

HIA INQUIRY RESTRICTED

HIA REF: 409

Witness Name: Ronald Graham

THE INQUIRY INTO HISTORICAL INSTITUTIONAL ABUSE 1922 TO 1995

WITNESS STATEMENT OF RONALD GRAHAM

I, Ronald Graham, will say as follows:-

Personal Details

1. I was born on 23rd June 1958. My parents were [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] Graham and I was the 2nd eldest of seven children. I came from a broken home. My mother was physically abused by my father and she would come and go from the family home. I also suffered physical abuse at the hands of my father. My mother and father separated when I was around 10 years old.
2. I was always covered in bruises from the beatings I received from my father. I recall that my primary school teacher noticed the marks on my body and the Social Workers were called in. They had to watch me for about six weeks but nothing changed at home.
3. On one occasion, I took a day off school and my father found out. He beat me black and blue with his fists. Afterwards, I was left in the corner of the sitting room. I was in intensive care for six weeks as a result of this beating. At this point the Welfare stepped in and I was taken into care.

Bawnmore Boys' Home (October 1971 – 18th January 1974)

4. I was 13 years of age when I was placed in Bawnmore Boys' Home. I enjoyed my time there. I had clean clothes and food and I was taught good personal hygiene. It felt like I was in a luxury home.

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5. I also developed a good relationship with **BM 2** and **BM 3** who were the Home **BM 3** at that time. **BM 3** was a lovely man and I got to know him and his family well during the years I was in Bawnmore.
6. There were certainly some thugs and bullies in Bawnmore when I was there but I found it a relief compared to my home life. I was not abused during my time at the Home and I did not see any abuse taking place.
7. When I left Bawnmore Boys' Home I returned to my family home however my father took ill and died from a brain haemorrhage on 10th December 1974.

Kincora Boys' Hostel (2nd December 1974 – 4th January 1975, 10th January 1975 – 11th January 1975 and 13th February 1975 – 10th June 1975)

8. I was placed in Kincora Boys' Hostel on the Newtownards Road on 2nd December 1974. I stayed there until 4th January 1975 when I was transferred to Rathgael. I was then sent back to Kincora on 10th January 1975 however I was fostered out on 11th January 1975.
9. Unfortunately the foster arrangement did not work out and I was sent back to Kincora on 12th February 1975 until 10th June 1975.
10. During this time I shared a room with **R 10**, **KIN 344** and **R 17** **BM 3**. I would go for walks during the day and mostly I went to see **BM 3** who had been in charge of Bawnmore Boys' Home. At nights I stayed in and watched TV.
11. Mr Joe Mains was the warden at Kincora. Mr Raymond Semple was an assistant warden and Mr William McGrath worked as a housemaster at that time.
12. William McGrath initially came across as a caring, gentle and sympathetic man. He would often pat me on the head and ask me how I was doing but things quickly changed.

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13. The first sexual assault by William McGrath took place around the beginning of March 1975. I was having a bath and the bathroom door was locked. I heard someone trying to open the door and a man's voice asked who was in the bath. I said "It's Ronnie, who's that?" The man said "It's Mr McGrath and I want to get something".
14. I told him to wait and I heard him walking away. I remember getting out of the bath and putting a towel around me. I went out of the bathroom and into my room. When I went into the room Mr McGrath was sitting on one of the boys beds. I asked him to leave as I wanted to get changed. Mr McGrath said "No, I've a job to do".
15. I got my clothes and went out of the bedroom. I walked towards the bathroom and Mr McGrath walked behind me. He followed me into the bathroom and closed the door over slightly. I still had the towel around me and I walked over and sat on the toilet. I was still holding my clothes.
16. Mr McGrath walked towards me and I could see that his trouser zip was open. I set my clothes down beside the toilet and when I looked up he had taken his penis out and was holding it in his hand. He said "I'm going to stick this up you". I was scared and I said that I was going to tell Mr Mains.
17. Mr McGrath said that Mr Mains would not listen to me and that he would hit me if I didn't cooperate with him. He told me to turn around and hold onto the toilet. I turned around and he said "open your legs". He pulled the towel off me and anally raped me. I kept telling him to stop but he wouldn't. The rape lasted about 5 or 10 minutes. When he stopped he told me to keep quiet about it.
18. I felt physically sick and I was sore. I was crying the whole time. I wiped myself with toilet paper and I remember I was bleeding.

