talk at particular conferences because I have an insight into the development of conflict and a different way of looking at how you get out of conflict.

37. I spent many years going crazy, drinking and taking legally prescribed medication and I have had a couple of really close calls as a result of the availability of medication. Even on the day the Inquiry announcement was made I was going to throw myself off the peace bridge. I ended up in hospital for a few days. Talking to a counsellor after that and actually talking to my children is probably what worked best for me. I am being advised to walk

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away completely from it but I know I can't let it go. The learning that I have gone through in the last forty years and actually watching people come through situations that I would say were infinitely worse than the experiences that I had and be survivors and be complete people sort of gives you the strength to carry on.

38. I never reported my complaint to the police but I have been contacted recently by Strand Road police station in relation HIA 144

39. I want a light to be shone on the people who were charitable and there were some of those but I also want that system to be condemned for what it was, a system that degraded, abused and devalued what I would consider to be some of the most vulnerable people in our society and did it ritually. It was not simply systemic or a systems failure, it was a ritual permitted to happen seen or unseen, tolerated or ignored. There was a failure in my view in the duty of care of the state, the church and on the agencies of state from education right through to social services and health, all of whom should have had some kind of reporting mechanism in place if not monthly at least quarterly on the health, emotional wellbeing and safety of children who had been placed in care.

Statement of Truth

I believe that the facts stated in this witness statement are true.

Sign HIA 151

Dated 30th October 2013.

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No. on Register	Name	Date of Admission	Date of Discharge	Age on Discharge
HIA 146	HIA 146	21 st March 1956	5/7/65	14
672	and	21 st March 1956	5/7/65	13
673	SND 235	21 st March 1956	5/7/65	11

These Boys were taken by their mother who has a house in [REDACTED]

1966 visits every Sunday.

1972 HIA 146 got married.

1975 HIA 151 is going to [REDACTED] University to do teacher training. For the past two years HIA 151 has gone to night classes and got his O'Levels.

HIA 146 has two children and seems to be very happy he called here last year.

SND 235 believed to be working in [REDACTED]

1980 HIA 151 visited - wouldn't be too sure of him?