

1 Thursday, 29 November 2018

2 (10.00 am)

3 LADY SMITH: Good morning. As promised, I think we have
4 some oral witnesses to lead now; is that right,
5 Ms Rattray?

6 MS RATTRAY: Yes, my Lady. The first witness is an
7 applicant who has waived her right to anonymity and she
8 is Veronica Altham.

9 VERONICA ALTHAM (affirmed)

10 LADY SMITH: Please sit down and make yourself comfortable.
11 You'll see that microphone is now switched on -- don't
12 touch the button because if the red light goes off, we
13 can't hear you at all. We also won't be able to hear
14 you properly if you move away from the microphone, so if
15 I can ask you to stay in a good position for it. I'll
16 let you know if you do drift away -- some people do --
17 the arm of the microphone will move up and down so that
18 might help you to get it into whatever is a comfortable
19 position for you. Feel free to do that.

20 A. Can you hear me?

21 LADY SMITH: That's good, yes, thank you.

22 I'm going to hand over to Ms Rattray. She will
23 explain to you what happens next.

24 Questions from MS RATTRAY

25

1 MS RATTRAY: Good morning, Ronnie.

2 A. Hello.

3 Q. In front of you you'll find in the red folder a copy of
4 the statement that you gave to the inquiry. But when
5 I refer to parts of your statement, it will also come up
6 on the screen in front of you, so if you prefer to use
7 one way or other to refer to your statement, feel free
8 to use either or both.

9 To start with, I'm just going to read out the
10 reference that we have given to your statement, which is
11 WIT.001.002.0981. If you could first of all go to the
12 paper copy in the red folder and if you could turn to
13 the very back page of that, which is page number 0998.

14 Can you confirm that you have signed your statement?

15 A. Yes.

16 Q. You will see that in the last paragraph, above your
17 signature, paragraph 90, you say that you have no
18 objection to your witness statement being published as
19 part of the evidence to the inquiry and that you believe
20 the facts stated in your witness statement are true.

21 A. Yes.

22 Q. You can put that to one side just now.

23 To start with, can you confirm the year you were
24 born? I don't want the date or the month, simply the
25 year.

1 A. 1952.

2 Q. And from your statement, you tell us by way of
3 background of you coming into care in Barnardo's that
4 when you were 18 months old, you first were taken into
5 care, that you spent a short time in Haldane House at
6 Bridge of Weir, and then you were in Ravelrig House in
7 Balerno. Then you moved to Balcary House in Hawick when
8 you were aged 2; is that right?

9 A. Yes, that's correct.

10 Q. You were placed in Balcary [REDACTED]
11 [REDACTED]
12 [REDACTED]

13 A. Yes.

14 Q. You moved from Haldane or Ravelrig to Balcary at the age
15 of 2 [REDACTED]
16 [REDACTED]

17 A. Yes.

18 Q. [REDACTED]
19 [REDACTED]

20 A. [REDACTED]

21 Q. Just to confirm, we've seen your children's records and
22 the Barnardo's records do indicate that you were
23 admitted to Balcary on 14 June 1957. Does that fit in
24 with your memories of how old you would have been?

25 A. If it was 1957, that's later than I thought.

1 LADY SMITH: You'd be about 5 years old?

2 A. In 1957, I was, yes.

3 LADY SMITH: In 1957 you'd be about 5 years old and what
4 Ms Rattray is explaining is that the records we've been
5 able to look at suggest that you were moved there in
6 1957.

7 A. I thought I was in Balcary long before -- I thought
8 I was in Balcary at 2.

9 LADY SMITH: You thought you were there at 2 years old?

10 A. Two or 3 years old.

11 MS RATTRAY: Your records seem to indicate that whilst you
12 went into Haldane House, which was another Barnardo's
13 home, when you were about 2 in February 1954,
14 essentially you then moved to Balcary -- actually,
15 sorry, I'm giving you the wrong date. You're right, you
16 went into Balcary on two occasions and I'm confirming
17 the second date.


18 A. Right.

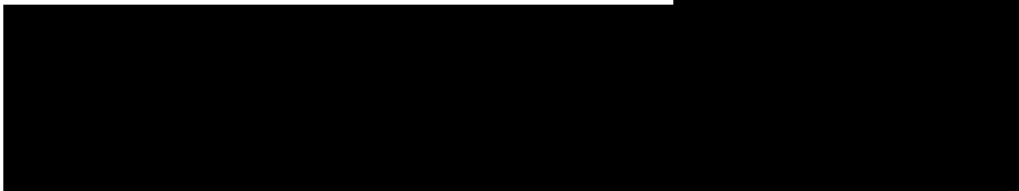
19 Q. So you're correct, Ronnie, and I'm wrong and I apologise
20 for that.

21 You went into Balcary on 4 July 1956. So that would
22 accord with your memory that you were younger than 5.

23 A. Yes.

24 Q. You stayed at Balcary, according to your records, until
25 14 June 1957 and at that time, according to your

1 records, you were boarded out, you were put into foster
2 care by Barnardo's for a few months. 

3 
4
5
6 We know you were boarded out on 25 March 1959,
7 according to your records, and in your statement -- I'm
8 not going to ask you about your experiences in foster
9 care because that's the focus of another study in the
10 future. We're focusing on your experiences in Balcary.
11 But you do tell us that whilst in foster care, you
12 suffered physical, sexual and emotional abuse, that you
13 ran away, and then you were removed from foster care and
14 taken to the Sick Children's Hospital in Edinburgh at
15 Douglas House.

16 A. That's right.


17 Q. You stayed there for a few months and, according to your
18 records, you were taken there on 8 August 1959 and then
19 you were returned to Balcary on the second occasion on
20 5 September 1959.

21 A. Yes, that sounds right.

22 Q. That sounds right to you?

23 A. Yes.

24 Q. When you first arrived at Balcary when you were younger,
25 in 1956, do you have any memories of that?

- 1 A. I remember arriving at the home and I remember meeting
2 Mamaji for the first time.
- 3 Q. Who was Mamaji?
- 4 A. Mamaji was the matron of the home, but we all called her
5 Mamaji, so yes.
- 6 Q. And was there any particular reason why she was called
7 that?
- 8 A. I found out later that it's Indian for mother, but
9 at the time I just called her what everybody else called
10 her. You didn't ... Her proper name was Hilda May
11 O'Brien, but we never, ever called her ...
- 12 Q. And what other staff do you remember from Balcary at
13 that time?
- 14 A. I remember Auntie Jasmine, Auntie Sheila. A June.
15 Quite a few.
- 16 Q. And can you remember about roughly how many children
17 were living in Balcary?
- 18 A. I think it was about 28.
- 19 Q. 
- 20
- 21 there were boys and girls there?
- 22 A. Yes, it was a mixed home.
- 23 Q. At your statement at page 0983 you give us a very
24 detailed description of the layout of the home. Can you
25 describe that to us in general terms?

1 A. What do you mean, just literally the layout?

2 Q. The layout and how it was.

3 A. Right. Sorry, I'm not quite sure what you're looking
4 for.

5 Q. You tell us, for example, it was a big house, a big old
6 house.

7 A. Yes, okay then. You'd go in the front of the house,
8 front door, which we didn't use --

9 LADY SMITH: Ronnie, you remember I was talking to you about
10 that microphone earlier, if you can get yourself with
11 the microphone -- hang on a minute. We'll give you some
12 help.

13 (Pause)

14 A. Is that better?

15 LADY SMITH: That's much better.

16 A. Sorry.

17 LADY SMITH: No need to apologise. I don't suppose you
18 spend every day talking into a microphone.

19 A. No.

20 LADY SMITH: It's not a skill we expect witnesses to have
21 before they come here.

22 Ms Rattray.

23 A. And you just want a description of the home; is that
24 right?

25 MS RATTRAY: Yes.

1 A. Okay. We used to come in the front of the door, on the
2 left was the dining room, on the right was the staff
3 room. Then there was Mamaji's office, and then there
4 was a big girls' playroom; the girls had separate
5 playrooms from the boys. On the other side was the
6 dining room, kitchen, and then all the boys' areas, the
7 boys' cloakrooms, the boys' playrooms. And then up the
8 stairs, that took you to the first floor. That's where
9 the elves were, the young girls, and the pixies were the
10 young boys. That was where our dormitories were.

11 Then there was -- the robins were the intermediate
12 girls, I would say, and then intermediate boys. And
13 then you became a senior and you may get to share
14 a bedroom with two or have your own bedroom by that
15 time.

16 Q. So what you're describing is a big house where the boys
17 had their base in one part of the building and the girls
18 in another?

19 A. Yes.

20 Q. And the children were divided into groups according to
21 their age?

22 A. According to the age group.

23 Q. And the groups were all given names like elves, robins
24 and pixies?

25 A. Yes.

1 Q. It's quite sort of child-friendly names?

2 A. Yes.

3 LADY SMITH: Ronnie, did you have any knowledge of or
4 involvement in Brownies when you were growing up?

5 A. I did, yes.

6 LADY SMITH: Do you recognise those names as the names that
7 some Brownie packs used for their sixes?

8 A. Yes, you're right.

9 LADY SMITH: Fairies, robins --

10 A. Yes. Do you know I've never connected that in 60-odd
11 years.

12 LADY SMITH: I just wondered whether Mamaji had any
13 involvement with the Brownies or the Girl Guides.

14 A. No, that was something we went out to do from the home,
15 so it was different.

16 LADY SMITH: Maybe she had done it previously and that's
17 where she learned about them from. Thank you.

18 MS RATTRAY: And you mentioned the dormitories: how many
19 girls were in your dormitory?

20 A. We started off in the elves, I think there was six in
21 the elves and seven in the robins, and then you went to
22 the top, the senior rooms, there were three, and then
23 one room on your own before you left.

24 Q. So how old would you be when you went up to the senior
25 rooms?

- 1 A. Oh ... 13, 14.
- 2 Q. Right. I think you tell us in your statement that there
3 was a staff member who had a bedroom near the dormitory.
- 4 A. Yes. All the staff. Where the elves and the robins
5 were, there was a small room that was a staff member's
6 room, and the same with the boys. There was a staff
7 member's bedroom there as well. So yes, we both had
8 members next to us.
- 9 Q. So these would be staff members who would be on call
10 during the night if any child needed help at that time?
11 Is that it?
- 12 A. When they were in the room, they were off duty, I think.
13 I think there obviously had to be somebody on night
14 duty, but ... Yes, we used to have an **BDA** or
15 Auntie June between us, depending ...
- 16 Q. Okay. When you returned -- obviously you had your first
17 time in Balcary before foster care and then you returned
18 to Balcary after being in foster care and having
19 suffered very serious abuse.
- 20 A. Mm.
- 21 Q. At that stage you tell us at page 0986, paragraphs 24
22 and 25 of your statement, that your experiences in
23 foster care had an effect upon your behaviour.
- 24 A. Yes. I would have thought -- well, having worked in
25 care since I left the home, I can now see -- well,

1 I think, looking back, there was obvious signs, like the
2 wetting of the bed, being a rebel sort of -- you know,
3 anything they said, I wanted to do the opposite.

4 I think they let me down. That was all. They sent me
5 there.

6 Q. You tell us in your statement that you started playing
7 up.

8 A. Mm.

9 Q. But your memories of that is that you were told you were
10 naughty?

11 A. Yes. Exactly.

12 Q. And perhaps they didn't recognise how troubled you were?

13 A. No, not at all.

14 Q. Although before you were returned to Balcary, you had
15 gone to the Sick Children's Hospital?

16 A. Yes.

17 Q. And you had received some help there?

18 A. Well, yes. I wouldn't speak to them much.

19 Q. Right, okay. So at the time it was recognised there was
20 a problem, but not the reasons for the problem?

21 A. Yes.

22 Q. And I think you tell us as well that when you returned
23 to Balcary, you still kept in touch with a psychiatrist
24 from the Sick Children's Hospital?

25 A. Yes, Dr Methwin. I didn't keep in touch with her,

1 obviously Barnardo's sent her to me. I don't know if
2 any of the other kids in the home saw her. It was just
3 I saw her, which wasn't very successful. I had nothing
4 to say.

5 Q. You didn't find Dr Methwin to be someone that you could
6 open up to or tell what happened to you?

7 A. No. Sister Makin in the Douglas House, Sister Makin
8 I could talk to. I told her all sorts, but not that.
9 No, I didn't have anybody I could tell or trust.

10 Q. So generally, your experiences at Balcary are -- you
11 were a troubled child because of what you had suffered,
12 and whilst staff appeared to be aware that there was
13 an issue with your behaviour, they didn't understand why
14 that was --

15 A. No.

16 Q. -- and perhaps may have treated you as a naughty
17 child --

18 A. Yes.

19 Q. -- rather than a child who's upset, essentially?

20 A. Yes, I think when I came back, I was definitely
21 a naughty child.

22 (Pause)

23 Q. Take your time. Are you okay?

24 What I'm going to do now, Ronnie --

25 LADY SMITH: Ronnie, if you need a break at any time, that's

1 no problem. You just let me know and we can have
2 a break, or if you just need a breather while you're
3 sitting there, we can wait until you're ready again.
4 All right? You let me know what works for you.

5 MS RATTRAY: Ronnie, I'm now going to leave that subject,
6 it's just that it's obviously important that we
7 understand the background for the purposes of your
8 experiences.

9 A. Yes, of course.

10 Q. But I'm leaving that subject behind now.

11 What I'm going to ask you now about is -- you tell
12 us in your statement a little about the routine at
13 Balcary House.

14 A. Uh-huh.

15 Q. I think you tell us that when you get up in the morning,
16 the first thing that you did was to make your bed;
17 is that what happened?

18 A. The first thing I -- well, for me personally, I had to
19 get up, strip my bed because I'd obviously ... I used
20 to wet my bed when I came back. Then I'd get up, go
21 downstairs, wash all my sheets, and go back upstairs, do
22 my chores before breakfast. But every morning I was
23 washing sheets.

24 Q. Where did you go to wash your sheets?

25 A. There was a proper laundry room with three big Belfast

- 1 sinks, deep ones, and I used to stand on a stool so
2 I could reach and wash them in there and then put it
3 through the mangle.
- 4 Q. Why were you washing your sheets as opposed to staff
5 washing your sheets?
- 6 A. Because I wet the bed, so I should clean up, so I did.
7 That's what we were ...
- 8 Q. And who told you to do that?
- 9 A. Staff. We had to do it. We just did it because you
10 were told to.
- 11 Q. Okay. And was Mamaji aware that children who wet the
12 bed were being told to hand-wash their own sheets?
- 13 A. I would have thought so. She didn't miss much going on
14 in the home.
- 15 Q. Was that your experience throughout your time in
16 Balcary, that every morning you were washing your
17 sheets?
- 18 A. Yes.
- 19 Q. We know later in the statement -- and we'll speak about
20 them later -- there was a point at which Mamaji retired
21 and the Barrons came in. Did the Barrons still treat
22 bed-wetting in that way? Can you remember?
- 23 A. No, no, I think we were still washing the sheets, but
24 there was no punishment from the Barrons, you know.
- 25 Q. So when the Barrons were there, did you still have to

- 1 hand-wash your own sheets?
- 2 A. Yes, oh yes, that was just automatic.
- 3 Q. But there wasn't a punishment for wetting the bed?
- 4 A. No, the only time I was punished was a lady, **BKE**,
- 5 and she rubbed my face in it, the wet sheet. But apart
- 6 from that, I think my punishment was to go and wash my
- 7 own sheets. And everybody knew, of course, that you had
- 8 wet the bed.
- 9 Q. Was that something which was embarrassing?
- 10 A. Not among my friends, I mean I wouldn't stay anywhere or
- 11 anything because I wet the bed.
- 12 Q. Okay. **BKE**, for how long was she there?
- 13 A. I don't remember. I genuinely don't remember. She was
- 14 there once -- the only reason she sticks in my head is
- 15 because she put my face in the wet sheets. Otherwise
- 16 she passed me by I think.
- 17 Q. Did any other staff members do that?
- 18 A. No, not rub our face in, no.
- 19 Q. So having washed your sheets, you got up, you've washed
- 20 your sheets, and you come back up, and then you said
- 21 there were some chores to be done.
- 22 A. Yes.
- 23 Q. Before breakfast?
- 24 A. Yes. You all had your set chores.
- 25 Q. What kind of chores did the children do?

- 1 A. It could be cleaning the bedroom, like sweeping it. It
2 could be cleaning the playrooms and polishing the floors
3 before we go to school. Setting the breakfast table.
4 Making toast. Helping this cook. Everybody had
5 a little job that they had to do before breakfast. And
6 a little job after breakfast before school.
- 7 Q. Okay. Things like laying the table or helping make the
8 toast sound like a little job, but polishing the floors
9 sounds like rather a big job.
- 10 A. Yes, you used to have a big bumper. The playroom was
11 about this size (indicating) and you had to go up and
12 down with a bumper.
- 13 Q. Was that heavy?
- 14 A. Very, but it was all right because you could swing it.
- 15 Q. So how old were you when you were using the bumper?
- 16 A. Maybe 8.
- 17 Q. And you could swing it, but was that easy to do or was
18 it quite heavy work for you when you were 8?
- 19 A. No, because it was like laminate floors, so you could
20 just go up one end, come back, but it had to be polished
21 every so often. I think the staff did that when we left
22 for school. They went in and did proper cleaning.
- 23 Q. You also mention at paragraph 28 of your statement that
24 one of the other jobs the children would do, they would
25 make high tea for Mamaji.

1 A. Mamaji, yes. Yes, we did. You were on a rota and
2 basically, that was to teach you how to set a nice tea
3 table properly and in Scotland, as you know, your high
4 tea is different, and you'd make it all for her, just to
5 teach you how to set up. But it was handy because we
6 could nick her cigarettes as well. As soon as we were
7 finished, we'd nick a couple of cigarettes.

8 Q. Were there any times when children were invited to join
9 her for tea in her apartment?

10 A. No.

11 Q. Was that not something you remember?

12 A. Never, no. I think that was her downtime, away from us
13 all.

14 Q. Right, okay. So if other children were invited
15 sometimes to join her for high tea, that wasn't
16 something that happened to you?