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19. When I came out of the bathroom I met another resident on the landing and he told me to stay away from Joseph Mains, Raymond Semple, and William McGrath but it was impossible to avoid them as they worked in the Home. I remember seeing Mr McGrath the following day and he just smiled at me.
20. Although I knew what had happened to me wasn't right I was too afraid to tell anyone about it. I felt ashamed and disgusted.
21. I remember that a Social Worker called to Kincora a few days after I had been raped. Mr McGrath knew that the Social worker was visiting and had warned me not to tell them anything.
22. The meeting with the Social worker took place in the room next door to Mr Main's office. It would have been easy for someone in Mr Main's office to hear what was being said.
23. I cut my wrists after the first sexual assault by Mr McGrath. It was a cry for help but my Social worker didn't read the signs. When the Social worker left, Mr McGrath said "Well, you done the right thing keeping quiet, no one would listen to a boy, a simple boy like you. What goes on here stays here, you remember that".
24. About a week later I was lying on my bed reading a book when Mr McGrath came into the room. He said "I want you to do something". I asked him what and he said "I want to look at your underpants". I asked him why and he said "I just want to see them". I was scared but I took my underpants down.
25. Mr McGrath undone his trouser buttons and took his penis out. He told me to lie face down on the bed and open my legs. I did this and he got onto the bed on top of me and anally raped me. I was crying and biting into the counterpane. I told him it was hurting me. The rape lasted a few minutes and when it was over Mr McGrath forced me to masturbate him. Afterwards, he said "Don't you be saying anything".

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26. When Mr McGrath left the room I went to the toilet and wiped my bum with toilet paper. There was blood in the toilet and on the toilet paper. I saw Mr McGrath at supper time but he didn't say anything to me.
27. About three or four days later, Mr McGrath came into my bedroom again. He said "come on, take your trousers down". I was afraid of him and took my trousers down to my ankles. Mr McGrath pulled them right off. He made me lie face down on the bed and anally raped me.
28. It was hurting and I was crying and screaming into the pillow. The rape lasted about 5 minutes. Mr McGrath then forced me to masturbate him again and he ejaculated over the floor. Afterwards, he warned me not to tell anyone about what had happened. I went to the bathroom and I was bleeding again but not as much as before.
29. Around two days later I was in the toilet when Mr McGrath pushed the door open and walked in. He attempted to masturbate me and told me to turn around. He told me to hold onto the toilet. He made me open my legs and proceeded to anally rape me. I yelled and cried because it was hurting. The rape lasted about 5 minutes.
30. When Mr McGrath stopped he put his arms around my neck. He kissed me on the lips and said "you weren't bad". He warned me to keep quiet and went into the next bathroom. I sat on the toilet and wiped my bum. I was bleeding again and I was very sore.
31. The following morning I was in the TV room. Mr McGrath came in and closed the door behind him. He took his penis out of his trousers and forced me to masturbate him. He ejaculated across the chairs and cleaned it with his hankie. He told me to keep quiet about what had happened.

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32. When he left the room I sat down on a chair and vomited over the floor. Mr McGrath came back into the room and asked me what was wrong. I said I was sick and he told me to get the mop bucket and clean it up.
33. I didn't see Mr McGrath until the following afternoon when he came into my bedroom. He forced me to masturbate him again and ejaculated over my bed. He told me to clean the mess up. He said "you know what will happen if you say anything". I went to the bathroom and got toilet paper and cleaned up the mess. I was sick again and vomited on the bedroom floor.
34. The next morning I was in the bathroom when Mr McGrath came to the door. The door was locked and he asked me to let him in. I said "no" as I knew what he wanted. He said "I'll wait until you come out". I was frightened and I said "I'm coming now". Mr McGrath said "It's just as well as I was going to get some boys". I thought he was referring to the UDA so I opened the door.
35. Mr McGrath pushed me back into the bathroom. He took his penis out of his trousers and forced me to masturbate him. Afterwards, he told me to get out of the bathroom and warned me not to tell anyone. I saw Mr McGrath about the hostel most of the day but he didn't speak to me.
36. I also recall a night when Joseph Mains took 3 or 4 boys including myself to a hotel in Bangor in the Home's minibus. When we arrived outside the hotel he turned around to us and said 'you're going to do what you're told here'.
37. The other boys went into the hotel but I didn't go in. They were in the hotel for about an hour and when they came out they were crying. The other boys did not tell me what had happened.
38. When it was my turn to go into the hotel a police land rover stopped at the opposite side of the road and we were taken back to Kincora.