17 A. Nobody was invited. Mamaji always had her tea on her
18 own when we had our tea in the big dining room.

19 Q. Because we heard from another witness who was in Balcary
20 around the same time that she would invite children on
21 a rota every few weeks to have tea with her and that was
22 a chance to sort of talk about any problems. Is that
23 something you recall?

24 A. Not in my lifetime. She never ... No. No.

25 Q. So what kind of person was she?

- 1 A. She was just ...
- 2 LADY SMITH: Ronnie, a bit nearer the microphone. Pull your
3 chair forward if it helps you to be more comfortable.
- 4 A. That's like me asking you what's your mother like. She
5 was kind, she was loving. She didn't like -- we didn't
6 get away with murder. She kept us quite in control with
7 the cane, it may have been with the cane or the dog's
8 leash, but she did it. You didn't want to misbehave for
9 her, whereas the Barrons, that was all we intended to do
10 because we hated them, because we thought they had taken
11 what was technically my mother away. We didn't realise
12 she was ill. And we had a mother one day and then
13 a couple, a man, which we weren't used to, and the
14 changeover was kind of close, if that makes sense. She
15 was gone and then they were there. I'm sure it wasn't
16 like that, but that's how I remember it as a child.
- 17 MS RATTRAY: So she was someone who was like a mother to
18 you?
- 19 A. Yes.
- 20 Q. And you found her kind and caring?
- 21 A. Yes, except for when she was giving me the cane.
- 22 Q. I'll ask you about that later. Was she someone that you
23 would be able to go to for a cuddle?
- 24 A. Yes. Yes.
- 25 Q. Okay. Was she someone that you would be able to speak

- 1 to if you had a problem?
- 2 A. No, you tended to do that with your peer group or
3 whichever auntie was on duty.
- 4 Q. So who was the auntie that was in charge of you?
- 5 A. There was Auntie **BDA** but there was one particular,
6 Miss Hutchinson, who was in the kitchen mostly, but she
7 looked after me. Hutchy. She spoiled me. She made
8 sure I had cigarette money for school every day.
- 9 LADY SMITH: Is she the member of staff you describe as
10 always having had a cigarette in her own mouth?
- 11 A. That's the one. She used to smoke and she had
12 nicotine ...
- 13 LADY SMITH: Even when she was working in the kitchen?
- 14 A. Oh yes, straight in the dinner, "Oh, there she is,
15 Hutchy".
- 16 MS RATTRAY: If we go back to the routine. After you tell
17 us about getting high tea ready for Mamaji, you said
18 that you used to get your age in pennies, and she would
19 make you put a halfpenny in the box for your keep.
- 20 A. That's right.
- 21 Q. Was that pocket money or was that money given to the
22 children who were making her high tea for her?
- 23 A. No that was given to all the children. It was your
24 pocket money. You got like 5p when you were 5 -- the
25 old money obviously. Until you got to about 13 and then

1 you got 10 shillings a week or 50p a week as it is now.

2 Yes, all the children got it.

3 Q. You tell us in terms of your daily routine when talking
4 about bedtime that bedtime differed for different age
5 groups.

6 A. Yes, of course.

7 Q. And you were allowed to read in bed at night?

8 A. Mm-hm.

9 Q. You said on a Sunday you'd get religious stories read to
10 you, but also the matron, Mamaji or a member of staff
11 would read books?

12 A. Yes. In the evening they would start a proper book and
13 they would read maybe two chapters and we had to wait
14 until the next Sunday to get -- yes.

15 Q. I'm going to ask you now about mealtimes. How did you
16 find the food at Balcary?

17 A. Too easily! Yeah, it was all right. It was okay, apart
18 from ... Roasts on a Sunday. I hated Tuesday -- no,
19 Thursday, Friday and Sunday because Thursday was liver,
20 and I could never eat it, so I got it for tea again.
21 Friday was fish, which was disgusting, I used to have
22 that for my tea Friday night. And invariably on
23 a Sunday night I'd be sitting eating roast beef. If you
24 didn't finish your meals, you were put on a table behind
25 everybody else, so everybody knew you were in disgrace

1 for not eating your meals. I couldn't get them down.
2 I got to the stage where I could eat my pudding and
3 still have the beef in my cheeks like a hamster. So if
4 you didn't eat it, you had to go it again.

5 Q. So basically, if you didn't eat your dinner, you were
6 sent to a table that I think you called the naughty
7 table in your statement?

8 A. Yes.

9 Q. If you didn't eat your dinner at that meal, then
10 it would be re-served to you?

11 A. At teatime, yes.

12 Q. Presumably it was cold by then?

13 A. I think they might have heated it, but it was still
14 disgusting.

15 Q. What happened if you didn't eat it at teatime?

16 A. On very rare occasions you might get it at breakfast,
17 depending on what mood the staff were in. But usually,
18 you tried to get it down at teatime with drinks because
19 we weren't allowed drinks with our food; we had them
20 after.

21 Q. Sorry, what was that?

22 A. We had drinks after our food, so you couldn't take
23 a slug of water and wash it down because we weren't
24 allowed water with our meal. But yes.

25 Q. Okay. Was there ever a time that you were force-fed

- 1 food in Balcary?
- 2 A. No, we weren't physically force-fed. It was a case
3 of: you will eat it. We had to eat it. And
4 if we didn't, well ... She must have given up after
5 breakfast because I don't remember it -- because
6 I always remember thinking, Friday, oh God, no, I have
7 got to go through this with fish again.
- 8 Q. You tell us a bit about washing and having a bath. You
9 had a bath about six nights a week?
- 10 A. Mm-hm.
- 11 Q. But there was a different arrangement on a Sunday?
- 12 A. Yes. That was given over to God, Sunday.
- 13 Q. You say that on a Sunday, the Lord's day, you'd have
14 a strip wash before church?
- 15 A. Yes.
- 16 Q. You say in your statement that you didn't share a bath
17 with other children?
- 18 A. No.
- 19 Q. Everyone had their own bath time?
- 20 A. Yes.
- 21 Q. So you say staff supervised bath times when you were
22 younger. But as you got older, did you have the privacy
23 to have a bath on your own?
- 24 A. You could lock the door, yes. Once the left the elves
25 and went up to the seniors, obviously there was locks on

1 all the doors. There was a lock on the elves' door, but
2 we weren't allowed to use it.

3 Q. Okay. You tell us about clothes as well, that you
4 didn't wear a uniform other than a school uniform.

5 A. That's right.

6 Q. But you would go up to the sewing room and get kitted
7 out with all your holiday clothes?

8 A. That's right. Every year you'd go up to the sewing
9 room, on the top shelf, and you would get kitted out
10 with summer clothes. Same with winter, you'd go up and
11 get all ... I waited three years or two years to get an
12 outfit [REDACTED] wore that I really wanted, and I got it
13 in the end though. But yeah, we all got kitted out.

14 Q. So the clothes were then handed down?

15 A. Yes, if they were left in good nick.

16 Q. So you waited for an outfit that [REDACTED] had?

17 A. Yes.

18 Q. The handing down of clothes, was that [REDACTED]
19 [REDACTED] handed down on a more general
20 basis?

21 A. Everybody in the home.

22 Q. Right. You tell us throughout your statement about
23 leisure time, essentially. You were allowed to go out
24 to play after school?

25 A. After all the homework was done and the dishes from

1 teatime, we were allowed out playing, yes.

2 Q. So what kind of things would you be able to do there?

3 A. Well, we had bikes. We were kind of confined to the
4 home. There was lots to do in the home. We could read
5 books; I read a lot. I used to go out and play in our
6 gang sort of thing. There was Dobby the donkey to be
7 seen as well. There was lots we could do.

8 Q. Balcary, was it set in a big garden or grounds?

9 A. Huge, yes. To the right there was like ... Well, it
10 wasn't very wooded, but there was a wood bit. And to
11 the left -- yes, the grounds were, to me as a child,
12 big. As an adult, still big.

13 Q. Right. I think you tell us that there were cottages
14 in the back garden, which you used as playhouses?

15 A. Yes, there were two up and two down, and that was our
16 sort of Wendy house. We thought that was perfectly
17 normal and all families had these. We didn't know they
18 were houses, per se, from days gone by when people lived
19 there.

20 Q. And you had the chance to go swimming?

21 A. Oh yes, I loved swimming. We got free swimming any time
22 we wanted and we got to the cinema every Saturday free.

23 Q. It wasn't just the local swimming pool that you went
24 swimming in either, you went swimming in the river
25 sometimes; is that right?

- 1 A. Yes, sometimes with the staff, but most of our river
2 swimming was at night when we used to get out the home
3 and go down. It was only just down the road from the
4 home. We used to go out in the middle of the night and
5 we'd swim, we'd fish, have great fun, and then go back
6 to the home before they caught us.
- 7 Q. So this was a group of children creeping out at night?
- 8 A. Yes.
- 9 Q. Was that something that happened quite often?
- 10 A. Yes, when we felt like it, we'd make a date and off we'd
11 go.
- 12 Q. There were times, I think, you went beyond the river.
- 13 A. Up to the police station that was being built. We used
14 to play on the building site up there. We had [REDACTED]
15 -- another wean and I, we climbed up a crane and he let
16 the handle go and the crane swang -- it was really
17 funny. But we got back to the home and now [REDACTED]
18 fell going up the stair, got us all caught and got us
19 all the cane. Again.
- 20 Q. So that's what I was going to ask, what happened when
21 you were caught. But you were given the cane?
- 22 A. Yes.
- 23 Q. Moving on to that, who was it who would give you the
24 cane?
- 25 A. Mamaji.

- 1 Q. Did any other staff member do that?
- 2 A. No. I do not remember any other staff -- that was
3 purely her job.
- 4 Q. Right, okay. Would there ever be a situation where
5 a staff member thought you ought to get the cane, so
6 they would tell the matron and then she would give you
7 the cane?
- 8 A. Yes.
- 9 Q. Is that how it worked?
- 10 A. Yes.
- 11 Q. And when you got the cane, was that on your own or was
12 it in front of other children?
- 13 A. Well, we used to go ... You'd stand outside her office
14 and she'd call you in, as I told you, and she'd tell you
15 to bend over. Everybody else would be outside
16 listening. And then if you didn't bend over, you still
17 got a smack.
- 18 Q. If you could move towards your microphone, Ronnie.
- 19 A. Sorry.
- 20 Q. Don't worry about it.
21 She would tell you to bend over?
- 22 A. Yes.
- 23 Q. Then whereabouts on your body would she hit you with the
24 cane?
- 25 A. Your bottom, over your clothes, over your thingummy --

1 it wasn't on the bare bottom, but I used to -- she
2 wasn't very good, so I tended to protect my head because
3 I knew she would just go for it.

4 Q. You would tend to protect your head because you knew she
5 would just go for it?

6 A. Yes. But not vicious. She wasn't -- she didn't ... It
7 wasn't that hard. The school belt was sore. Yes, it
8 was the thought that she'd had to punish you yet again
9 that made you feel bad.

10 Q. Okay. When she went for it, did she did it in
11 a controlled way or was she angry and had lost her
12 temper a bit?

13 A. No, I don't think I ever saw her lose her temper. The
14 way she spoke, you felt so bad for upsetting her, you
15 know, you felt guilty.

16 Q. But sometimes when you got the cane, you had to protect
17 your head?

18 A. Well, yes, because I really wasn't one of these people
19 that was prepared to bend over and have my bottom on
20 display, so I would just cover my head and bend slightly
21 and then she'd give you it and it'd be over.

22 Q. Okay. So sometimes the cane made contact with other
23 parts of your body?

24 A. Yes. Usually your back and your hands.

25 Q. Did it ever hit your head?

- 1 A. I'm sure it did, but I'm still here, so ...
- 2 Q. You said she didn't hit you that hard, you don't think?
- 3 A. I don't remember it being -- you know what I mean?
- 4 I don't remember ever thinking that that was way too
- 5 hard that time. I think on average, it was the same and
- 6 it was just, "You've been bad, you've been punished, we
- 7 all move on now".
- 8 Q. And how many strokes of the cane would she give?
- 9 A. It would probably be ten if you bent over, but I can't
- 10 remember. I know it just lasted and you just would
- 11 protect yourself and then go "sorry" and walk out.
- 12 Q. Okay.
- 13 A. Simple as that.
- 14 Q. Did it ever leave any marks on your body?
- 15 A. I suppose there'd be little marks, but no one would
- 16 bother with them, you know. I don't remember thinking,
- 17 "Oh my God, I'm covered in red welts". We had a couple,
- 18 but there was never like I went to school and anybody
- 19 would say, "What's that?"
- 20 Q. You mention in your statement something about a dog
- 21 lead.
- 22 A. Oh yes. We were all watching -- Barnardo's had a ball
- 23 every year -- I presume it was to raise money, I don't
- 24 know -- and we were all watching out the window and she
- 25 caught us, but all she had was a dog's lead and she

- 1 whacked us. That was the worst. That hurt.
- 2 Q. So you were leaning out the window and she came up from
3 behind.
- 4 A. From behind us and whacked me and [REDACTED]
- 5 Q. And whereabouts on your body did she whack you?
- 6 A. The bum. Because we were at the window.
- 7 Q. What was this dog lead like?
- 8 A. It was just a handle and then a metal bit, a metal chain
9 with a leather handle. It was only the handle, only the
10 leather -- she didn't hit you with the metal. And that
11 was only if she was caught -- we were doing something
12 and she caught us red-handed and she happened to have
13 Bruce's lead on.
- 14 Q. And that was the lead of Bruce, the dog?
- 15 A. My golden lab, yes. He was beautiful.
- 16 Q. Was there any other form of punishment that was given to
17 children if they weren't behaving?
- 18 A. I think you could get your pocket money stopped. You
19 could be grounded for a night. But Mamaji was pretty
20 consistent. We knew what you had to do to avoid
21 trouble. It was a bit more awkward when the couple
22 came, Mr and Mrs Barron.
- 23 Q. I'll ask you about them in a minute. But was there
24 something which you mentioned to me the other day but
25 isn't in your statement about standing in the hall

- 1 in the dark?
- 2 A. Yes. If you misbehaved in the evening, in your bedroom,
3 a staff member would take you out and you had to go down
4 the stairs and stand -- it was called -- by the shoe
5 cupboard. You had to stand there in the dark for as
6 long as the staff member deemed fit. Then you'd go back
7 up to bed when she did.
- 8 Q. So you might be there until the staff member went to
9 bed?
- 10 A. Yes, about 11.
- 11 Q. What would be the longest time, do you think?
- 12 A. A couple of hours maybe.
- 13 Q. What would you be wearing at that time?
- 14 A. Pyjamas and dressing gown.
- 15 Q. Did you have anything on your feet?
- 16 A. Yes, you'd have slippers.
- 17 Q. Was the hall heated or was it cold?
- 18 A. It was cold. The whole home was heated where we were --
19 it wasn't -- it was all right. Because even if you were
20 on punishment, the other kids could talk to you over the
21 bannister. So we always had somebody to talk to because
22 the bannister looked straight down. So yes, I didn't
23 like it. I still don't like pitch black now.
- 24 Q. You mentioned the Barrons. What was the Barrons'
25 approach to punishment if a child wasn't behaving?

1 A. They were more likely to dig at you. He never gave, as
2 far as I -- he never did corporal punishment on me.
3 I would have remembered. But if you did something
4 wrong, he'd make snide remarks for weeks and dig at you
5 and make you -- oh ...

6 Q. What kind of remarks?

7 A. I remember one of the boys took some money and he
8 thought I had it, and I don't know why, but it involved
9 bringing Dr Methwin down, and he sorted it out and said
10 I had stolen this money and I hadn't. Then he kept
11 saying, "Don't leave your handbag, Joan, you know we've
12 got a thief in the house", things like that. As it
13 happened, it turned out to be a boy called [REDACTED] that
14 did it. He apologised and I said, "I don't want your
15 apology, you ruined my Christmas, you ruined my
16 birthday, I don't want your apology, go away".

17 Q. So the different approach with the matron, Mamaji, you
18 got the cane and then it was all finished?

19 A. Not always the cane, sometimes you were just sent to
20 bed. But only if you were naughty-naughty.

21 Q. But you were punished and then it was finished?

22 A. It was never brought up again.

23 Q. But with the Barrons, it wasn't physical, but it went on
24 and on?

25 A. Mm-hm, yes. I hated them. I didn't like the Barrons at

1 all. Not for anything they had done, simply because
2 they weren't Mamaji. And Barnardo's didn't give us
3 a good enough explanation as to why Mamaji was
4 disappearing and this couple were coming. We didn't get
5 a proper explanation, so one day our mother was there,
6 the next day we've got -- it seemed like to me -- God
7 knows, they'd probably been there half a dozen times but
8 I didn't see them -- and then we had this couple in
9 charge of us and I just hated them instantly, but only
10 because they weren't what I considered to be ... She
11 was to all intents and purposes my mother. They didn't
12 explain.

13 Barnardo's would do things and not give you a reason
14 for it. The only time I came to any trouble was when
15 somebody at Drumsheugh Gardens decided that this was
16 best for me, whether it be Mrs Trembath, Mrs Fraser. If
17 they made a decision for me, it invariably went wrong.
18 But I can't blame Mamaji for what Drumsheugh Gardens
19 told us she had to do.

20 Q. So when you're talking about that, there were decisions
21 being made about you --

22 A. Yes.

23 Q. -- by people perhaps higher up in the hierarchy in
24 Barnardo's?

25 A. Who didn't even know me, were making assumptions --

1 decisions on reports, you know, made from other people.

2 [REDACTED]

3 [REDACTED]

4 [REDACTED]

5 Q. At any point in time when these kind of decisions were
6 being made, were you ever asked what you would like?

7 A. No, never.

8 Q. And from what you're saying, am I correct in my
9 understanding that no one actually sat down and
10 explained to you what was going to happen and why it was
11 happening?

12 A. No, that's right. You did as you were told, you didn't
13 ask questions.

14 Q. On a more positive note, you tell us about Christmases
15 and birthdays at Balcary. What were they like?

16 A. They were absolutely brilliant. I loved our
17 Christmases, especially Christmas. It's hard to explain
18 to people. The older children would get up
19 Christmas Morning and we would actually go and give the
20 staff breakfast in bed. Then we'd have to go and get
21 changed and then the staff would do everything for us.

22 It was just wonderful, Christmas Day. [REDACTED]

23 [REDACTED] I had a gift at the
24 breakfast table from my friends [REDACTED]

25 [REDACTED]

1 Then Mamaji would take us to the girls' playroom and
2 all the little ones would be singing "Why Are We
3 Waiting?" and then we'd all go in and -- we had
4 wonderful Christmases. We had really good Christmases
5 with Mamaji.

6 Q. Were the children's birthdays marked and celebrated as
7 well?

8 A. Yes. [REDACTED]
9 [REDACTED] yes, we were pretty spoilt.

10 Q. [REDACTED]

11

12

13 A. [REDACTED]

14 [REDACTED] you were allowed to get your friend
15 a little thing. So nobody sat at the breakfast table
16 with nothing.

17 Q. Moving on to when you left Balcary, you tell us that you
18 left Balcary when you were aged about 15.

19 A. 15 years and 3 months.

20 Q. What arrangements did Barnardo's make for you when you
21 left Balcary?

22 A. I'm trying to think. Oh, I was put in a hostel called
23 Martin House in Edinburgh, which I -- I liked that,
24 I liked it there. Barnardo's wanted to update, they
25 wanted me to take a couple of O levels because I'd left

1 school, so I did that. Then the lady who was my
2 teacher, she wanted to foster me, but by that time I had
3 left the home, you know, Mrs Petrie. That was, as you
4 know -- I was sent to Dr Guthrie's, an approved school,
5 a D school as I believe it was called now. I was there
6 for a while and I obviously didn't comply very well.
7 I was put in the padded cell, actually. I was so angry
8 I kicked the door off its hinges, jumped out of the
9 window and ran away, so I was sent to Greenock.

10 Q. You were sent to where?

11 A. Greenock.

12 Q. And that was a borstal in Greenock?

13 A. That was the borstal, not the prison. No, I weren't in
14 prison, no.

15 Q. So how far, from your experience, did Barnardo's prepare
16 you for being an adult on your own?

17 A. Absolutely nothing. They kitted us out with beautiful
18 clothes, we had two of everything, and I had a welfare
19 officer, as they were called then, Mrs Fraser, who
20 I never saw, Gladys. And that was it, you were out.
21 Here's your clothes, you got a job, you got a house,
22 that was it.

23 Q. So did they help you get a job and find somewhere to
24 live?

25 A. Oh yes, yes, of course.

- 1 Q. But in terms of, for example, finance, did you get any
2 guidance on how to budget, for example?
- 3 A. No. I learnt that in the hostel, once I'd paid my digs,
4 I had to do my own money. So yeah, in the hostel, by
5 the time I'd left the home, I had learned it myself.
- 6 Q. So you were self-taught by experience after you left?
- 7 A. Yes.
- 8 Q. How supported did you feel by Barnardo's after you left
9 Balcary as a young person, still in your teens?
- 10 A. Not at all. No. I knew I had a welfare officer.
11 I only ever saw her if I was in trouble. You know what
12 I mean? Not like social workers today, who actually see
13 their clients occasionally.
- 14 Q. You tell us a little about your life after care. In
15 general terms you've worked all your life in care
16 services yourself?
- 17 A. I have indeed. I tried a little bit -- I was trained to
18 do secretarial work and I hated it, so I went into
19 caring, yes. I prefer actually to be in the caring
20 profession.
- 21 Q. I think there was a point at which you qualified as
22 a nursery nurse.
- 23 A. That was with the military, yes. I was in Germany and
24 I was going on the nursery, so I had to take my NNEB,
25 which I did, no problem. When the kids were young, it

- 1 was perfect, because I got all the holidays.
- 2 Q. At page 0098 of your statement, you tell us about when
3 you applied to get records from Barnardo's. Can you
4 tell us what happened then?
- 5 A. I applied to get my records and they said I could only
6 have them if a social worker brought them, which
7 I didn't understand. I said, "Why have I got to have
8 a social worker? It's my life, I lived it, I remember
9 it". As it was, I was glad because a lot of the things
10 were totally, to my mind, inaccurate.
- 11 Q. The records you were given, were there quite a lot of
12 them or --
- 13 A. A few pages.
- 14 Q. When you say a few pages, roughly how many?
- 15 A. Round about six, maybe, both sides. It wasn't a huge
16 pack.
- 17 Q. So the records you were given were about six pages with
18 writing on both sides?
- 19 A. Yes, I should imagine they were pretty well condensed.
- 20 Q. So you weren't given your full records that might run to
21 several hundred pages or anything like that?
- 22 A. No, no.
- 23 Q. You tell us that you ripped them up and threw them out?
- 24 A. Yes, I did indeed because they weren't correct.
- 25 Q. If you did want to see your fuller records, because it

1 sounds like you've only got a very small section of the
2 records when you got them, Barnardo's say that they are
3 very happy to help you get your full records and
4 certainly they will fast-track that for you, if that's
5 something you would like to do.

6 A. I actually thought about it last night and I thought,
7 why? What do I need them for? Let Barnardo's keep
8 them. I don't want them.

9 Q. Okay. Fair enough.

10 A. Simple as that.

11 Q. Moving on to, finally, the impact that your experiences
12 in Balcary and in care generally had upon you, you tell
13 us in your statement that Balcary was a good experience
14 on the whole --

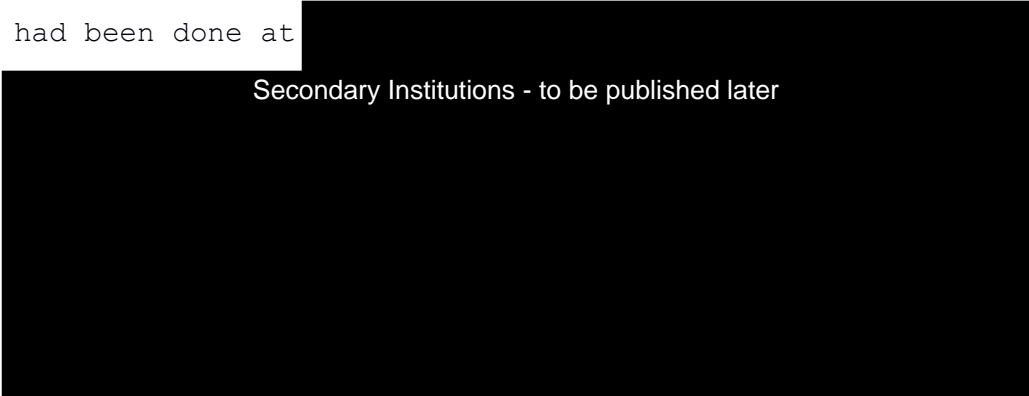
15 A. Yes.

16 Q. -- but there were some concerns that you tell us about
17 at paragraph 80 on page 0996.

18 A. Yes. Barnardo's -- I loved it, I loved Barnardo's,
19 I was very happy. Any experience I had outside the home
20 hadn't been a happy one, so obviously it made, when
21 I got back to the home, made life much more happy. But
22 although I came back ... (Pause). It still makes me
23 angry that not one person picked up that there was
24 something wrong with me, [REDACTED] Not one
25 member of staff. They just said I came back and I was

1 a really naughty child.

2 I just suppose back then they weren't trained the
3 way they are now. They just couldn't see what damage
4 had been done at

5  Secondary Institutions - to be published later
6
7
8
9

10 Q. What could have been a very positive experience perhaps
11 in Balcary was very much marred throughout your time
12 there -- your feelings about the matter is that
13 Barnardo's were unable to see a child, as you say in
14 your statement, who was damaged and they were just
15 telling you that you were naughty?

16 A. That's right. But then I suppose the staff weren't
17 trained back then like they are now, as they are now.

18 MS RATTRAY: Ronnie, I don't have any further questions for
19 you, and it just remains for me to thank you very much
20 for helping us today. I'll just wait and see in case
21 anyone else has any questions for you.

22 LADY SMITH: Are there any outstanding applications for
23 questions of this witness?

24 MR JACKSON: Not from me, thank you, my Lady.

25 LADY SMITH: Ronnie, those are all the questions we have for

1 you today. It just remains for me to thank you for
2 engaging with the inquiry, both by providing your
3 written statement and coming along this morning to talk
4 about your recollection of your time in the Barnardo's
5 home at Balcary. It's very helpful for me to have heard
6 that and I'm now able to let you go and relieve you of
7 the anxiety of the microphone. Thank you very much.

8 A. Thank you.

9 (The witness withdrew)

10 LADY SMITH: Ms Rattray.

11 MS RATTRAY: Yes, my Lady. There is another oral witness.

12 I don't know whether maybe a short break for handover or
13 whether this would be an appropriate time to take an
14 early break.

15 LADY SMITH: We could take the morning break now if that
16 suited everybody. We'll take the break now.

17 (11.03 am)

18 (A short break)

19 (11.23 am)

20 LADY SMITH: Yes, Mr Peoples.

21 MR PEOPLES: My Lady, the next witness is an applicant who
22 wishes to remain anonymous and she has chosen the
23 pseudonym "Cathy".

24 "CATHY" (sworn)

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

1 It's important that we hear you through the microphone,
2 so if you can make sure you're in a good position for
3 that, please, Cathy.

4 A. Okay.

5 LADY SMITH: I will let you know if you drift away from it,
6 don't worry.

7 I'll hand over to Mr Peoples and he will explain
8 what happens next.

9 Questions from MR PEOPLES

10 MR PEOPLES: Good morning, Cathy.

11 A. Good morning.

12 Q. You'll see in front of you there's a red folder and that
13 contains a copy of a written statement that you've
14 provided to the inquiry.

15 A. Yes.

16 Q. It's there for your own use, and when I'm asking you
17 some questions about the statement today, feel free to
18 use that folder to assist you at any point. You will
19 also see your statement or anything else that might come
20 up as a document on the screen in front of you, and
21 you're free to use that as well if it's easier to do so.
22 Just you choose what suits best.

23 A. Yes.

24 Q. Before I begin, I'm going to give the reference number
25 that we give to your statement for the benefit of the

1 transcript and that is WIT.001.002.0835.

2 Cathy, could I ask you to look at the red folder and
3 turn to the final page. Can you confirm for me that
4 you have signed your statement on page 0851?

5 A. Yes.

6 Q. Can you also confirm that you have no objection to your
7 witness statement being published as part of your
8 evidence to the inquiry?

9 A. Yes.

10 Q. And can you also confirm that you believe the facts
11 stated in your witness statement are true?

12 A. Yes.

13 Q. With that introduction, can I ask you perhaps to turn to
14 the first page of the statement, which will also come on
15 the screen, page 0835. First of all, can I ask you to
16 confirm that you were born in the year 1958? I don't
17 need your precise birthday.

18 A. Yes.

19 Q. In your statement you begin by telling us a little bit
20 about your young life before going into care and I think
21 you tell us that really much of what's contained
22 there is based on what you've read in any files or from
23 information that you've been told by others; is that
24 correct?

25 A. Yes.

1 Q. I think the reason for that is that, as you tell us at
2 paragraph 5 on the first page, page 0835, you were taken
3 into care at a very early age when you were about 1 year
4 of age.

5 A. Yes.

6 Q. We have read the statement and we can read the details
7 for ourselves, but I think you tell us about your
8 parents and say that you didn't have any brothers or
9 sisters; is that correct?

10 A. That's correct.

11 Q. But that you lived in the Edinburgh area before you went
12 into care; is that correct?

13 A. Yes.

14 Q. That's your understanding?

15 A. Yes.

16 Q. You tell us basically the reason that you were taken
17 into care was because the view was taken that you were
18 being neglected at home.

19 A. Yes.

20 Q. And indeed, I think you tell us that your father spent
21 time in prison; that's something you learned, I think.

22 A. Yes.

23 Q. If we move on to the second page of your statement at
24 page 0836, Cathy, you tell us that the first place that
25 you were taken when you were put into care was

1 Ravelrig House at Balerno.

2 A. Yes.

3 Q. I think you very frankly tell us you don't have any real
4 memories of that stay; is that right?

5 A. That's right, apart from opening the toy cupboard.

6 Q. That's the big memory you have from that time?

7 A. Yes.

8 Q. I think you do tell us that at some point -- and this
9 may be something you found out or maybe it's something
10 you remember -- your father did take you out of care
11 during that early period and that you spent a little
12 time away from care and you were then put back into
13 care; is that correct?

14 A. That's correct.

15 Q. I'm not going to spend too much time on the detail of
16 that, but I understand that from records or information
17 we've been shown by Barnardo's that you were admitted to
18 Ravelrig on [REDACTED] 1961, so that would accord with what
19 you remember or what you've been told; is that correct?

20 A. Yes.

21 Q. The information suggests that, on [REDACTED] 1961, you
22 were removed from Ravelrig by your father and that you
23 must have spent just less than two months in his care
24 before you were taken to another care setting, which
25 I think is known as Roberts House in Harrogate in

1 Yorkshire. I don't know if you have any memory of that.

2 A. I have no recollection of that whatsoever, no.

3 Q. I can tell you from the records the indications are that

4 you were taken to Roberts House in Harrogate on

5 [REDACTED] 1962. About a month later, on

6 [REDACTED] 1962, it appears you were removed again and

7 I assume that would be by your father.

8 A. Mm-hm, yes.

9 Q. It appears that, maybe for just over two months, you

10 were in his care or in his custody. You will have no

11 memory of that, I take it?

12 A. No, but I can quite believe it, yes.

13 Q. And it does appear that on [REDACTED] 1963, you returned

14 to Roberts House in Harrogate for a short period, just

15 a matter of days, and that on [REDACTED] of 1963, you were

16 taken to Balcary Children's Home in Hawick.

17 A. Yes.

18 Q. And you would have been aged 4 at that stage?

19 A. Yes.

20 Q. It appears that for most of the time until you reached

21 the age of 14 you stayed at Balcary House. There were

22 periods when you seem to have been staying somewhere

23 else, but only for a short time; is that correct? Or

24 do you have -- because I have something indicating that

25 there was, on [REDACTED] 1973 -- sorry, I think I've got

1 that wrong. I think it was [REDACTED] 1973 when you were
2 14, you stayed until then?

3 A. Yes.

4 Q. And then you went to a place in Whitley Bay; is that
5 right?

6 A. Yes.

7 Q. Sorry, I'm confusing you there.

8 Really, that was the extent of your time in care --

9 A. Yes.

10 Q. -- with Barnardo's at Balcary?

11 A. Yes.

12 Q. I think you'll probably tell us a little bit about what
13 happened after you left Balcary in 1973, but basically,
14 from the age of 4 to 14, you were staying in Hawick at
15 Balcary House; is that right?

16 A. Yes, that's right.

17 Q. You give us a description of Balcary House in your
18 statement. Can I tell you that we have already heard
19 some evidence about Balcary House, so if I don't take
20 you through all of the detail of that, it's not because
21 we're not interested in reading it, but we've heard some
22 of this description before and it seems what you tell us
23 accords very much with what we've heard already about
24 the layout.

25 A. That's absolutely fine.

1 Q. What you do tell us is in your case, at paragraph 12 on
2 page 0836, you tell us that the bedrooms in the house
3 were upstairs and that you shared a bedroom with four
4 other girls; is that right?

5 A. Yes.

6 Q. What you tell us is that the girls you shared with were
7 all much the same age as you.

8 A. Yes.

9 Q. Did that remain the position as you got older --

10 A. Yes.

11 Q. -- in Balcary, that you tended to stay in accommodation
12 or dormitories with girls of the same age?

13 A. Yes.

14 Q. Just to help me, we've heard some evidence that there
15 was a section in the house for younger girls called the
16 elves; does that mean anything to you?

17 A. Pass.

18 Q. Okay.

19 A. Sorry, it must have been after I had left.

20 Q. Maybe it was -- well, no, I think in fact the person
21 that told us about this was there before you.

22 LADY SMITH: It could have been before you were there.

23 MR PEOPLES: It might have been before your time.

24 A. Sorry, no.

25 LADY SMITH: There's no need to apologise. It's all right.

- 1 A. It just doesn't ring a bell.
- 2 LADY SMITH: That's fine.
- 3 MR PEOPLES: I think I know what the answer to this is, but
4 you wouldn't be aware of a section for what's called the
5 pixies, which would be for boys?
- 6 A. No.
- 7 Q. Or robins for intermediate children, children above
8 a certain age? You don't remember those names?
- 9 A. Are you not going back to Brownies or Guides?
- 10 LADY SMITH: We have canvassed that already this morning.
11 Your memory is absolutely right. Brownie packs would
12 divide girls into sixes and habitually used names like
13 pixies, fairies, robins.
- 14 A. In Balcary, I can't remember ...
- 15 MR PEOPLES: Okay. As we understand it, there was
16 accommodation on the upper floors for girls and boys of
17 different ages.
- 18 A. Yes.
- 19 Q. I think we have also heard that perhaps on the top floor
20 there were rooms for older children, older girls,
21 including single rooms; do you remember that?
- 22 A. I don't think there is another floor that goes right up
23 to the sewing room and the bathroom is further up.
- 24 Q. Don't worry. At any rate, as you got older, you would
25 continue to stay with girls of the same age?

- 1 A. Yes.
- 2 Q. Did you stay in the same place -- did you sleep in the
3 same place from ages 4 to 14?
- 4 A. Yes.
- 5 Q. Okay. What you tell us is that when you arrived at
6 Balcary on [REDACTED] 1963, at the age of 4, the person in
7 charge or house mother or matron, whatever term was then
8 used, was a Miss O'Brien.
- 9 A. Yes.
- 10 Q. You remember her being called Mamaji?
- 11 A. Mamaji.
- 12 Q. You understand that that's because it was a term that
13 would be used in India to refer to a mother figure?
- 14 A. Yes.
- 15 Q. What you tell us is that you recall that Mamaji,
16 Miss O'Brien, was there for maybe a couple of years and
17 then she was replaced by a couple called Joan and
18 Stuart Barron.
- 19 A. Yes.
- 20 Q. So if you're right on the sort of time frame, can we
21 take it that perhaps Mamaji left maybe around 1965 or
22 1966?
- 23 A. Yes, and she went to live in Weensland.
- 24 Q. To where?
- 25 A. Weensland. She had a house in Weensland.