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39. The final sexual assault by William McGrath happened the day before I was due to leave Kincora. I was packing my clothes as I was leaving to live with foster parents when he came into my bedroom. He said "I heard you're leaving, one more time before you go". I said "No" and McGrath said "If you don't do it this time, I'm going to tell your foster parents what you're like".
40. I asked him what he meant and he said "I'll tell them about the other times". I was frightened and Mr McGrath told me to take down my trousers and get onto the bed. I did as he asked and I was lying face down on the bed. Mr McGrath got up onto the bed on his knees. He told me to open my legs and he put a cream inside my anus. He did this with his finger and then he anally raped me.
41. After he raped me he warned me not to tell anybody about what had happened at Kincora. He then left the room. I started to cry and went to the bathroom. There was blood on my backside and legs and my backside was very sore. I left Kincora the following day. Leaving Kincora was like coming out of Hell and going into Heaven; that was the nightmare over with.
42. **KIN 386** and **KIN 387** were my Social Workers while I was a resident in Kincora.
43. I was too frightened to tell them about the abuse. I thought that word would get back to William McGrath and that things would only get worse.
44. I did tell **KIN 386** a few times that I did not want to stay at Kincora but I didn't tell her why. I might have plucked up with courage and opened up had she taken me out of the building and questioned me more closely about my reasons for not wanting to stay.
45. On one occasion, I remember **KIN 386** telling me that I did not know how lucky I was, this being in relation to my circumstances.

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46. I also told **KIN 387** that I did not want to stay at Kincora. Again, I did not tell her the reason why however she did not ask me nor did she seem surprised about this.
47. I had been placed in Kincora as my father had died. I was supposed to be in a safe and happy place but I wasn't and I felt that the Social workers should have realised that something was wrong.
48. At that time, Mr McGrath was a well known and respected member of the community. He boasted that he had friends in high places and that he had paramilitary connections. I knew he had a gun as he had placed it in my mouth during one of the last sexual assaults against me.
49. I believed Mr McGrath when he said that no one would listen to me. I thought that I would be abandoned by my family and friends if I reported the sexual assaults and that I would be treated like an outcast by the community. I also feared that I would be hurt or killed if I told anyone.
50. Despite getting away from Kincora I was very troubled as a result of what had happened to me there and the relationship with my foster family broke down.
51. I hadn't seen my mother since my father's funeral and my grandparents were too old to look after me at this time. As a result, I was sent to Rathgael Training School under the terms of a Care and Protection Order. At the Court hearing I told the magistrate that I would rather go to jail than go back to Kincora.

Rathgael Training School (1975-1976)

52. I went to Rathgael when I was seventeen. I enjoyed my time there and I didn't want to leave it. It had a relaxed atmosphere and I felt safe and secure. There were no gates and you could walk in and out if you wanted but the building would be locked at night.

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53. **RG 277** and **RG 278** were the house masters at that time and I stayed in Senior House 3.
54. I only recall one incident in Rathgael when another resident called **██████████** made a sexual advance towards me in the shower rooms. I punched him and knocked him unconscious. **RG 277** found out and we were both punished with extra chores the following week.

Life After Care

55. I finally built up the courage to speak out and do something about the abuse I had suffered at Kincora.
56. I went to see the Reverend Ian Paisley and told him about what had happened to me at Kincora. I respected him and believed that he would do something about it but he did nothing. In fact, he denied having ever spoken with me and also denied knowing anything about William McGrath.
57. In the 1980s, I gave evidence at the trial of Joseph Mains, Raymond Semple and William McGrath.
58. A few days before the Court case I was approached by two men in a car and threatened with a gun. One of the men said "You're Graham aren't you? I wouldn't go near the High Court if I was you, we're friends of McGrath and the next time we see you; you will be in a wooden box".
59. They were wearing balaclavas and I remember shaking with fear and wetting myself. After the confrontation I went back to my bedsit and got washed and changed. I couldn't sleep but I was determined to go ahead with the Court case.
60. I reported the incident to the police the following day however they said that I must have imagined it as no cars could get into the area after 7 o'clock.