- 1 Q. Where is that?
- 2 A. In Hawick; we used to go and visit her.
- 3 Q. Did she retire?
- 4 A. Yes.
- 5 Q. And she went to live in her own house in Hawick?
- 6 A. Yes.
- 7 Q. What age was she when she retired or left Balcary? Was
8 she quite old?
- 9 A. You know something. You could never put an age on
10 Mamaji because she always looked the same from the time
11 that I started to the time that she left. She was just
12 one of those women that never seemed to age. She was
13 just always the same.
- 14 Q. I think you tell us -- and I think we've heard a little
15 bit about this already -- that some of the older
16 children were less accepting of Mr and Mrs Barron --
- 17 A. Yes.
- 18 Q. -- because they felt that Mamaji had been pushed out and
19 replaced by this new couple. Was that the sense you had
20 at the time?
- 21 A. Yes. I think it was just because they had been there
22 longer than what I had and they were much fonder of
23 Mamaji because they'd known her longer. That was all.
- 24 Q. You, of course, were quite young and you hadn't had that
25 much --

- 1 A. No, but I was still very attached to her.
- 2 Q. You attempt to describe her for us at paragraph 17,
3 I think, as best you can at page 0837. You describe her
4 as a spinster who was old-fashioned in her ways,
5 although you add that she was lovely and the sort of
6 person that you would warm to and a person you could
7 speak to.
- 8 A. Yes.
- 9 Q. Just help me with this. What were you trying to convey
10 by saying she was old-fashioned in her ways?
- 11 A. Well, the Barrons just put more -- what can I say? They
12 put more routine into Balcary than what Mamaji did.
13 There was a lot of changes happening when the Barrons
14 came, there was more structure, whereas Mamaji stuck to
15 the same old things. That's what I meant by that.
- 16 Q. Could you give us some examples?
- 17 A. I can't think.
- 18 Q. Your recollection is that things did change considerably
19 when the Barrons took over?
- 20 A. Yes.
- 21 Q. So there was --
- 22 A. It was more family-orientated. That's all I can say.
23 There was more acceptance of like children coming from
24 outside to come in for tea, visit for tea, and you could
25 interact with the children outside more. It was more

- 1 acceptable.
- 2 Q. When the Barrons came?
- 3 A. Yes.
- 4 Q. I'll maybe just ask you this at this stage. Was there
- 5 any difference in the way that children were disciplined
- 6 or punished if they misbehaved between Mamaji's time and
- 7 the Barrons'?
- 8 A. I was far too young to remember that in the time to give
- 9 you an answer for that. But from just what I've been
- 10 told from the other children, no, there wasn't an awful
- 11 lot of difference.
- 12 Q. Because we have heard some evidence that Mamaji -- and
- 13 she has been described in very favourable terms by those
- 14 who have given this evidence, but from time to time she
- 15 would punish children by using a cane and, from time to
- 16 time, a dog lead belonging to a dog called Bruce.
- 17 A. What? No.
- 18 Q. You never saw that?
- 19 A. No, I didn't.
- 20 Q. So it didn't happen to you?
- 21 A. No, definitely not.
- 22 Q. You were quite young. Were you a difficult child when
- 23 you were young or did you tend to just behave as much as
- 24 you could when you were 4 to 6?
- 25 A. I wouldn't say I was difficult, but I wouldn't say I was

- 1 an angel either.
- 2 Q. At any rate, you didn't have any experience of Mamaji
3 using a cane or using a dog lead?
- 4 A. No, I find that absolutely appalling. No, I don't.
- 5 Q. You'd find it appalling if she did do that?
- 6 A. Yes -- well, appalling that it's even been mentioned, to
7 be honest with you, that they're saying that it's
8 happened because that's the first I've ever heard of
9 something like that.
- 10 Q. Okay. When she was still in charge at Balcary, do you
11 ever remember children being made to stand in the hall
12 in darkness because they were misbehaving in their
13 bedroom by talking or doing other things?
- 14 A. No.
- 15 Q. I suppose you wouldn't necessarily be in the same place
16 as some of the older girls at that time.
- 17 A. That's true, yes. That is true.
- 18 Q. And you might have been fast asleep when they were
19 talking and getting into bother for doing so.
- 20 A. Yes, but we still all talked, though, so this is just
21 a surprise to me, basically.
- 22 Q. Okay. Can I maybe just ask you at this stage about the
23 general routine at Balcary in your time between 1963 and
24 1973.
- 25 Mealtimes. Were there times when children didn't

- 1 like the food that was served up?
- 2 A. Oh, many a time. I hated, absolutely hated cauliflower
3 cheese, hated macaroni cheese, but there was another
4 choice.
- 5 Q. So in your time there was a choice?
- 6 A. Yes, you got a choice of two main courses.
- 7 Q. Right. What age would you be when you remember this
8 choice being given to children who didn't like something
9 like macaroni cheese or whatever? Was that something
10 that the Barrons introduced?
- 11 A. Yes. I would say. Because I can't remember mealtimes
12 when Mamaji was there. It's too long. I was only
13 4 years old when Mamaji was there, 4 up to 6 years old,
14 say.
- 15 Q. Do you have any recollection at mealtimes of children
16 being re-served the same meal --
- 17 A. No.
- 18 Q. -- if they didn't eat what was put in front of them?
- 19 A. No.
- 20 Q. But I think you're telling us that to a large extent
21 much of your time in care at Balcary was when the
22 Barrons were in charge?
- 23 A. Yes.
- 24 Q. Is that right?
- 25 A. Yes.

- 1 Q. So a lot of what you remember about the routine is
2 probably the routine that the Barrons introduced?
- 3 A. Yes.
- 4 Q. You mentioned some of the dislikes that you had, some of
5 the things you didn't like, and you mentioned macaroni
6 cheese, for example. We've been told, at least, at some
7 point in the life of Balcary, the staple meal on
8 a Thursday was liver. Was that the case in your time?
- 9 A. Possibly. I mean, it varied, because the cook tried to
10 make it different for different weeks, so you weren't
11 getting chicken every Monday, so she would try and vary
12 it so that you weren't getting sick of the same thing,
13 "Oh, I'm going to home to get chicken tonight".
- 14 Q. Would you generally get fish on a Friday? It's not an
15 uncommon thing.
- 16 A. Possibly, yes.
- 17 Q. You say the cook would vary it. Do you remember who the
18 cook was?
- 19 A. Yes, it was Ma Summers.
- 20 Q. You don't remember a Mrs Hutchinson or Hutchy?
- 21 A. No. I only remember Ma Summers.
- 22 Q. Is she the person who would be introducing or making the
23 meals --
- 24 A. Yes.
- 25 Q. -- and providing you with these choices?

- 1 A. Yes.
- 2 Q. Just on another matter at this stage, when you got up
3 in the morning at Balcary, before breakfast were
4 children expected to do any form of chores in your time?
- 5 A. Yes, we would make our bed, put our nightie or pyjamas
6 underneath the pillow. That's about the extent that
7 I was asked to do anyway.
- 8 Q. Would that have been the case from the time you arrived
9 until the time you left?
- 10 A. Mm-hm.
- 11 Q. So you didn't have to do things like polishing or
12 cleaning?
- 13 A. Not in the mornings, no.
- 14 Q. Did you have to do it at all?
- 15 A. The polishing and whatnot, yes, you were expected to
16 keep your place in your bedroom, like your cabinet or
17 whatnot, clean and tidy. But generally, they had
18 cleaners in to do the cleaning.
- 19 Q. Would you ever have to polish stairs or floors even in
20 your bedroom?
- 21 A. No. No, they had carpets so we didn't need to polish.
- 22 Q. You say there would be cleaners who would be doing these
23 things?
- 24 A. Yes.
- 25 Q. What about children who wet the bed? Was that something

1 that you have a memory of?

2 A. Yes. I was a bed-wetter.

3 Q. Can you tell us what the situation was with people who
4 wet the bed? How did the staff respond?

5 A. As far as I can remember, the only thing I didn't like
6 and felt uncomfortable about when I wet the bed was that
7 we had to carry our own sheets down the main stairs to
8 the laundry. But apart from that, I wasn't ridiculed or
9 punished in any way for wetting the bed. It was
10 acceptable of children in care, of why they were there
11 and the upset from being there, basically.

12 Q. But the one thing you did have to do -- and I think you
13 tell us about this at paragraph 77 on page 0847 -- that
14 if a person wet the bed, and you were in that category,
15 that they would strip the beds and carry them down the
16 main stairs themselves. And as you say:

17 "We weren't ridiculed or punished."

18 But you said it was a humiliating experience?

19 A. Yes. But you've got to remember, we were young then and
20 we didn't want other people out of other dormitories or
21 rooms to see us, "Oh, they've wet the bed tonight", and
22 they're you're getting ridiculed all the way up to
23 school sort of thing. Not that it really happened, but
24 you just have that feeling of insecurity that somebody
25 was going to say something.

1 Q. Is that not maybe the point? That if anyone had given
2 it a moment's thought, they might have said, would it
3 not be better for a member of staff to discreetly change
4 the bed, take the sheets away in the normal way, and not
5 ask you to take them down to wherever they were going?

6 A. Yes, but you've got to remember there's quite a few
7 children that had wet the bed. So it was easier for the
8 child to strip the bed and get it off the bed as quick
9 as possible so the bed wasn't getting -- you know --
10 smelly and whatnot. And then after it, the staff can go
11 and clean the bed.

12 Q. I'm not wanting to debate it, but would it not have been
13 possible then for that reason to take the wet sheets off
14 as soon as possible if you knew you had wet the bed, but
15 then leave them beside the bed for the staff to gather
16 up and take them to the laundry?

17 A. Yes, in hindsight, yes, but it was possibly just the
18 norm then.

19 Q. What happened to sheets that were used that weren't
20 soiled or wet because someone had wet the bed? What
21 happened normally to sheets children had on their beds?
22 Were they changed by staff?

23 A. They weren't changed every day, but to be honest with
24 you, I can't remember changing a bed --

25 Q. No, exactly.

- 1 A. -- right?
- 2 Q. But children who didn't wet the bed didn't have to take
3 sheets downstairs --
- 4 A. Yes.
- 5 Q. -- at any point?
- 6 A. Mm-hm.
- 7 Q. Is that the case?
- 8 A. Yes.
- 9 Q. So there was a difference of treatment between those who
10 wet the bed and those who didn't?
- 11 A. Yes.
- 12 Q. Was that the case in both -- well, I don't know whether
13 you're talking about both Mamaji's time and the
14 Barrons', that you had to take these sheets downstairs.
15 Is it your memory you had to do it in both periods?
- 16 A. I just remember having to do it. I can't remember on
17 whose time it was. I just remember that I had to carry
18 my sheets down the stairs.
- 19 Q. Can you remember what sort of age you might have been
20 then? You went in at age 4.
- 21 A. It wouldn't be then. I'd be older than that.
- 22 Q. Were you at school?
- 23 A. Yes.
- 24 Q. Were you at high school?
- 25 A. No. I'd stopped by then.

1 Q. But it might be between starting school and reaching the
2 age to go to high school?

3 A. Yes.

4 Q. That might suggest that if Mamaji was only there for
5 a couple of years, that probably this was happening more
6 in the Barrons' time.

7 A. Possibly, yes.

8 Q. You've described what sort of person Mamaji was;
9 do you have a description for the Barrons?

10 A. Yes.

11 Q. What sort of persons were they?

12 A. Mr Barron -- I look on him and still have great fond
13 memories of both Joan and Stuart Barron. But Mr Barron
14 most of the time was the one that had dealings with us.
15 I think Joan tended to take -- sorry, Mrs Barron tended
16 to take a back step and would do the organisation of the
17 home, like organising the trips to Sunday school, trips
18 to go to school and that sort of thing, uniforms. And
19 Mr Barron would do all the activities because he was
20 driving the minibus and suchlike to take us to holiday.

21 But to sum it up, I wrote a wee note after I'd heard
22 that Mr Barron had died, and I think on Mr Barron as the
23 father of Balcary and I always will do. He taught us
24 right from wrong and I wouldn't be sitting here today if
25 it hadn't been for Joan and Stuart Barron. I could have

- 1 easily took a very different step.
- 2 Q. So to you, because you were a young child when you went
3 into Balcary, and indeed you didn't really have much
4 contact with your natural parents --
- 5 A. No.
- 6 Q. -- during your childhood, did you very much see the
7 Barrons as almost like a mother and father to you?
- 8 A. Yes.
- 9 Q. And I suppose some of the older girls, when you arrived,
10 saw Mamaji as a mother to them?
- 11 A. Yes.
- 12 Q. And saw the Barrons as replacing their mother?
- 13 A. Yes.
- 14 Q. Is that maybe what explained the different attitude
15 towards the Barrons when they came in?
- 16 A. Yes.
- 17 Q. You give us on page 0838, going back to paragraph 19 of
18 your statement -- I think you estimate that in your time
19 there was perhaps something around about 18 boys and
20 girls. Is that during the whole period you were there,
21 you think it was around that number?
- 22 A. Yes, but you have got to remember that was just an
23 estimate.
- 24 Q. Absolutely.
- 25 A. That was just a rough estimate.

1 Q. The age range could be from quite young, 4 in your case,
2 in 1963, to up to around 16 years of age?

3 A. Yes. Yes, if my memory serves me right, it was mostly
4 16 that they left Balcary in those days.

5 Q. So far as your experience of it is concerned, at
6 paragraph 20, I think you make the point that in your
7 case, it was the only place you ever felt you were at --
8 it was your home?

9 A. I still do, yes.

10 Q. And that you've remained in touch with some of the
11 people that you knew there?

12 A. Yes.

13 Q. Is that right?

14 A. Yes.

15 Q. And did you keep in touch with the Barrons as well?

16 A. Yes, Christmas cards every year.

17 Q. I think Mr Barron passed away quite recently.

18 A. Yes.

19 Q. And to you, you say:

20 "It didn't feel like an institution. It was always
21 [your] home."

22 A. Yes.

23 Q. "There was always happiness and laughter."

24 So that was your experience of the time you had
25 there, it was a good experience?

- 1 A. Yes.
- 2 Q. You tell us a little bit about schooling when you were
3 there. On page 0840, at paragraph 36, you tell us about
4 the arrangements for your schooling. I think this was
5 a home where the children attended local schools;
6 is that right?
- 7 A. Yes.
- 8 Q. Balcary children went to local schools, either a local
9 primary -- in your case I think it was Drumlanrig -- and
10 they would go to the local high school. Was that in
11 Hawick?
- 12 A. Yes.
- 13 Q. And I think in your case, at least, as you tell us, you
14 enjoyed school?
- 15 A. Yes.
- 16 Q. So far as leisure time is concerned, you've got
17 a section of your statement that deals with that and
18 basically, I think you -- on page 0841, paragraphs 40
19 and following -- you tell us a bit about that. You had
20 time for free time --
- 21 A. Yes.
- 22 Q. -- after school after you had done your homework and you
23 said you were pretty much allowed to do whatever you
24 wanted.
- 25 A. Yes.

- 1 Q. So it was quite a relaxed regime, was it, in that way?
- 2 A. Yes.
- 3 Q. There was structure you said that the Barrons had, but
4 you had plenty of free time and were allowed to do what
5 you liked?
- 6 A. We were allowed to play, yes, watch television, play
7 games, play on the bikes outside. We used to play a lot
8 of football on the lawn, even the girls. In those days,
9 even girls played football, cricket.
- 10 Q. I think you tell us -- and we have heard some evidence
11 about this already -- at page 0842 there were various
12 animals and pets that were kept around the place,
13 including the donkey --
- 14 A. Yes, Dobby the donkey.
- 15 Q. -- and rabbits and things like that, pets for the
16 children to look after; is that right?
- 17 A. Yes.
- 18 Q. And you tell us that you'd get your pocket money each
19 Saturday -- and I don't know whether this was you or
20 everyone -- but you'd go to the pictures for the
21 Saturday matinée; is that right?
- 22 A. Yes.
- 23 Q. Is that something you did throughout your whole time?
- 24 A. Yes.
- 25 Q. You tell us that during the summer there would be trips,

- 1 including an annual holiday to North Berwick to --
2 I think it's called Glasclune House. Do you remember
3 that?
- 4 A. Yes.
- 5 Q. As we understand it, the children from Balcary and the
6 staff from Balcary would go to Glasclune House and the
7 children and staff from Glasclune House would come to
8 Balcary. Is that what would happen, a swap?
- 9 A. Yes.
- 10 Q. You say Balcary had its own minibus and you'd go on
11 various trips to various places in the Borders and
12 elsewhere; is that right?
- 13 A. Yes.
- 14 Q. Again, you tell us about birthdays and Christmases and
15 other celebrations like Easter on page 0843, and I think
16 essentially, and we can read it all for ourselves, these
17 were occasions that were well celebrated --
- 18 A. Yes.
- 19 Q. -- and happy times for you and others; is that right?
- 20 A. Yes.
- 21 Q. You do tell us -- and this isn't something we've heard
22 about -- in paragraph 56 that at Balcary there would be
23 an annual garden fête.
- 24 A. Yes.
- 25 Q. And that was seen as a kind of fund-raising activity.