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61. On first day of the trial I questioned the police about the car again as I was extremely concerned for my safety. Although I was prepared to give evidence at trial I wanted assurances that I would be kept safe.
62. The police admitted that there had been a car in the area however they said that someone must have left it there overnight. I lived in the area at that time however and my understanding was that any vehicles left un-attended would be towed away. The police told me not to worry about it and that I would be safe.
63. At the end of the trial, all three men were convicted of the systematic sexual abuse of children in their care.
64. Although I was able to tell my story and help secure their convictions, I found the police investigation and legal process tough going and I still live with what happened to me at Kincora every day. I don't feel that the other victims and I had our day as we never got an apology.
65. I also gave evidence at the Hughes Inquiry and I received [REDACTED] compensation as a result of a civil claim but it didn't feel right to have the money. It felt like dirty money and I couldn't wait to get rid of it. I ended up giving away most of it to charities.
66. I got married in 1992 when I was 34 years of age. I have two sons and one daughter aged 20, 21 and 18. I was determined to make sure my children had the life that I never had.
67. Over the years however I have suffered nervous breakdowns and I was diagnosed with bipolar depression 3 years ago.
68. I have attempted suicide on several occasions and I have been in and out of various mental institutions. I have read books written by people who have suffered similar abuse to help me cope but I still haven't been able to put the past behind me and I am currently receiving counselling from Lifeline Counselling Service.

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69. My ill health has had a detrimental effect on my relationship with my family but especially my wife and daughter.

70. I suffered a nervous breakdown shortly after I met with the Acknowledgement Forum in March 2015. I thought that I could handle recounting my experiences of Kincora. I had so much in my head that I wanted to talk about but the meeting had a bigger impact on me than I thought it would. My marriage broke down as a result in May 2015.

71. Despite these difficulties, I still believe that assisting with the Inquiry is the right thing to do. I am still hopeful that it will finally help me to put the past behind me, move on with my life and get some closure.

Statement of Truth

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

Signed Ronald H Graham

Dated 18. May 2016

COMMITTEE OF INQUIRY INTO CHILDREN'S HOMES & HOSTELS
SUPPLEMENTAL STATEMENT OF RONALD GRAHAM

Made this 9th day of October 1984

Further to my statement made to the Police on 5th March 1980 I wish to state that on more than one occasion whilst a resident in Kincora Hostel, I told my Social Worker, a **KIN 286**, that I did not want to stay in Kincora.

I did not make it clear why I did not want to stay but she never made any attempt to find out from me the reasons, and did not ask me for the reasons.

On one occasion the Social Worker, **KIN 286**, told me that I did not know how lucky I was, this being in relation to my circumstances.

On another occasion when I was being brought back to the Kincora Hostel, having been able to live at home for a time, I again indicated that I would not go back to Kincora. **KIN 286** told me that no matter what I wanted I could be made to go back.

On one occasion when I appeared before a Juvenile Court when some authority was required for my placement, I told the Resident Magistrate that I did not want to go back to Kincora. Again, I was not able to say why, but the Magistrate appeared puzzled by my reaction. My Social Worker was present in Court when I said this but she never asked me anything further about it even although my reaction in the Court and to the Magistrate had been expressed as strongly as I possibly could.

The offences against me occurred when I was about seventeen or eighteen. **KIN 286** was then a young woman in her twenties. I was quite unable to bring myself to discuss the offences with her, but I might have opened up if she had questioned me more closely about my reasons for not wanting to return to Kincora as I had expressed.

I also told a **KIN 387**, who was also my Social Worker for a time, that I did

On Monday 11.01.75 ...
 it for a short time, and was obviously allowed to be
 free again. ~~He was~~ Ronnie went down
 to see Mr McKnight for Youth Employment - waiting list
 and was sent out to the Stourmont Hotel. He
 started work as a porter ^{in the Stourmont Hotel} a few days later but only
 stayed a couple of weeks. He became increasingly restless
 in Kinross especially when he was not working. He wants
 to buy a motor bike but Mr Mains does not permit
 bikes at the hotel. Ronnie frequently visits both
 Palmerston and Ettrvale and especially during
 March was difficult to control. He is rowdy and
 wrestles with younger children in Palmerston and when

BM 3

are not there, he plays up on the staff.
 He has been talking to Mr. Mc Graith in Kinross
 and secretly informing him of a 'job' he was ^{involved} ~~involved~~ in
 the weekend after he came back from Kinross.