- 1 Who would come to that particular event?
- 2 A. Oh, nearly the whole town would come to it. We'd have
3 a little mini-railway down beside Dobby's field. And
4 there would be a dignitary that would come, a lady
5 somebody, and the youngest child would give her a posy
6 of flowers and the photo was in the paper. Just to
7 raise awareness of Barnardo's, I think.
- 8 Q. Was there a special visitor each year?
- 9 A. Yes.
- 10 Q. They would choose someone as a special guest and they
11 would come?
- 12 A. Yes.
- 13 Q. So far as having your own possessions is concerned, you
14 tell us about that on page 0844. If you got presents,
15 they were yours to keep and you had places to keep them
16 in your bedroom; is that right?
- 17 A. Yes.
- 18 Q. So far as relations with other children is concerned,
19 you say you were just like a large group of brothers and
20 sisters?
- 21 A. Yes; we still feel that way.
- 22 Q. One point you make, because sometimes we hear that
23 children of people in charge of homes don't always treat
24 their own children the same way that they treat the
25 children that they're caring for, you say that, in the

- 1 case of the Barrons, their son was treated very much
2 like any other child at Balcary; is that right?
- 3 A. Yes, he was. He wasn't made to feel any more higher or
4 better than any one of us. Yes, far enough, he might
5 have got a brand new bike for Christmas and we maybe had
6 to make do with a hand me down or a second-hand one, but
7 that's acceptable, you know.
- 8 Q. You never felt that he was treated more specially in any
9 significant way?
- 10 A. No.
- 11 Q. So far as visitors were concerned, do you have any
12 memory of any official visitors coming to Balcary when
13 you were there between 1963 and 1973, official visitors
14 in the sense of either people from Barnardo's or people
15 from other places like local authorities or things?
- 16 A. Are you talking of maybe like the social workers?
- 17 Q. You do mention two social workers called Sylvia Massey
18 and Betty Trembath. My understanding is they were
19 employed by Barnardo's --
- 20 A. Yes.
- 21 Q. -- and one was based in Edinburgh, I think,
22 Betty Trembath.
- 23 A. Both of them were.
- 24 Q. Was it Sylvia Massey as well?
- 25 A. As far as I am aware. She still lives there, yes.

1 Q. Would these be people who would come to see you from
2 time to time?

3 A. Yes, they would come, obviously to see how you were and
4 get an update of how you were doing at school,
5 et cetera. They had time to speak to you. If you had
6 any worries or something was happening that you didn't
7 like, you could tell them. I always opened up to them,
8 they were fine.

9 Q. I think you tell us at paragraph 65, dealing with those
10 two individuals at page 0845, that you would sometimes
11 go to the Edinburgh office for the reason that your
12 father was, for part of the time, in prison. So you
13 were getting visits through the office --

14 A. Yes.

15 Q. -- at the office?

16 A. Yes.

17 Q. Is that right?

18 A. Yes.

19 Q. And you also say at paragraph 66, and I just want to
20 clarify a point with you:

21 "My social workers would come and visit me."

22 Do you mean Sylvia Massey and Betty Trembath?

23 A. Yes.

24 Q. Do you remember local authority social workers or anyone
25 of that kind coming to see you at any time?

- 1 A. No. As far as I was aware, Betty Trembath and
2 Sylvia Massey were my designated social workers.
- 3 Q. So you don't have a memory of any other social worker
4 or --
- 5 A. No. The only other social worker I have a memory of,
6 but that was Sylvia Carrington, but that was when I had
7 left Balcary and went to Newcastle.
- 8 Q. I was more thinking of the time at Balcary. You don't
9 have a memory of anyone other than Sylvia Massey or
10 Betty Trembath coming to see you in the capacity of
11 being a social worker?
- 12 A. No.
- 13 Q. While you did see your father, and you saw him in
14 Edinburgh, how much contact did you have with your
15 father or mother while you were at Balcary?
- 16 A. I had more contact with my father when he wasn't in
17 prison than I did with my mother. Oh, there was many
18 a time I'd come running down the stairs once I'd got in
19 contact with my mother again and it was decided that
20 I would go for weekends to Newcastle and I would come
21 running down the stairs on a Friday night with my little
22 suitcase, only to be met at the bottom of the stairs by
23 Mrs Barron, saying, "Sorry, your mum's not well, you
24 can't go". In other words, she was going out for the
25 weekend. Simple as. And that was the type of person

- 1 that she was, basically.
- 2 Q. So did you have many weekends with your mother?
- 3 A. Well, I had some.
- 4 Q. But not many?
- 5 A. Not many no.
- 6 Q. Were they happy times?
- 7 A. They were all right. It was something new. Right? You
- 8 got away out of Balcary. It was exciting. I was at an
- 9 age where I wanted more adventure. Right? And going to
- 10 Newcastle was better than going to the park.
- 11 Q. What age would you be when you starting to go for these
- 12 weekends to see your mother?
- 13 A. I'd be 12 up until I was 14 because I moved to
- 14 Whitley Bay.
- 15 Q. So it was basically when you got to almost teenage years
- 16 you'd go and see her?
- 17 A. Yes.
- 18 Q. You have told us and we know that you went into Ravelrig
- 19 initially at a very young age and that you have said
- 20 already that in a sense Mr and Mrs Barron were really
- 21 your mum and dad so far as you were concerned.
- 22 A. Mm-hm.
- 23 Q. How then did you view your mother? Because you knew she
- 24 was your mother, I take it.
- 25 A. Yes, I know, but it was strange because I hadn't had any

1 contact with her for years. It was just the deputy,
2 Margaret, was doing my hair, checking my hair, and asked
3 me one day, "Would you like to get in contact with your
4 mother again?" Obviously, they'd had this conversation
5 with the Barrons and I just said yes.

6 Q. But before that conversation took place -- and you're
7 suggesting that this contact started around the age of
8 12 or thereabouts -- between the ages of 4 and 12, had
9 there been much discussion by the staff at Balcary about
10 your parents or your mother, that you had a mother and
11 she was away?

12 A. Oh, yes, I knew I had a mother, I knew, knew that she
13 existed, but apart from that, nothing really. But I did
14 read in my files that she did come and see me at some
15 point, but I can't remember.

16 Q. Do you feel that you got at the time an explanation why,
17 unlike some children, you weren't with your mother or
18 your father? Did anyone sit down with you before the
19 age of 12 and say, "Look, Cathy, when need to speak to
20 you about these matters and explain why you're at
21 Balcary rather than with your natural mother or father"?

22 A. No, that just wasn't the done thing then.

23 Q. It wasn't done?

24 A. No, I don't think I would have been able to accept it
25 then anyway, to be quite honest with you.

- 1 Q. But it didn't happen?
- 2 A. No.
- 3 Q. You do say in relation to family contact at paragraph 60
4 on page 0844 that you feel that Balcary and the staff
5 did encourage family contact.
- 6 A. Yes, that was after Margaret had asked me if I wanted to
7 get in contact with my mother. But in the meantime,
8 I had also been having contact with my dad, quite
9 regular.
- 10 Q. So I take it then that those who did get visitors,
11 whether their parents or family members, those visitors
12 were welcomed by the staff at Balcary? There was no
13 issues or difficulties of people visiting. Is that --
- 14 A. That's true -- unless they turned up drunk, like my dad
15 did most of the time.
- 16 Q. I can understand why there might be a problem there, but
17 generally speaking there wasn't any -- they didn't
18 discourage family contact or visitors?
- 19 A. No.
- 20 Q. Is that the way it was in your time as far as you can
21 recall?
- 22 A. Yes.
- 23 Q. I don't need to dwell on this, but you tell us --
24 obviously, you deal with healthcare generally at
25 paragraph 67 on page 0845. You're very complimentary of

1 the local GP. I take it he was one of the local doctors
2 in Hawick?

3 A. Yes. He was the best GP that I have ever known.

4 Q. You say he was someone you could open up to, and I think
5 you have said you could speak to the Barrons as well.

6 A. Yes.

7 Q. Were you the sort of child who had problems that you
8 needed to open up to them about, major problems?

9 A. No, no. The only thing that I would be talking to
10 Dr McAllister about would be my epilepsy or something
11 like that. There was nothing else that I needed to sort
12 of open up about.

13 Q. And I think the reason you talk about the epilepsy --
14 and there's some records that you had a serious accident
15 when you were 11 years of age, is that right, a road
16 accident?

17 A. Yes.

18 Q. And as a legacy of that, I think you had epilepsy,
19 post-accident epilepsy, and seizures, which was an
20 occurrence after that --

21 A. Yes.

22 Q. -- after that accident; is that correct?

23 A. Yes.

24 Q. You have a section in your statement at page 0847
25 dealing with the issue of discipline. I think this

1 section is really relating to discipline when Mr and
2 Mrs Barron were in charge because I think you've got
3 very little memory of Mamaji and indeed you don't have
4 any memory of her using a cane?

5 A. Aye, because she never disciplined me. For me she was
6 just somebody you could cuddle up to and she would read
7 you a story, you know?

8 Q. Can you remember her reading you a story and --

9 A. Oh yes. Mm-hm.

10 Q. So what sort of punishments or discipline was used
11 in the time that the Barrons were in charge?

12 A. Well, for a kick-off, you got your pocket money either
13 stopped or halved or whatever. You might have to do the
14 weekly shoe polish or the weekly peeling of the
15 potatoes.

16 Q. What would that involved, shoe polishing? How many
17 shoes would you have to polish?

18 A. You would have to polish quite a few shoes, I think. It
19 all depended on what the punishment was for.

20 Q. Was it just the shoes of the other children or the shoes
21 of everyone?

22 A. That would just be the shoes of the other children.

23 Q. And that was a form of punishment?

24 A. Well, it could be. But then -- or you were sent to your
25 room if it was necessary to do that.

- 1 Q. So far as the peeling potatoes, was that something if
2 you were -- it wasn't something you were routinely
3 doing, is it?
- 4 A. Yes, actually, I did used to peel the potatoes, but
5 mind, we had a machine to do it, we didn't do it all by
6 hand.
- 7 Q. And you say you might be sent to your room and I think
8 you tell us at paragraph 78 your pocket money or some of
9 it might be withheld or you might not go on a planned
10 trip?
- 11 A. That's right.
- 12 Q. And you say if it was really bad Mr Barron would give
13 you what you describe as a "good, stern ticking-off"?
- 14 A. Yes.
- 15 Q. And you say it was enough to get a glare from
16 Mrs Barron.
- 17 A. Yes.
- 18 Q. What was so significant about Mrs Barron's glare then?
- 19 A. It's the same with mine, with my children, I'm afraid.
20 It's just that look: they knew they couldn't go any
21 further, not to push it too far.
- 22 Q. What do you think would have happened if you had?
- 23 A. I have no idea.
- 24 Q. You just didn't want to try?
- 25 A. I never tried.

1 Q. One thing you do tell us is that you didn't in your time
2 see anyone being physically punished by --

3 A. No.

4 Q. -- by the staff; is that right?

5 A. That's right.

6 Q. You told us obviously that Mr Barron, to your knowledge,
7 didn't use -- or indeed others -- physical or corporal
8 punishment. Was he the sort of person that might make
9 remarks to people if they were misbehaving or if he
10 thought they'd done something wrong or something bad?

11 A. I can give you one example.

12 Q. Please do.

13 A. He was taking me to see my dad in the minibus and we had
14 stopped and he was putting petrol in the van and
15 I thought, being a child, you think, what's that
16 handbrake for? I let the handbrake off, didn't I?
17 Well, he give me one ticking-off for that, and you knew
18 that you weren't going to do it again.

19 Q. Was it all over in a flash?

20 A. Oh yes. Once you got told off, that was it. You got
21 the ticking-off and then everything just went back to
22 normal.

23 Q. Because we heard some evidence to the effect that maybe
24 he didn't let something go always, he might have carried
25 on with remarks if someone had crossed him or done

1 something wrong.

2 A. Well, not in my case.

3 Q. Was that the case in others?

4 A. But then I didn't see anybody else getting punished by
5 Mr Barron, that's what I'm trying to say.

6 Q. So all you can say is in your experience he didn't dwell
7 on it?

8 A. No, or bear a grudge.

9 Q. But you can't talk for others because you don't know?

10 A. No, that's right.

11 Q. That's very fair.

12 You say that you ran away once, is that right --

13 A. Mm.

14 Q. -- when you were around 12 or 13 years of age. So that
15 wouldn't be long before you left Balcary?

16 A. That's right.

17 Q. So things must have got to a certain stage to cause you
18 to do that. What was the problem?

19 A. The boys. They were teasing me. I was at a vulnerable
20 age. A little girl doesn't like to get her hair pulled
21 or pigtails pulled or somebody coming in saying that
22 their dad's in the paper and he's in the jail. You
23 don't want the other children knowing that. Of course,
24 they were older boys and they were hearing it from their
25 pals at school. And it just got to a head and, I'm

1 sorry, once I get something in my head, that's it, I'm
2 away.

3 Q. You found this treatment quite hurtful to the point that
4 you ran away?

5 A. Yes.

6 Q. And I think you stayed away for quite a while, didn't
7 you? A couple of months.

8 A. Yes, I wasn't going to come back.

9 Q. Were the staff aware that you were being treated in this
10 way by the boys particularly?

11 A. I think most of the time they said, "Try and ignore it
12 because it makes it worse", for them that's doing it to
13 you, you know? You know what I mean? So I would, to an
14 extent, just ignore it rather than keep going and
15 telling on them and whatnot.

16 Q. But you did -- obviously by telling the staff that this
17 was happening, they were made aware of it?

18 A. Yes. But sometimes it would be a simple thing like
19 changing the channel on the TV and the staff would be
20 in the room, right, and the boys would get
21 a ticking-off, but that was it. But a girl of that age,
22 you're taking everything to heart.

23 Q. I appreciate you're saying you were quite sensitive to
24 the remarks, but it rather suggests, if you got to the
25 point for the first time and the only time that you

1 decided to run away, that it was more than just changing
2 the channels.

3 A. Aye, it was pulling my hair.

4 Q. Yes, and remarks about your family?

5 A. Yes.

6 Q. And you told the staff about this?

7 A. Yes.

8 Q. And their advice was just to ignore it?

9 A. Yes.

10 Q. They didn't give you any other advice or do anything
11 else to perhaps stop the behaviour?

12 A. They would get the boys in and tell them off, yes.

13 Q. It didn't seem to work because you ran away.

14 A. I'm sorry, I'll only take so much and then I'm off.

15 Q. Okay. You hadn't considered doing that up to that point
16 of time, if I can put it that way?

17 A. That's true. I think I was just that age.

18 Q. Maybe the staff should have appreciated that you were at
19 that age.

20 A. They should have, yes.

21 Q. You say that when you did come back after being away for
22 a time -- where did you go, by the way, when you ran
23 away?

24 A. When I ran away, I met one of my good friends at the
25 bottom of the road beside the church, just along from

1 Balcary, because I had no money, I was crying, she gave
2 me 50p pence for the bus to Edinburgh. I got on the bus
3 to Edinburgh and went to my grandad's. He put me on the
4 train to Newcastle, where I went to my mother's.

5 Q. And you stayed with her for a time?

6 A. Yes.

7 LADY SMITH: So this was the age that you'd had a notion to
8 reconnect with your mother as well?

9 A. I'd already had weekends with her, yes.

10 MR PEOPLES: You say that when you got back to Balcary, in
11 paragraph 84 on page 0848, that you were spoken to, but
12 you didn't get into trouble and they were more keen to
13 find out why you had run away and how they could change
14 the situation. Now, it appears that things did change.

15 A. Sorry, what paragraph?

16 LADY SMITH: It's paragraph 84 that you're being asked
17 about.

18 MR PEOPLES: I don't need the name of the individual you
19 were being tormented by, it's blacked out, but do you
20 see what you say there? You say:

21 "When [you] got back [you] didn't get into trouble.
22 They discussed how they could change the situation and
23 [you weren't] tormented by this individual again."

24 A. Yes, that's true.

25 Q. So they obviously managed to work out a strategy by

1 then --

2 A. Mm-hm.

3 Q. -- to deal with the situation?

4 A. Yes.

5 Q. I suppose it begs the question why they didn't manage to

6 do that before. You don't know?

7 A. I can't answer that question, I'm sorry.

8 LADY SMITH: Have you any memory of who it was that spoke to

9 you when you got back? The picture that you paint of

10 you going back to Balcary is you weren't in trouble --

11 A. Mm-hm.

12 LADY SMITH: -- but somebody had a chat with you and wanted

13 to know what the problem was and what could be done to

14 sort things out. Is that what you're trying to get

15 across here?

16 A. Yes.

17 LADY SMITH: Do you remember who it was that you spoke to?

18 A. To be honest, I can't remember. I would only assume

19 that it would be the social workers, one of the

20 social workers, and Mr and Mrs Barron.

21 LADY SMITH: And the Barrons probably, yes. Either or both

22 of them may have talked to you?

23 A. Mm-hm.

24 LADY SMITH: And you didn't feel you were in trouble?

25 A. No.

1 LADY SMITH: And you didn't feel you were being punished for
2 having run away?

3 A. No, definitely not.

4 MR PEOPLES: I can maybe put a document in front of you on
5 this matter to see if we can work out when this may have
6 happened as well: BAR.001.004.9373.

7 This bears to be a staff meeting about you on
8 [REDACTED] 1973, which was less than a month before you
9 left Balcary. A number of people are present,
10 including: Mr and Mrs Barron; residential staff, they're
11 not identified; Sylvia Massey, who you have mentioned;
12 a Dr Little, I don't know if that rings a bell; and also
13 a Mary Macleod, who seems to have been a social worker.
14 Does that name mean anything to you?

15 A. Mary Macleod? No, it doesn't. And I don't know this
16 Stephen Little either.

17 Q. No. But it does appear that around this time, there is
18 this discussion at this meeting, and indeed there are
19 other entries around that time, about you running away.
20 I think this is to do with you running away.

21 A. Right. This must have been discussed after I'd come
22 back, I take it?

23 Q. Well, we can see. We'll have a look at it. It says
24 that:

25 "The residential staff indicate the boys have been

1 on at Cathy for some time. Cathy usually coped with
2 this by ignoring them. On this occasion the older boys
3 managed to get the group to support them, saying they
4 hated her and wishing she was away from Balcaray. When
5 Cathy said she was going to leave, [some named
6 individual] followed her down the drive saying 'good
7 riddance'."

8 And then there's a rhetorical question, I suspect,
9 "Why?" And there are various possibilities there.

10 A. Can I get a copy of this?

11 Q. I'm sure that Barnardo's will be happy to give you
12 a copy of this. It's a note about this matter and it
13 does seem to see the situation as one of what they would
14 describe as persecution. Two thirds of the way down,
15 three quarters of the way down, there's a question:

16 "How do we deal with the situation?"

17 LADY SMITH: Cathy, the print isn't very good on screen.

18 Would it be helpful if we read through it just now if
19 you haven't seen this before?

20 A. Okay.

21 LADY SMITH: We can do that. Mr Peoples has obviously had
22 more time than you to work out exactly what all the
23 timing is.

24 MR PEOPLES: I read out the paragraph at the beginning which
25 ends with "good riddance", which was just describing a

1 situation that is being discussed, and then there's
2 a question:

3 "Why? 1, both her parents want her. 2, she is more
4 self-contained and independent. 3, answers back to any
5 of the boys. 4, never let's on she cares. 5, Cathy
6 gets staff support."

7 Then it goes on. It's not a very clear narrative,
8 but it goes on:

9 "Scapegoating for last two months or so. It used to
10 be [and there's a name blanked out]. The extent of the
11 persecution on this occasion may have been precipitated
12 by: 1, general insecurity due to Barrons being away and
13 Richard Thornton being new deputy ..."

14 A. That name doesn't ring a bell to me.

15 Q. "... 2, Cathy being a promised a weekend in Newcastle [I
16 think that's with your mother] and rail strike
17 preventing this; 3, two new children admitted."

18 Then there seems to be some contribution from
19 Dr Little:

20 "Scapegoating is putting your bad feelings onto
21 someone else trying to push them out."

22 Then:

23 "[An individual] is doing this to Cathy."

24 And then there's the question:

25 "How do we deal with situation? Anxiety over Cathy

1 not having pills."

2 A. That's for my epilepsy.

3 Q. "Cathy needing reassurance that she is wanted."

4 It rather suggests that you're away from Balcary
5 when this discussion is taking place if there's concern
6 about not having pills because if you were back, there
7 wouldn't be the same concern:

8 "Mary Macleod [who's the social worker I mentioned
9 earlier] and Sylvia Massey [who you knew] to go down to
10 Newcastle to see Cathy and find out how she is feeling."

11 So clearly this discussion is taking place when
12 you're still away from Balcary.

13 A. Right, okay.

14 Q. And it says:

15 "Do we involve boys in getting Cathy back?"

16 And then it says:

17 "Richard Thornton [this is someone described as the
18 new deputy] and Mary Macleod to see [three boys] and
19 talk about their feelings. Cathy must come back.
20 Leaving Balcary in this way after living there for
21 8 years, very destructive for her. Terribly difficult
22 for the boys if she does not come back. How cope with
23 guilt?"

24 Do you see that?

25 A. Mm-hm.

1 Q. If we go over the page to page 9364, there's another
2 entry, which seems to be the day before this meeting on
3 [REDACTED]. This might date the time that you left. The
4 entry reads:

5 "Cathy ran away from Balcary as a result of being
6 mercilessly taunted by the three oldest boys. She went
7 away to Edinburgh having borrowed money for the bus fare
8 from a friend. Cathy left without taking her medication
9 for her fits."

10 And then there's another entry on [REDACTED] 1973
11 that:

12 "[I think this is your mother] rang up to say that
13 Cathy had arrived safely in Newcastle, having borrowed
14 the fare from her grandfather in Edinburgh. Her mother
15 said that she was still very upset and would not
16 consider returning to Balcary."

17 Does that bring back any memories?

18 A. Oh, it's as clear as a bell.

19 Q. It seems quite a serious matter, for you at least, if
20 you left even without your medication.

21 A. Then, it was just a stupid, stupid act of a child that
22 was immature, basically.

23 Q. Your act?

24 A. Yes.

25 Q. What about the act of the three boys?

1 A. Yes, but it's like being at school, you get taunted, you
2 live with it, you are taunting them one minute and then
3 you're playing in the playground with them the next
4 minute.

5 Q. That's maybe your interpretation. It does seem as if
6 the professionals at that time saw it rather differently
7 and rather more serious than that, that you can have
8 teasing --

9 A. I think it's because I'm older now and I can look at it
10 in a different way to what I did then.

11 LADY SMITH: It's interesting, though, isn't it, that the
12 professionals recognised that this should be regarded as
13 you having been mercilessly taunted? So they understood
14 why you'd been driven away, but they needed to work out
15 how to do the right thing for you, so as to not let you
16 leave your life like that, leave Balcary like that.

17 A. But to be honest, they didn't have an option. I just
18 took off out that door. Nobody knew. I was down that
19 drive before they could turn round.

20 LADY SMITH: With the boys shouting "good riddance" at you?

21 A. Well, I can't remember that part, to be honest.

22 MR PEOPLES: The only thing that strikes me is maybe, it may
23 just be a coincidence, but the dates I gave you earlier,
24 you left Balcary for the final time, according to the
25 records, on [REDACTED] 1973, which is three weeks after

1 this meetings.

2 What I'm beginning to wonder is: did you ever go

3 back?

4 A. Yes, I did. I remember going back.

5 LADY SMITH: You say that at paragraph 83, I think, don't

6 you?

7 A. Yes.

8 LADY SMITH: You were persuaded by your social worker to go

9 back --

10 A. Yes.

11 LADY SMITH: -- but it looks like it must have been for

12 a pretty short period.

13 A. Mm-hm. Yes.

14 LADY SMITH: But you finished your time properly and left

15 Balcary properly, not by running away?

16 A. Yes.

17 MR PEOPLES: But in the event, you did leave on [REDACTED].

18 Can you tell us what then was the reason for that

19 happening around that time? You were 14.

20 A. Sorry, say that again?

21 Q. Why did you leave then? If it was nothing to do with

22 running away or --

23 A. That was to go to Whitley Bay.

24 Q. You were 14. Why did you leave at that time? Because

25 you said some children stayed until 16 or 15.

- 1 A. Because I wanted to be nearer my mother --
- 2 Q. Right.
- 3 A. -- in Newcastle. Because she was finding it more
- 4 difficult for me to go for weekends from Hawick. And
- 5 it would have been easier if I was in Whitley Bay to be
- 6 closer to her to have more contact with her on the
- 7 understanding that I would eventually be going to stay
- 8 with her permanently.
- 9 Q. Had there been discussion before this move to
- 10 Whitley Bay? Had there been discussion involving you?
- 11 A. Yes.
- 12 Q. That there was planning for you to go back to live with
- 13 your mother?
- 14 A. Oh yes, that was brought on by me, that I wanted to go.
- 15 Q. So by the time that you ran away, you were already
- 16 saying to Balcary "I want to go home and live
- 17 permanently with my mother"?
- 18 A. Mm-hm.
- 19 Q. Yes.
- 20 A. Mm-hm, yes.
- 21 Q. But it just happens at the same time these boys started
- 22 to say things to you that caused you to run away --
- 23 A. Yes.
- 24 Q. -- quite quickly without your medication?
- 25 A. Yes.

1 Q. So even if the boys hadn't said this, are you telling us
2 that you think you would have left to go to Whitley Bay
3 in any event?

4 A. Oh yes.

5 Q. Okay.

6 One thing you do tell us about Balcary -- because
7 you've got quite a positive view about your time there,
8 I think you've said. You've mentioned perhaps the
9 bed-wetting so far, but one point you do make at
10 paragraph 85 on page 0848 is that when people left, one
11 minute they were there, the next minute they were gone,
12 and that's something you recall?

13 A. Mm-hm.

14 Q. There didn't seem to be a process of people who were
15 brothers and sisters saying goodbye to each other or
16 preparing for one leaving?

17 A. Yes, I know. But I just ... I can't remember there
18 ever being like a sort of get-together for somebody that
19 was going to leave.

20 Q. I suppose --

21 A. You know what I mean? It just didn't happen, not that
22 I can recall.

23 Q. I suppose in a family setting, one would expect that if
24 your brother or sister was going away, leaving home,
25 there might be some preparation and discussion.

- 1 A. Yes. Well, that wasn't up to me.
- 2 Q. That didn't happen?
- 3 A. Not as far as I'm aware, no.
- 4 Q. Just on the question of leaving, you do say at
5 paragraph 86, it was really your decision, you wanted to
6 leave Balcary and move to live with your mother --
- 7 A. Mm.
- 8 Q. -- albeit you hadn't had a huge amount of contact until
9 more recent -- well, until you were 12, 13, whatever.
10 So it very much looks as if you wanted to go but maybe
11 Mrs Barron had reservations. Did you sense that at the
12 time?
- 13 A. No, I didn't, but to be honest, she was right. That's
14 all I can say.
- 15 Q. I just wonder if she voiced any reservations.
- 16 A. Not that I'm aware of.
- 17 Q. As you say on page 0849, you did move away from Balcary,
18 but you spent a period of time in this hostel in
19 Whitley Bay. And I think I can tell you that from the
20 records we've seen, you went to the hostel from Balcary
21 on [REDACTED] 1973 and you stayed there until about
22 [REDACTED] 1973, so it was about five months. Does
23 that accord with your recollection, you were there for
24 a while?
- 25 A. Yes.

1 Q. And would you be having contact with your mother during
2 that time?

3 A. Yes.

4 Q. Then it says -- and I think the expression they use in
5 Barnardo's is called restoration -- that there was
6 a restoration on [REDACTED] 1973 when you were,
7 I think, restored to your mum in Newcastle. So you went
8 to live with her at that time. That, I think, accords
9 with your recollection?

10 A. Yes.

11 LADY SMITH: Was the Whitley Bay home a Barnardo's place as
12 well?

13 A. As far as I'm aware. As far as I can remember.

14 LADY SMITH: That would make sense: it would be easiest for
15 them to move you to a Barnardo's institution.

16 A. Yes.

17 MR PEOPLES: So they transferred you to this hostel aged 14
18 and you were there for five months while they were
19 trying to make the transition from living at Balcary to
20 going to stay with your mother on a permanent basis;
21 is that right?

22 A. Yes.

23 Q. And indeed, you mention that at that time you had
24 a social worker who was based in Newcastle. Would that
25 have been a local authority social worker?

- 1 A. Yes.
- 2 Q. Then you say that really, it was quite a short stay with
3 your mother in the event because you say you stayed with
4 your mother and her boyfriend until she died when you
5 were 15 years of age; is that right?
- 6 A. Yes.
- 7 Q. But what you do say as well is that Mrs Barron turned up
8 in Newcastle after your mother's funeral to see you were
9 okay.
- 10 A. She turned up on the day of the funeral.
- 11 Q. I see. So she was aware of what had happened and she
12 took the trouble to come and see you --
- 13 A. Yes.
- 14 Q. -- on the day of the funeral? And did she continue in
15 contact with you after that?
- 16 A. Yes, regularly.
- 17 Q. Then I think things got a bit better, I think, because
18 you say that after your mother died, when you were still
19 16, you went back to Hawick, which I suppose would
20 really be the place you saw as your home town.
- 21 A. Yes.
- 22 Q. You met your husband, you got a job, and you had four
23 children together.
- 24 A. Yes.
- 25 Q. When it comes to impact, on page 0850, I suppose you

1 make a good point and a bad point about life at Balcary.

2 In paragraph 94 I think you tell us one of the
3 things that I think was one of the good things about it,
4 which was -- just tell us in your own words what point
5 you're making there.

6 A. Well, basically, there should be a structure in any
7 family. There's got to be rules and regulations or it
8 just doesn't work. Everybody knew their place,
9 everybody knew what they were supposed to be doing.
10 They knew when it was playtime, they knew when they had
11 to be quiet, they knew when it was mealtime and they
12 knew when it was bedtime.

13 Q. And I think you say if you were to compare it with what
14 you think might have happened had you been with your mum
15 and dad throughout your childhood, it would have been
16 a rather different experience and you might have gone in
17 a different direction?

18 A. Definitely.

19 Q. But you do make another point, which I think is a
20 significant point in your case, and you say that:

21 "The one thing that was missing from the Balcary
22 experience was the love, the kisses, the cuddles that
23 kids would get from your parents."

24 That would suggest that you didn't get enough of
25 that?

1 A. Well, you wouldn't expect that in a children's home.
2 They're there to care for you and look after you, not to
3 be kissing you and cuddling you, because that would now
4 be termed as child abuse if they started to do that in
5 a children's home.

6 Q. Again, there's no doubt appropriate affection and warmth
7 and caring can involve physical contact and, equally,
8 you're quite right, there's inappropriate contact and it
9 may be difficult sometimes for staff to give affection
10 because of the risks that it might be misconstrued. But
11 you're saying that that was something that was missing?

12 A. Yes, which you would expect to find from your own
13 parents.

14 Q. Yes. And if they were trying to replicate a family home
15 so far as possible, one thing they failed to do was to
16 provide that aspect of family life, the kisses, the
17 cuddles, the parental kisses, cuddles, the appropriate
18 affection?

19 A. I think there's boundaries that have to be expected from
20 the care sector when they're caring for so many
21 children. I just don't think it would be appropriate
22 for them to be kissing and cuddling all the children.

23 Q. I suppose that these days, professionals might say that
24 one thing that children, whether in care or not in care,
25 should have is the love of a family and that that may

- 1 involve some of the things that you missed out on.
- 2 A. Yes, but you can't replicate that love of a family if
- 3 you're not with that family.
- 4 Q. Well, maybe I can leave this point on the basis that you
- 5 do feel, though, that what was missing has had an impact
- 6 on you and the way your relationship has been with your
- 7 own children.
- 8 A. Definitely, but I don't think it was the Barrons or the
- 9 staff in Balcary that should have been showing me the
- 10 kisses and cuddles.
- 11 Q. Who should have been?
- 12 A. My mum and dad.
- 13 Q. And if they weren't there for any reason?
- 14 A. Well, they should have been there. That's all I'm
- 15 saying.
- 16 Q. But what about the children who lost their parents in an
- 17 accident, for example, that had to go to Balcary --
- 18 A. But we're talking about me, not the other children.
- 19 Q. I know, but I'm trying to see the general point you're
- 20 making. They might not be able to get that; what would
- 21 you say to that?
- 22 A. I just can't answer that. I'm just answering for
- 23 myself.
- 24 Q. I see that. I think you tell us why you came forward at
- 25 paragraph 98 and you felt it was important to give your

1 MR PEOPLES: My Lady, the next witness is going to be taken
2 by Ms Rattray. I do wonder if it's maybe best, rather
3 than simply teeing it up, to have an early finish and
4 start earlier after lunch if that suits.

5 LADY SMITH: We could do that.

6 MR PEOPLES: I think we have to. I should have actually
7 checked. I think the witness has been asked to come for
8 2.

9 LADY SMITH: We're slightly ahead. It's an afternoon
10 witness, she will have been asked for come for 1.30.

11 MR PEOPLES: So we should adjourn at this point.

12 LADY SMITH: And sit again at 1.45?

13 MR PEOPLES: If the witness is ready.

14 LADY SMITH: We'll try and do that.

15 (12.43 pm)

16 (The lunch adjournment)

17 (1.45 pm)

18 LADY SMITH: Yes, Ms Rattray.

19 MS RATTRAY: The next witness today is an applicant who
20 wishes to remain anonymous and is using the pseudonym
21 "Dianne".

22 "DIANNE" (affirmed)

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

24 That microphone sounds as though it's in the right
25 position; we need to pick you up through the microphone

1 all the time.

2 I think there should be a red file beside you, which
3 will be retrieved and handed over in just a moment.

4 Is that right, there's a red file for this witness?

5 MS RATTRAY: Yes.

6 LADY SMITH: Here it is.

7 Ms Rattray will explain what she wants you to do
8 with that. I'll hand over to her now.

9 Questions from MS RATTRAY

10 MS RATTRAY: Good afternoon, Dianne.

11 A. Good afternoon.

12 Q. In the red folder in front of you you're going to find
13 a paper copy of the statement that you've given to the
14 inquiry and a copy of your statement will also come up
15 on the screen in front of you. When I'm asking you
16 questions based on your statement, hopefully the
17 relevant parts will come on the screen in front of you,
18 but failing that, if you prefer to use the paper copy,
19 that's fine as well.

20 A. Yes.

21 Q. Your statement has been given a reference which I'll say
22 for our purposes, which is WIT.001.002.0912.

23 What I'm going to ask you, first of all, is if you
24 could go to the back page of the paper copy and that
25 should be 0936. Can you confirm that you have signed

- 1 your statement?
- 2 A. Yes, I did.
- 3 Q. And do we see from the paragraph above that,
4 paragraph 114, that you have no objection to your
5 witness statement being published as part of the
6 evidence to the inquiry and you believe the facts stated
7 in your witness statement are true?
- 8 A. Yes. That's fine.
- 9 Q. Could you please confirm the year of your birth?
10 I don't need the date or the month, simply the year.
- 11 A. The year was 1952.
- 12 Q. At the start of your statement you tell us about your
13 life before your experience of care. Just by way of an
14 overview, you can confirm that your background was your
15 parents were divorced, you and your two brothers were
16 living with your mum, your mum suffered from terrible
17 depression.
- 18 A. Yes.
- 19 Q. And during your childhood, you moved around a lot with
20 your mum, but ultimately your mum was struggling to cope
21 with the care of you and your brothers because of her
22 mental health problems?
- 23 A. Yes.
- 24 Q. Then one evening, when you think you were about aged 9
25 or 10, she dropped you and your brothers off with some

- 1 suitcases at the Children's Department?
- 2 A. Yes.
- 3 Q. And that's a memory that stays with you, I understand.
- 4 A. Yes, it's something that I'll never forget. Just that
- 5 little old brown suitcase, a little square one, and
- 6 obviously we didn't know where we were going because
- 7 we were young, and it was just quite upsetting,
- 8 I suppose, taking -- dropping you off somewhere and that
- 9 was it, no goodbyes or anything.
- 10 Q. At first you were put into a Church of Scotland home,
- 11 you're not clear which one it was --
- 12 A. I'm not sure which one.
- 13 Q. -- but for a short period, before you were placed in
- 14 Balcary. And you think you stayed there on and off
- 15 until you were about 14?
- 16 A. Yes.
- 17 Q. We have the records, your records from Balcary. The
- 18 Barnardo's records tell us that you were admitted to
- 19 Balcary in Hawick on [REDACTED] 1962, so you would have
- 20 been aged about 10.
- 21 A. Yes.
- 22 Q. Their language is you were restored to your mother, but
- 23 I think you simply went back to your mum at that stage
- 24 on [REDACTED] 1963. Then you came back to Balcary on
- 25 [REDACTED] 1963. And then you were removed by your mum

1 on [REDACTED] 1963. You returned to Balcary on
2 [REDACTED] 1964. You and stayed there until you were
3 discharged on [REDACTED] 1966 when you would have been
4 about 14.