On 15 February Ronnie was complaining of a sore ear
 and head. Mr Mains sent him to Dundonald hospital
 on 16th February but he was not detained. Later Ronnie
 talked confidentially to Mr Mc Graith about acquiring his
 injuries. He and a few friends were asked to do a job
 which involved stealing a car. However several older boys
 chased them and after a schuff drove the car away.

Ronnie was scared of these boys catching up with him
 and wanted an immediate move from Kinross. He said
 he didn't mind where it was as long as he got out of Kinross.

9.3.75 Called at Kinross, Ronnie had ~~not~~ kept an appointment
 with Mr McKnight, Youth Employment and gone to the Stourmont
 hotel to work as a porter. I talked to Mr Mains and
 Ronnie is keeping out of Mains' way for the time being. I 155
 discussed the possibility of being in employment, but Mains

27.3.75 Ronnie phoned me to ask me to visit him soon.

28.3.75 I called and found Ronnie down in the dumps - he complained about having to remain in Kincora and went on to talk of his visits to Palmerston and Ectoville. He spends a lot of time in Palmerston and says [redacted] is changing greatly - now, ^{he} is ~~not~~ ~~so~~ more polite and has to ask permission for everything he does. Ronnie was annoyed that ~~for~~ [redacted] should have to comply with the rules in Palmerston. He also said [redacted] was not happy since he had to change his school. He asked me why [redacted] could continue at her old school yet [redacted] had to change. I explained that [redacted] had a year and a half to do at school yet and [redacted] had only a few months before she would leave school. Ronnie complained that [redacted] was becoming quite a snob and was not growing up as his father would have liked.

Ronnie had been visiting [redacted] at Ectoville and found [redacted] quite strict. Now he was told he always had to ring before he visited, and when he came he was only allowed to stay a few hours.

[redacted] BM 3 had complained ^{some} about Ronnie's bad behaviour in Ectoville. I asked him not to make a nuisance of himself and told him he would be welcomed if he behaved properly.

Ronnie finished work in the Stornount Hotel on 17 March - he said this was because his mother and black boyfriend called up to see him there. This I later found out was not true. He started to work in [redacted] hotel on 24.3.75 and stayed there until 2.5.75. He was doing a lot of evening work and said he preferred to ^{see} [redacted] and [redacted] more often. He said he would stay in Kincora to be closer than

0.4.75 I phoned Kincora, since I had not heard of Ronnie for several weeks. My maams said [redacted] and much.

VN/6/1

27

A Q A member of staff then approached you about this complaint that you had made to the Social Worker?
A Yes.

Q Well now, it may be obvious but could you just spell it out. How did that dissuade you or stop you complaining to the Social Workers about the way McGrath was sexually ill-treating you?

B A At that time when McGrath was sexually assaulting me if I had told the Social Worker I'm quite sure it would have come back to me and that's why I didn't ...

Q You use this phrase "come back to me" - do you mean it would have got back to McGrath and McGrath might have come back to you then on it?

A Yes, after each visit by a Social Worker I was questioned by a member of staff of what I said and what I done.

C Q Now, that's Social Workers. Secondly, outsiders - why didn't you complain to outsiders about what McGrath was doing.

A I was disgusted over what happened to me.

Q Would you have been embarrassed telling someone else what had happened?

A Yes I would have been embarrassed.

D Q Apart from the disgust which I'm sure the Tribunal can well understand, had McGrath threatened you in any way or was there anything about him that made you fearful of him?

A He would have threatened me yes.

Q What had he said?

A He just said - you know what would happen to you, you know who my friends are.

E Q You were asked at one stage by Mr Kennedy why didn't you tell the Magistrate. Did you, in fact, once tell a Magistrate that you didn't want to go back to Kincora?

A Yes.

Q Did you tell him why you didn't?

A No.

F Q But you did complain to a Magistrate that you didn't want to go back to Kincora. Were you sent back to Kincora?

A No, not at that time.

Q Subsequently did you go to Kincora?

A No,

G Q That was after you had been discharged from Kincora?

A Correct.

Q Was that Magistrate Commander Mullen in fact, can you remember?

A Correct.