5 A. 14, yes.

6 Q. As you say, you were in there on and off between the
7 ages of 10 and 14. Just to begin with, what did that
8 sort of in and out of care -- the whole fact that it
9 wasn't stable, you kept changing --

10 A. It was quite an emotional thing, actually. Because
11 obviously, you're going into a home and then you're
12 coming back home and you are thinking, God, what's
13 happening now, sort of thing. And you know, I remember
14 on Saturdays, people, either mums or dads, used to come
15 and visit their children and I remember my mum being
16 away in America, and I used to sit at the window and get
17 quite upset because obviously nobody was coming to visit
18 me.

19 You're a child and obviously you don't understand
20 why this is happening because obviously nobody ever sat
21 and talked to you about these things. You just sort of
22 were a child and you just had to get on with things and
23 do your own thing, sort of thing.

24 Yes, it was quite a difficult time, very, yes.

25 Q. When you were in Balcary, you were out of Balcary, and

1 also your time moving around quite a bit before you went
2 to Balcary, were you going to different schools?

3 A. Yes, I was in different schools, quite a lot of schools.
4 I think that's why I'm not very intellectual nowadays,
5 but I get by.

6 No, I think it's quite difficult going from one
7 school to another. You don't really get into like
8 a normal child would go to one school and that's it for
9 so long and then they move to their secondary school and
10 so on. But I was in so many different schools it was
11 really hard for me to settle into schools, I always
12 found. And then there was the times that my mum kept me
13 out of school to look after her, which I think she had
14 trouble with, yes.

15 Q. So that generally affected your ability to keep up with
16 classwork?

17 A. Yes, definitely.

18 Q. At your statement, initially you tell us a bit of
19 background of Balcary. I think you tell us that there
20 were about 30 children there, aged between 3 and
21 15 years?

22 A. About that, yes.

23 Q. And there were boys and girls?

24 A. Yes, a mix.

25 Q. When you were placed there, were your brothers with you?

1 A. No, no.

2 Q. Why was that?

3 A. Well, when my younger brother, [REDACTED], he was knocked
4 down when he was about 5, and he had to go into
5 [REDACTED] into that school, because I think it
6 was a bit more special needs. He had problems. My
7 older brother, [REDACTED] went to William Baker's Technical
8 School in Hertfordshire.

9 I don't know why we were all split up, which wasn't
10 very good because I know there were families in Balcary
11 and I don't know why we were split up as a family. But
12 obviously [REDACTED], my younger brother, was in there for
13 a reason because he had head trouble, he had concussion
14 when he was knocked over, so it sort of knocked him
15 back, from what I now know.

16 Q. What you describe in your statement when you arrived
17 there is you describe a big old house with a massive
18 drive and great fir trees.

19 A. Yes.

20 Q. And that there was a field behind with a donkey.

21 A. We had a donkey at the bottom of the drive on the
22 right-hand side, as you came -- the drive used to sweep,
23 and the big, big house. It was a beautiful house,
24 actually. At first when you're a child, you think oh my
25 God, it's big. But now -- it is a lovely house,

- 1 a beautiful house.
- 2 Q. I think you indicate it's part of your first impressions
3 that you were rather worried that people wouldn't be
4 nice to you.
- 5 A. Well, that's it, yes. You think, I don't know who I'm
6 going to meet. You just don't know, do you? Because
7 obviously, it's a big thing, going somewhere different,
8 away from your family. And it is quite difficult,
9 I think, yes.
- 10 Q. Once you arrived, were people nice to you?
- 11 A. Well, yes, as far as I remember I made friends with
12 [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] and we used to all hang about
13 together. But I never had any problems with children
14 being horrible to me or anything.
- 15 Q. Who was in charge of Balcary?
- 16 A. Miss O'Brien was in charge at the time. Mamaji as she
17 was called. I don't know why she was called Mamaji.
18 I don't know if it's a French -- I'm not sure if it's
19 French, but Miss O'Brien.
- 20 Q. What kind of person was she? Was she a nice person or
21 was she --
- 22 A. She seemed really nice, from what I gather. I can
23 remember one night she woke me up and my mum had rang me
24 from America. She woke me up and took me, because she
25 had a little flat upstairs -- she took me to the flat

1 and I spoke to my mum on the phone and I went back to
2 the dormitory and I remember just crying, obviously,
3 because I'd spoke to my mum, which is quite sad, really,
4 when I know she's miles and miles away somewhere and I'm
5 not with her.

6 Q. Did Miss O'Brien comfort you?

7 A. You know what, I can't even remember her hugging or
8 anything like that. I can't remember that at all.

9 Q. But I think in your statement you remember going back to
10 bed --

11 A. Yes, I just cried when I went back to bed because it's
12 quite sad, actually, isn't it?

13 Q. What about other staff, what other staff were there?

14 A. There was Jasmine, who was really nice, she looked after
15 the boys -- Jasmine Bell her name was. Bobby -- now,
16 she looked after the girls and she was lovely, she was
17 really nice. Actually, when I think back, they weren't
18 that much older, really, than us, maybe four or five
19 years older. They looked like just sort of like
20 teenage-y girls sort of thing. But they were really
21 nice. I liked Bobby, she was lovely, she was really
22 nice.

23 I think I remember saying to her once, I said, you
24 know, if I ever get out of here, I'd love to come and
25 stay with you, because she was so nice. Honestly, she

1 was. She made me feel really good, she wasn't horrible,
2 she had a lovely personality. You know with someone you
3 felt secure when you were a child, when you sort of felt
4 safe. I always remember saying that to her, can I come
5 and stay with you, but obviously I didn't.

6 Q. At some stage during your stays at Balcary, Miss O'Brien
7 left and was replaced?

8 A. By Mr and Mrs Barron.

9 Q. What were Mr and Mrs Barron like?

10 A. I always thought that Mrs Barron looked a bit
11 hoity-toity -- sorry for saying that -- and he looked
12 a bit stern kind of thing. Strict, looked more strict.
13 But ... That's the only words I can describe how to --
14 when I first met them. That's the only words I can
15 describe.

16 Q. So if that was your impression when you met them, was
17 that impression borne out in fact? Were they quite
18 strict or --

19 A. I think obviously they could be strict, but I never,
20 ever seen anything untoward happening or anything like
21 that. I suppose you have to have someone that's got to
22 keep children in hand. Obviously, I never, ever seen
23 anything happen, that's one thing I didn't see, anybody
24 getting hit, smacked or anything. I didn't see that.
25 Definitely not.

1 Q. In terms of their approach, you've obviously described
2 Bobby as being quite a warm person and someone you felt
3 safe and comfortable with. What about the Barrons?
4 Were they similar, did you feel safe and comfortable
5 with them or were they more remote?

6 A. I don't think ... I don't know. I wouldn't say
7 I felt -- I don't know if I'd say uncomfortable, but
8 I would never sort of seem to go and say, "I'm feeling
9 a bit down or anything like that". But I never ...
10 I never -- I don't know. They weren't like Bobby, put
11 it that way.

12 Q. What about Miss O'Brien? Was she someone you could sit
13 down and tell your troubles to?

14 A. Nobody ever really sat down and talked to you about
15 a lot of things, to be honest. This is what I find
16 that is quite difficult because when you're a child, you
17 still need to understand what's going on in your life.
18 I don't care how old you are, sometimes you need
19 someone -- especially if you've not got your mum -- if
20 you can't trust your mum, who can you trust? And
21 I think somebody needs to sit you down and talk about
22 things, definitely.

23 It's a thing for now -- for even the children now,
24 I definitely think that someone needs to communicate
25 with children more and talk about things because I think

1 that helps a lot. I do. I think that would help a lot.

2 Q. From what you tell us in your statement, at no time did
3 anyone --

4 A. I can't remember anyone sitting down with me and
5 talking, no.

6 Q. And no one explained to you why it was that you were in
7 care?

8 A. No. I can't remember that.

9 Q. Why it was you were going in and out of care?

10 A. No. Obviously, I was in and out of care, but it was
11 something that you felt like you were just having to get
12 used to. Because you had no say. I had no say.
13 I couldn't say, right, I'm not going into a home and
14 that's it. What can you do? You just have to go along
15 with things, don't you?

16 Q. Turning now to the routine in Balcary, you tell us
17 a little about that. You were in dormitories --

18 A. Yes, dormitories. I think there were five or so beds in
19 each dormitory. And then the older ones, the older
20 girls, I think were up the top of the house and the
21 older boys were down -- you had a stairway and they were
22 down there somewhere, yes.

23 Q. Do you remember whether -- my understanding from what
24 we've heard, and certainly from your statement as well,
25 is that the boys and girls were divided out and had

- 1 different dormitories.
- 2 A. Yes.
- 3 Q. Then, within the girls' group and the boys' group, they
4 were then sub-divided according to age.
- 5 A. Yes. Because we never used to play about with the
6 younger children; we'd always stick to the children that
7 were your age.
- 8 Q. Do you remember whether any of the groups of girls or
9 dormitories had any names? Were there names given to
10 the groups?
- 11 A. I can't remember that, honestly, I can't remember.
12 Sorry.
- 13 Q. I think we've heard evidence that maybe they had names
14 a bit like the Brownies or the Guides, like robins and
15 elves --
- 16 A. Ah. Now you said that, robins, yes. Something -- yes.
17 I know I was in the Brownies when I was little, but
18 I was like a gnome then, I think. When you mentioned
19 that, you see how little things bring back memories,
20 honestly, yes. I don't know who I was, but I know I was
21 a Brownie and I was a gnome in the Brownies. Sorry.
- 22 Q. Please don't apologise.
- 23 A. I think it was the Brownies and then I was in the
24 Girl Guides, yes.
- 25 Q. The Brownies and Girl Guides, was that something you

- 1 were able to do at Balcary?
- 2 A. Yes. We did that, yes.
- 3 Q. In your dormitory, you each had your bed, was there
4 anywhere you could keep personal belongings?
- 5 A. Yes, you had a little cabinet at the side of the bed and
6 you could put your little things in there, yes.
- 7 Q. When you got up in the morning, was there a routine that
8 children followed?
- 9 A. To get to school and stuff like that?
- 10 Q. Yes. In the morning when you got up --
- 11 A. We got up and got dressed and I think we had to make our
12 beds, I'm sure we had to make our beds. Then we'd all
13 go down to the big dining room area and have our
14 breakfast. That's what I can remember, yes.
- 15 Q. I think you say in your statement at paragraph 37 that
16 you have some memory that when making your bed, they had
17 to be made to made in a particular way with particular
18 corners --
- 19 A. I think you had to do the hospital -- yes. Is that what
20 you called them, hospital corners or something? You
21 used to pick that up, tuck that in and fold that in,
22 yes. I still remember it after all these years.
- 23 Q. Were there any little jobs or chores that the children
24 had to do, either before or after breakfast?
- 25 A. I think we all had to do little things, but I can't

1 remember what it was. Maybe it'd be setting the table
2 or something like that, helping take the dishes away or
3 whatever. But I can't remember a lot. Sorry.

4 Q. Do you remember anyone being involved in polishing
5 floors?

6 A. I don't know if the older people that looked after --
7 I don't know if any of them had to clean the floors.
8 I'm sure I seen someone polishing floors or whatever,
9 but I can't remember exactly who it was.

10 Q. If in the morning if it turned out that a child had wet
11 the bed, do you remember how that -- what would have
12 happened when a child wet the bed?

13 A. I've got no idea. All I remember is seeing obviously
14 sheets outside the bedroom -- like it was the boys'
15 bedroom, I don't know, but I would see sheets outside
16 the bedroom, but that's ... I don't know what would
17 happen after that. Honestly, I don't know.

18 Q. In terms of washing and having a bath and so forth, you
19 indicate in your statement that you think bath night was
20 a Sunday.

21 A. I'm sure. That's most likely wrong that, but yes.
22 I don't think we had a bath every night, but then again
23 I can't remember a lot of things that happened then
24 anyway, I'm sorry.

25 Q. No, please do not apologise.

1 You do tell us that when you had a bath, you had
2 privacy --

3 A. Yes.

4 Q. -- to have a bath on your own.

5 A. Yes.

6 Q. Is that right?

7 A. Yes, I think that's what happened, yes.

8 Q. Turning now to mealtimes, you describe eating in a large
9 dining room.

10 A. Yes.

11 Q. Can you tell us a bit more about that, the layout of the
12 dining room and what happened at mealtimes?

13 A. All I can remember was a big table -- and obviously the
14 chairs all round -- and I remember if you wanted
15 marmalade, you had to have Marmite before you had
16 marmalade. I hate Marmite, so I never got round to
17 having marmalade, I don't think, because obviously you
18 either love it or you hate it, and I never liked Marmite
19 -- sorry, I didn't. But I think you had to try and eat
20 your food, obviously, but they never, ever forced and
21 said -- as far as I can remember, you were never, ever
22 forced to eat all your dinners and things like that.
23 I'm sure you would have to, you know, have done your
24 best.

25 Q. We've heard from different witnesses who had different

1 memories of what happened and some people saying they
2 don't remember having to eat their food if they didn't
3 like it and others saying that there might have been
4 another table, a table where children were sent to if
5 they were naughty in the dining room.

6 A. There might have been a table maybe away from the big
7 table, but I never really took much notice of that,
8 I suppose you just get down and have your breakfast.
9 I remember I never liked porridge much because it was
10 lumpy and it had salt in it. I hate lumpy porridge.

11 Q. If you hadn't eaten your porridge with the lumps in it
12 and your toast with the Marmite on it --

13 A. I can't remember, honestly, I swear to God I can't
14 remember.

15 Q. Don't worry.

16 In terms of clothing, did you have your own clothes
17 to wear or were clothes given to you by the home?

18 A. They were normally given, but I remember my mum sent
19 some clothes for me because I suffer with bad eczema and
20 I was in hospital for quite a while with eczema when
21 I was younger, apparently. I don't know if it was nine
22 months, I read in something, I got some files back.

23 I used to have to wear a lot of cotton because my
24 skin -- it used to make me itch if I had anything on it
25 sort of thing. I think my mum used to send me some

1 clothes. I think she sent me tights or something.
2 Obviously, they're a bit itchy as well. We used to have
3 to wear woolly tights to school and I think that
4 sometimes used to aggravate my eczema because wool is
5 not good for eczema at all. It doesn't sort of ... you
6 know.

7 I think we had a lot of clothes from the home, your
8 school uniform and then you'd come home and change into
9 something -- sorry, I'm moving away again. You'd come
10 home and change into your little play kind of clothes
11 in the evening after school.

12 Q. And the clothes that your mum sent you, were they given
13 to you and you were able to wear them if you wanted to
14 wear them?

15 A. I think I was, yes, yes.

16 Q. And the clothes you had in the home, whether from your
17 mum or from the home, were they your own clothes whilst
18 you were there?

19 A. Yes.

20 Q. It wasn't like there was a wardrobe and everybody just
21 had to take --

22 A. No, I think you had -- in fact, I don't even know if you
23 had your name on the back. I can't remember. I don't
24 know if they used to put a little tag with your name on.
25 I'm sure, but I might be wrong on that sorry.

1 Q. You tell us about pocket money --

2 A. That was a good time with the pocket money. We used to
3 all line up on Saturday morning in a little line and you
4 used to get a little brown envelope with your pocket
5 money in. I used to say I'm going to get some tablet
6 because I love tablet. We'd all go into town and the
7 older people would come in, you couldn't just wander off
8 on your own, I suppose, until you were a bit older. But
9 that's what we used to do on a Saturday, yes.

10 Sorry, another thing we used to do -- well, mostly
11 through the winter, is line up in the medical room and
12 have a spoonful of malt and cod liver oil. It used to
13 make me heave. I hated it. Cod liver oil, horrible.
14 And then you'd have a little halibut orange tablet
15 before you go to school and stuff like that in the
16 winter.

17 Q. Going to school, did you get any help with homework
18 in the home?

19 A. I'm not sure about that either. I can't remember.
20 Sorry. Did I say anything about that?

21 Q. Yes, you do at paragraph 48 --

22 A. You know, Bobby or anybody would maybe have helped out
23 a little bit. I don't think Mr and Mrs Barron ever
24 helped with the homework and things like that.

25 Q. I think generally, you say, I think it's paragraph 49

1 where you tell us on page 0923 that you think you got
2 homework.

3 A. Yes.

4 Q. And you did it in the home and you say in your
5 statement:

6 "I'm sure we got help from the staff when we got
7 stuck and it was most likely Bobby who helped us."

8 A. Yes.

9 Q. Does that fit in with your memories?

10 A. Yes, Bobby was really nice, actually. I'm going off
11 track now, sorry.

12 Q. No, no, it's absolutely fine. What about Sundays? Was
13 there a different routine on a Sunday?

14 A. We used to go to Sunday school and church on a Sunday,
15 which I found a bit boring. Well, most children
16 I suppose do. We went to -- I think it was Bible class
17 or something like that. We used to go to things like
18 that. And obviously, not very interesting.