H MR KENNEDY: I don't wish to interrupt my friend but no doubt he will remember as well as the Tribunal that when I asked the witness would he not have spoken directly to a Magistrate he smiled and suggested that it would be quite unknown for him to speak direct to a Magistrate.

- A
- Q How did you know that?
A I knew; because I knew.
- Q How did you know that?
A Because I read about it. He was in the Orange Order; he had friends in that. He had friends as MPs.
- B
- Q Is this something you have read since, or something you read at the time?
A It was something I knew at the time.
- Q Where did you read this at the time, about his friends?
A In the paper, and I was told it.
- Q You are talking about when you were in Kincora? Is this the period you are talking about? You read in the paper, during the time you were in Kincora, that McGrath had friends as MPs?
C
A No, I did not read that in the paper.
- Q What did you read in the paper?
A I just knew. I read a bit about him after the court case in 1981 or 1980, but I knew about him having friends in high places before it was in the paper.
- Q I thought you had told us a few minutes ago that you read in the papers at the time you were in Kincora about McGrath, and that was one of the reasons why you knew he was important?
D
A I read it after the court case but I knew beforehand, before this actually came out in the open.
- Q I asked you, Mr Graham, a few minutes ago was this something you had learned since, or read in the papers since, and you said No, you knew it at the time. How did you know it at the time?
E
A Before I read it in the paper I knew because he boasted about it in the home; him and Joe Mains.
- Q Boasted about what?
A What they were, what friends they knew, what MPs they knew. I gave him a name and he named me one, and I named him one.
- Q Did you know MPs too?
F
A I knew Mr Paisley before he was an MP.
- Q You could have mentioned it to him, could you not?
A No.
- Q Why not?
A Because I was afraid and disgusted with it. I did not think Mr Paisley would have time to listen to me.
- G
- Q Mr Paisley was a clergyman?
A He was, yes.
- Q And you were a sort of supporter of his Party too, were you not?
A I supported him, not because he was a clergyman but because of what he stood for.
- H
- Q Was he not a man you could have trusted?
A Yes, I would have trusted Mr Paisley.

IT/5/6

26

A Q Yet you did not complain to him?

A No.

Q Thank you.

Re-examined by MR GILLEN

B

Q I just want to summarize, Mr Graham, if I may, this situation about complaints, or the lack of complaints. First of all, why did you not complain to the social worker?

A I complained once, not about McGrath. I was watching TV one night and the housefather came in and asked me to go to bed. This was about 9.30 and I was watching the 9 o'clock news. I said "No", and he said: "Would you please go to bed?". I went to bed - eventually I went upstairs. The social worker came to visit me a few days later and I told her what happened. I told her I was complaining and that I was not a child and I do not like to be treated like a child. She said: "That is grand" and a few days later came back to me, a member of staff, and I was quite surprised because I thought it had been told in confidence.

C

/Q A member of staff ...

D

E

F

G

H

A

Q Now you think it had nothing to do with it.

A It had something to do with it. I did not know nothing about it. I did not know anything about that kind of life at all, sex in general.

Q In any event, you felt this was something that should not happen?

A That is correct.

B

Q Was there any clergyman that you were friendly with at the time?

A No.

Q Who was your best friend in that winter time, 1974 and early 1975?

A In Kincora or out of Kincora?

Q Either in Kincora or outside of Kincora.

A My best friend outside was a friend from [REDACTED] R 17.

C

Q Did you tell him about it?

A No.

Q Were you ashamed of it?

A I was.

D

Q Was that why you did not tell anybody?

A I was ashamed and disgusted with it.

Q It was something that you did not want to reoccur?

A That is correct.

Q Did you ever try to tell Mr Mains about it?

A No.

E

Q You did not like him?

A No.

Q Why do you smile?

A I just smiled.

Q Why?

A I just did.

F

Q I know you did .

A There is no crime in smiling, is there?

Q No, I am not suggesting there is. I am smiling myself. I just want to know why you smiled.

A I just smiled at the name you mentioned.

G

Q Did you not like Mr Mains?

A I did like Mr Mains.

Q You did like him?

A I did like him, yes.

Q Was he a man you felt you could trust at the time?

A Yes, he was at that time.

H

- A
- Q Did you know where they lived?
A Yes.
- Q And could you have gone to visit them if you had wanted?
A As long as I told them where I was going, yes.
- Q Did it ever occur to you to go to your grandparents and tell them what was happening?
A No.
- B
- Q Why was that?
A It is very hard to tell close relations; your grandparents.
- Q Because they were close relations?
A I was disgusted with what had happened; I just could not tell them.
- C
- Q What about some of the people in Kincora itself? There were other boys there, were there not?
A Yes, there were other boys there.
- Q Did you ever discuss with them what had happened?
A No.
- D
- Q Did anyone in Kincora ever see you in a distressed condition after these incidents, or ever say "What is wrong?"
A They would have noticed there was something wrong, yes.
- Q They did notice?
A I am sure they did, yes; quite obviously.
- Q Did any of the boys ever say: "What is wrong with you, you are looking very down in the dumps?"
A I was asked a couple of times.
- E
- Q By other boys?
A Yes.
- Q Did you tell them?
A No.
- F
- Q Did it not occur to you that it might be happening to the others as well?
A No.
- Q There would not have been so much embarrassment about telling it to somebody who had suffered the same experience, would there?
A If I had known at the time that it was going on with other boys then I would have done something, but each boy kept himself ...
- G
- Q Did you think you were the only boy?
A Yes.
- Q What about these associates in the paramilitary organisations? Did you ever think of mentioning it to them?
A No.
- H
- Q I mean, you certainly had done nothing wrong; you were the victim, were you not?
A That is correct.

8 ENTER THE BEAST

Kincora was like a haunted house as I walked around inside on that cold January night in 1982. It was as if I were not alone, as if I had for company the lost souls of those who had once lived there. The statements made by the residents which I had read and the reports of the investigating policemen were brought chillingly home to me. Some forensic scientist or RUC scene-of-crime officer had the unpleasant task of searching out clues from the carpets covering the stairs and landings, to establish the veracity of the statements made by former residents. The fact that the investigators found traces of semen on the floor-covering in the hallway, the landings and the stairs - not what one would normally expect - bore testament to the claims made by the young men once incarcerated there.

McGrath's appetite for these young men was insatiable, and it was quite clear from statements and interviews given to police that he was not always the gentle seducer. In the toilet on the landing McGrath had raped a young boy - we will call him Sammy to protect his true identity - on his final day in the hostel, as foster parents waited downstairs to take him to a new home. In the same toilet McGrath had raped the boy in on his first few days at Kincora. Sammy's description of his brief spell in Kincora was undoubtedly the principal reason detectives nicknamed McGrath 'The Beast'.

Sammy came from a broken home. From the time his

mother left when he was twelve, he had experience of different residential homes, as he was moved from one to another in the Belfast area for the next four years. Sammy's statement that he had repeatedly been raped by McGrath was eventually used to confront the 'Beast'. It was the basis of charges to which McGrath eventually pleaded guilty, thereby removing any possibility that his evidence would be heard in open court.

Sammy's years in different institutions had taught him to respect house masters. He says he did once tell one of the many social workers he had to deal with, but that she just laughed, as McGrath told him 'they' would if he dared to speak out. In spite of her reservations, the social worker did raise Sammy's complaint with Mains and McGrath. Sammy was called in after they had time to discuss his allegations, to hear McGrath describe him as a liar in front of Mains and the social worker and to see Mains turn his back on him. By this stage, the mid-1970s, there had already been complaints against McGrath, including Garland's anonymous call to Strandtown RUC station. Garland alleged that boys at the home were being abused.

Mains felt a great dislike for McGrath from the moment he arrived unannounced at the front door of Number 236 Upper Newtownards Road in June 1971. Raymond Semple recalled his surprise and anger. Apparently Mains had not been consulted about the appointment of McGrath; indeed Semple claimed that he and Mains simply did not know of any plan to fill a third staff position at the hostel. But once they checked with the Director of Social Services they realised that McGrath's appointment was a *fait accompli*. No one has any idea why McGrath took this job in Kincora.

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He certainly had no formal qualifications. It may have been an attempt to stabilise his family's income. Apparently two clergymen, who have never been identified, provided references for him.

Even with Sammy, McGrath boasted about his contacts 'high up in the Orange Order and in loyalist paramilitary groups like the UDA as well as politicians such as Paisley'. Sammy remembers McGrath's boast that during the 1974 loyalist strike he was involved in talks with representatives of the Northern Ireland Office. McGrath did mention Tara to Sammy, asking one day if he had ever heard of the group, then explaining the name of the organisation as 'something to do with the Free State'. At this point, according to Sammy, McGrath burst out laughing and said there was more to the word Tara than he could ever begin to understand. He said it was part of the Orange Order, but a part of the Order made up of Protestants who thought differently from the rest of the Orange Order, people who believed that Catholics should have no say in society.

McGrath would test the boys politically as they watched the news on television, and occasionally if he was satisfied that the person concerned was a Protestant with strong anti-Catholic views he might be invited to consider membership of Tara. Sammy remembers that some of the boys living in Kincora were involved with loyalist paramilitary groups, occasionally the UVF but mostly the UDA. During a television interview in 1990 I asked him if there had ever been any evidence of weapons in the house, because another former Kincora resident I had traced to London in 1982 told me that on one occasion he saw one

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of the boys with a gun. Sammy said he was never aware of any guns in the home although boys did boast about having weapons. I then asked him if there was anyone he could think of at Kincora who was definitely actively involved in paramilitary organisations? He answered:

There was one lad whose name I forget and he came in one night very late and McGrath was on duty, he was in the building anyway. It was very unusual to see him [McGrath] in the building at that time of night and the boy came in. He was in the same room as me but I cannot remember his name. He was a lad for talking, though, and he was shaking a bit. His clothes were all gathered up and McGrath took them all out and one of the lads asked him what was up, so he turned round and says he was just after shooting someone. And we tried to ask him, a couple of us, who it was, but before we could get any more information McGrath just came in and told us to shut up. I think he started waiting a bit, outside the door listening, so we just shut up and next morning there was not anything mentioned. The lad just said nothing about it. That is the only really serious time.

And in answer to a question about what happened to the clothes?

McGrath took them outside. There was a kind of big thing ... just seen the light like, coming up and this ... he burned them because we never seen

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them. So he did not like . . . there was a laundry room downstairs and they were not in that like . . . so we assumed he burned them.

There may have been another explanation for the boy's behaviour that night, but Sammy and the others believed that his physical state, 'the shaking', was evidence of a serious occurrence. There were others during this period of the mid-1970s who observed the gun-running McGrath, and even some who knew of his association with loyalist hardliners like John McKeague, who also had a taste for young boys. For Sammy it was a reminder that McGrath had contacts on the outside and that if there was going to be any trouble he had a means of dealing with it. It certainly discouraged Sammy from reporting McGrath, so he continued to force his unwanted attentions on the boy.

Mains was undoubtedly uncomfortable with McGrath but he also had selfish reasons for wishing to keep a lid on McGrath's growing catalogue of abuses. The level of complaints mushroomed once McGrath took up his post. Indeed, one of the most bizarre comments came from Semple, who told police during questioning: 'Because of the amount of complaints made to me and Mains about McGrath interfering with the residents me and Mains tried to watch McGrath. I could not find out anything while I was on duty. There was plenty of talk about McGrath interfering with the boys by the boys but I could not find out anything.' There is no evidence to show that Mains and Semple advanced these complaints about McGrath through the proper channels.

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I paused briefly in the office. There was still a desk, a couple of chairs, a calendar on the wall and a filing cabinet. I tugged at one of the drawers on the cabinet. The most important files had long since been removed, no doubt by the police seeking clues as to the identity and whereabouts of the residents or former residents. But then I had a stroke of good fortune. In the bottom drawer I discovered desk diaries covering a period of seven years, diaries which the police had overlooked during their short period of control over the premises. (I made several enquiries of police officers on this subject but failed to establish why this had occurred.) The handwriting inside was old-fashioned and I could discern that most of the entries were made by three different hands. I later tried unsuccessfully to determine beyond doubt whose handwriting was whose by sending letters to the three convicted Kincora staff, hoping for handwritten replies. Two replied in their own handwriting but McGrath requested the prison governor to reply on his behalf. All of them declined my request for an interview. But for now, all I saw were pages and pages of mundane information, recording everyday events in the life of Kincora, such as how much meat was to be delivered by the butcher and how much he was to be paid; the staff rota; the names of social services staff who telephoned about their clients. But there might be other material here worthy of investigation and I could not possibly note it all down in the time I had available inside the home. I had to 'borrow' the diaries.

Leaving Kincora with seven A-4 sized diaries tucked under my arm made me feel like a thief but I had a feeling