19 Q. Was there any choice as to whether you could go or --

20 A. I think you had to go. I think you had to go, yes.

21 Q. You tell us in your statement about leisure time, that
22 the children had free time --

23 A. Yes.

24 Q. -- where they could go off and play.

25 A. Yes, we had playrooms, two, boys and girls, yes.

- 1 Q. And were there toys available in the playroom?
- 2 A. There was toys, yes, and I think they had a little
3 record player, the old little record player we used to
4 have. Yes, toys, we had some toys and things like that,
5 yes.
- 6 Q. And what about books? Were there books available to
7 read if you wanted to read?
- 8 A. I think there was books, but you know what, I was never
9 a book person. The only books I liked was the
10 Famous Five and the Secret Seven, but I can't remember
11 if they were out. The 1960s? They would be out then,
12 yes.
- 13 LADY SMITH: Yes, they were.
- 14 A. Were they? That's the only books -- but I've never
15 been -- not because I can't read, I can read, but
16 I can't seem to concentrate, I seem to go down to the
17 next bit and the next bit. I can't seem to take it in,
18 if you know what I mean.
- 19 MS RATTRAY: What about TV? Was there a TV?
- 20 A. We had a TV room and I think you could go in there, but
21 I don't know if you were allowed in there for a certain
22 amount of time before you went to bed or whatever. But,
23 yes.
- 24 Q. You also talk about climbing trees in the grounds and
25 using a sledge in the snow.

1 A. Yes, I used to love climbing the tree. I do love trees
2 now, honestly, I love trees. There was a shortcut and
3 we used to have to use that for school, we weren't
4 allowed to go down the main drive. We weren't allowed
5 to do that, so we had to go down the shortcut and it was
6 quite, like, bendy, and obviously if you were on
7 a sledge and you hit a bit of wood, that was it, you
8 were off your sledge, weren't you?

9 Obviously, winters were winters then, there was
10 proper snow. Well, in Scotland you do get a good lot of
11 snow up here. Yes, there was happy times anyway, yes.

12 Q. You also speak about trips to North Berwick.

13 A. Yes.

14 Q. That there would be a holiday there?

15 A. Holiday.

16 Q. And I think we've heard that the children from Balcary
17 would swap around with the children from a home in
18 North Berwick.

19 A. Yes.

20 Q. You tell us that you can't remember birthdays, but
21 you have got good memories of Christmas.

22 A. Yes. Christmastime, we used to get -- obviously we used
23 to write a little letter to Father Christmas, then we
24 used it put it in the -- they had a red pillar box in
25 the hallway. Because when you could come in the front

1 door -- they have a massive big hallway there -- it was
2 lovely -- and it had a red pillar box and we used to put
3 our little letters in that for Father Christmas.

4 And on Christmas Morning -- they had a massive big
5 Christmas tree as well and on Christmas Morning we used
6 to get an pillowcase full of toys -- and obviously
7 I don't know -- obviously, you'd ask for three things
8 that you'd really like and obviously you'd maybe just
9 get one and you were just overwhelmed because you had
10 a big pillowcase full of toys.

11 I think there was a boy called [REDACTED] and his
12 uncle used to work in -- I'm not sure if it was Kuwait
13 and he used to bring the children's gifts. He was
14 a really lovely man and I think he helped at
15 Christmastime. I'm sure he did. He used to bring us
16 presents. It was a nice time.

17 Then you obviously got to wear your tartan frock or
18 party frock for the day and your shiny black patent
19 shoes which I used to love. I loved fashion actually
20 back then.

21 Q. Moving on to family visits -- you've touched on this
22 earlier on -- what was the arrangement whereby family
23 members would visit children in Balcary?

24 A. Well, if my mum ever came to visit, I can remember --
25 I don't know if they'd have to get in touch with the

1 home and tell them that obviously they were going to
2 visit and take you out for the day or whatever.

3 I always remember my mum took me out once and never took
4 me back.

5 Then there were times when she wasn't there and
6 I used to remember sitting at the window and looking out
7 and thinking everybody else's mums or dads is popping in
8 and taking the children out and it was quite deflating,
9 thinking, that's it, I'm not seeing my mum, and
10 I suppose you just have to get used to it.

11 Q. You say in your statement you might cry about that and
12 there was no one there who spoke to you when your mum
13 didn't turn up.

14 A. No, I can't remember anyone sitting down and talking to
15 you.

16 Q. You also say again there, in your statement, that it was
17 really quite hard on you coming in and out of care.

18 A. It was very difficult. Honestly, it was. I think it
19 really disrupts your life. It takes you a long time --
20 now I sometimes think I don't really know who I am.
21 It's like not having an identity.

22 At least when you have a proper family life, you
23 grow up with your family all together and you know what
24 you're doing, you know where you've been, you can talk
25 about holidays and so on and so forth. But then it was

1 just like nothing, really.

2 Q. You do tell us in your statement that there was an
3 occasion when you were back home with your mum -- you
4 were in and out -- when you were at home and your mum
5 tried to kill herself.

6 A. Yes, she tried to commit suicide. She [REDACTED]
7 [REDACTED] and we
8 had to have the ambulance.

9 There was another time I can remember when she was
10 sectioned for a while -- this is when we were in the
11 home -- but I think we went out to see her. She was
12 sectioned and I can't remember which hospital it was in
13 Edinburgh that took people like that that tried to
14 commit suicide. It was a massive thing to see this
15 happening. Sorry. It's just a massive thing seeing
16 this happening --

17 Q. Did anyone --

18 A. -- and there's just nothing you can do about it.

19 Q. Were you given any support to deal with these kind of
20 things?

21 A. See, I can never remember anyone talking and sitting me
22 down and saying why she was doing this. I can never
23 remember that because you just feel like you're dealing
24 with it on your own. Sorry.

25 Q. Please do not apologise. Take your time.

1 You say when you went to visit your mum, you were
2 probably in the home at that time. Was it staff from
3 the home who took you to visit?

4 A. Well, it must have been someone. I don't know who it
5 was. It must have been someone because obviously
6 I wouldn't be able to get home on my own.

7 Q. You've explained that your brothers weren't placed with
8 you in Balcary and they were in different places.

9 A. Uh-huh.

10 Q. But you do tell us that the arrangements were made
11 whereby they would come and spend holidays with you?

12 A. Yes, a little holiday. Maybe it might be for a week or
13 a few days or something on holiday times. Then
14 obviously, they went back again, but you know, just ...

15 Q. To what extent did them being elsewhere for most of the
16 time affect your relationship with your brothers?

17 A. Well, now -- and I know it's -- obviously, we never grew
18 up together, so it's like a bit of a stranger to you,
19 your brother. I talk to my older brother now, but
20 I don't speak to my younger brother. I know it sounds
21 sad really, I think you should really, but we just had
22 sort of words and that and he always was ringing me up
23 and saying that he was like the black sheep of the
24 family and I thought, look, we all had to go through
25 things, not just you, and we ended up falling out.

1 I know it sounds awful, we should be really close
2 together now, but we never ever grew up together,
3 really. We never grew up as a family, like a normal
4 family. It's like if you had been in the home from an
5 age of 4, and gone right through to 14, that's your
6 home, isn't it? That's what you're used to. But when
7 you're in a home and out of a home and in a home, you're
8 just like so confused. And it is difficult, yes.

9 Q. Moving on to the subject of discipline, you tell us that
10 you used to sneak out at night with your friends.

11 A. Yes.

12 Q. Can you tell us what happen then?

13 A. All I remember is there would be [REDACTED] [REDACTED] --
14 I think [REDACTED] BKZ [REDACTED] used to come out.

15 When I look back, I think how dangerous was it to
16 sneak out -- obviously there were a few of us. God
17 knows why we sneaked out, but we did. It was just like
18 an adventure, I suppose, and being a child and just
19 being a bit like, right, let's go for it, you know.

20 We used to walk across to the park -- and I think
21 one time, somebody mentioned that a police car had
22 passed us, so obviously we had to go back to the home
23 and we got told off.

24 I can't remember ever getting smacked or caned or
25 anything like that. I don't know if we got a right

1 telling off, because we were found out, and I think
2 **BKZ** I think, fell up the stairs and made a noise
3 and then -- I'm thinking, though, when I think about it
4 now, I think, how can that happen? How can we have got
5 all out and sneaked out and nobody knew about it? You
6 know when you think about it now, I think, God, I'd be
7 blimming mortified if my daughter had sneaked out at my
8 age -- not that she would have done, she'd be too
9 scared.

10 But obviously growing up without a parent, you have
11 to toughen yourself up a bit. I think how the heck did
12 we manage to get out without anyone actually knowing we
13 went out? I think we went down the back stairs, if
14 I can remember that correctly.

15 LADY SMITH: Do you remember how old you were?

16 A. I don't know, I must have been -- I don't know, I was
17 about 11 or something like that. I can't remember
18 exactly.

19 LADY SMITH: And there was a group of you?

20 A. Yes. It is quite -- you think, well, you're in a care
21 home, obviously, surely they should have had locks on
22 the doors -- not like windows boarded, all bars and
23 stuff, but you'd have imagined there would have been
24 some kind of somebody watching out at night or
25 something. But we managed to get out.

1 LADY SMITH: I suppose somebody in your group might have
2 worked out how to get out despite the locks.
3 A. Yes. I think we just used to follow like little sheep.
4 Sorry.
5 MS RATTRAY: Do you remember the time -- there was a time
6 you were caught because your friend fell on the stairs?
7 A. **BKZ**, yes. I can't remember getting told off.
8 Obviously, we must have done, but I can't remember
9 exactly what happened. Because I can't ever recall me
10 ever getting smacked or caned or strapped. I did get
11 the strap from Bill McLaren. That's my claim to fame.
12 At school, he gave me the strap for forgetting my PE
13 kit. I never, ever did it again because it really hurt.
14 On your hands. It stung. But obviously, that was then.
15 Q. You are never got the cane or --
16 A. I can't remember getting the cane or anything.
17 Q. Do you know whether any other child did?
18 A. No, honestly and truly I can't remember any other child
19 getting caned.
20 I used to be friends with Ronnie and Ronnie used to
21 say that she used to get into trouble a lot, but I can't
22 remember her getting the cane. But I wasn't with her
23 24/7, was I? I don't know who went into separate rooms.
24 You are a child and you're just getting along in life
25 and I never concentrated on everybody else.

1 Q. Yes.

2 A. You know, which is just -- that's it.

3 Q. So if another person hadn't behaved and was taken by
4 Miss O'Brien into her office and given the cane, that's
5 not something --

6 A. I have never seen it. I've never seen it. I've heard
7 like people mention something about -- what was it? She
8 had a dog called Bruce, about the belt or something,
9 something about the leash or something. I don't know.
10 That's all I've heard. But I've never seen it happen,
11 so I can't honestly say that I did.

12 Q. So when you heard about something to do with the dog's
13 leash, was that something that you heard at the time?

14 A. I've only heard it recently, sorry.

15 Q. That's fine.

16 A. Because I said, well, I've never heard that, honestly
17 I've never heard that.

18 Q. So you weren't aware if the sort of --

19 A. I was never aware of --

20 Q. -- leather end of the dog's leash was used to smack
21 someone's bottom?

22 A. If I was aware of it, I would tell you now, I would
23 definitely be saying something and that is the truth.
24 If I had seen anything happening, or anything had
25 happened to me, that would be the first thing I'd be

1 telling you. I would, honestly.

2 LADY SMITH: Was it Ronnie that told you that?

3 A. What, about the leash?

4 LADY SMITH: Yes.

5 A. Well, yes -- because Ronnie was like friends with me and
6 I think she mentioned something about -- she said she
7 used to get into trouble a lot. I don't know if she
8 ever got smacked with a cane or whatever. I never seen
9 it myself, so I can't lie, I can't say to you, yes, I'd
10 seen it, because I didn't.

11 See, Ronnie was obviously really close with me and
12 I think sometimes she was quite -- I think Ronnie was
13 quite a strong person in herself and I just sort of went
14 along with things, and think I don't want to fall out
15 with anybody. You just used to go along with things.

16 We did used to climb trees and apparently I climbed
17 a tree and I wouldn't come down because my mum was in
18 America and I wanted to go and see my mum and they
19 couldn't get me out of the tree but I did come down
20 eventually for tea.

21 MS RATTRAY: Was Ronnie -- was she someone who might push
22 boundaries more?

23 A. I would maybe say so, yes. Yes. She was quite a strong
24 little character, Ronnie. She was really nice and that
25 to me, but she was never horrible to me, but I think she

1 was quite a strong -- she seemed stronger than me, put
2 it that way. I think she was quite a strong character.
3 We're all different in life, aren't we? Some people can
4 cope with things better than others, yes.

5 Q. You tell us that when it came to leaving Balcary for the
6 last time, that you don't have any memories of actually
7 leaving.

8 A. No.

9 Q. You just remember being back home with your mum?

10 A. Yes, which was a bit of a nightmare, but yes.

11 Q. You tell us in your statement about your life after care
12 and I'm not going to ask you about that in any detail.
13 But you do say to us that you didn't get any support
14 from the home --

15 A. No.

16 Q. -- after you left.

17 A. Never. I can never remember any support at all. And
18 I think it's -- I definitely think it's a must for
19 children for now. I really do. You've got no -- people
20 have got no idea of how it affects you, honestly.
21 I know you think, oh, some people -- inside I can -- it
22 still upsets me now -- obviously it does upset me now
23 and obviously you have to move on in your life. I've
24 got a family myself, a lovely family, great kids, and
25 I love them to bits and they're my life and I'd never

1 let anything happen to them and I'd never ever do that
2 to my kids.

3 I know my mum suffered with mental health problems
4 and I wish -- things back then were not as good as
5 things now because more people are aware of mental
6 health awareness and, you know, people can help more.
7 I know I suffered myself a bit with it, for a few years,
8 I was on medication, because I just didn't want to see
9 anyone, I didn't want to speak to anyone, and it sort of
10 made me go a bit inside myself. I'm over that now.

11 I've got a great family. But I definitely think you
12 need someone to talk to people more -- and make them
13 understand more -- to talk more to children because it's
14 a massive thing, it is.

15 Q. You left Balcary when you were about 14.

16 A. Yes.

17 Q. You went back to your mum, who had a long history of
18 mental health problems.

19 A. Yes.

20 Q. And from what you're saying, at that time you really
21 needed someone to talk to?

22 A. Definitely, yes. I never knew a lot about things in
23 life and I just think -- obviously, when my mum
24 committed suicide, I just had to try and -- and
25 obviously, I might have made a few mistakes along the

1 way, but I ended up going on the right path and now I've
2 got a great husband and great family, and it's took
3 a long time to get there, but I'm happy now. I am.

4 Q. You were still very young when your mum committed
5 suicide.

6 A. Yes.

7 Q. How old were you?

8 A. I was about -- I was nearly 18 or something at the time.
9 It's hard because your mum's your best friend, really,
10 supposed to be. It's like me and my daughter. We're so
11 close together -- and my other daughter as well, and we
12 do everything together. And if you can't trust your
13 mum -- your mum's always there to give you answers, to
14 help you out and things, and when you never had that
15 you've just got to make your own life and that's it,
16 haven't you? You just have to get on and that's it.

17 But definitely, people -- children now need --
18 definitely need someone to talk to because, I tell you
19 what, there's so many people that obviously commit
20 suicide and have problems and things like that, you
21 definitely need to speak to kids now, you do, and make
22 them aware of what's going on.

23 Q. And I think in your statement, when you talk about the
24 impact your care experience has had upon you, I think
25 you address all these matters that you've explained to

1 us about what a big thing being in care is and that you
2 feel that you didn't have an identity --

3 A. Yes.

4 Q. -- and you also say that it affected your self-esteem --

5 A. Yes.

6 Q. -- and you tell us that it affected your ability to
7 trust people.

8 A. Yes. I am really funny like that. I know I was talking
9 to you earlier on and I said a lot of people say, oh,
10 you're an extrovert and that, but honestly, I think
11 I cover it up well, but inside I think you're crying
12 sometimes. You know what I mean? Genuinely sometimes.

13 I'm really friendly and I'm easy-going and I've got
14 a lot to love to give to my family. In fact, a doctor
15 said in my files from -- Barnardo's sent me a load of
16 files and one doctor said to me, [REDACTED] seems anxious,
17 but she says, she seems keen to please, she's old for
18 her years, but I think deep down inside that's not quite
19 how it's ... I must have covered a lot of things and
20 held them back inside, I suppose. I don't know.

21 Because I am like that and I can't stand going to
22 big affairs and things like that, I just can't be --
23 I honestly... I don't know if this is anything to do
24 with my past. I think sometimes it's anxiety with me.
25 I do talk a lot, I'm sorry, but I do talk a lot. And

1 I think it is anxiety because I've been -- apparently
2 when I was in the home, through my files, it's got
3 "██████████ is a little chatterbox", so I've always talked.

4 Q. On the subject of your file, you do tell us that six or
5 seven years ago you asked about your records and you
6 make two points about that. The first is you tell us
7 that they were posted to you, so you didn't have support
8 reading them.

9 A. Mm.

10 Q. And the second point you make is that you wonder why it
11 was left to you to go and try and find records --

12 A. To go and sort it out, yes.

13 Q. -- so many years later and why wasn't it that Barnardo's
14 got in touch with you or other children.

15 A. I know. I didn't even know that I'd got files. But
16 then somebody told me, I think, about it and I thought,
17 I'm going to ring them up and find out, so obviously
18 I rung London because it was down in London where the
19 Barnardo's place was. I rang them up and I said, have
20 you got files belonging to me when I was in Barnardo's.
21 And she said, oh yes. Obviously she went off and she
22 said, yes, I have. I said, am I entitled to these files
23 because obviously it's about me and my mum and family,
24 and she said, yes, we'll send you the files.

25 Then I got a big folder full of files and I sat down

1 with my daughter on the sofa, me and her, and looked
2 through them at all, and the two of us cried, we just
3 sat there and cried. It's hard.

4 Q. Do you feel that it would have been better for you if,
5 after you left care --

6 A. If somebody had done that back then? Yes, and --

7 Q. -- if someone had come then and said, we have files
8 about you?

9 A. Yes. All it was is you leave and that's it, finished,
10 make your own way in life.

11 Obviously, I've managed to do that now, but it's
12 a massive thing. So please just help the kids nowadays,
13 honestly, because they need to talk. You've just got to
14 talk to people, honestly.

15 Q. But you have told us, and you tell us in your statement,
16 that you have gone on, notwithstanding your memories of
17 childhood and the effect that's had on you, you have
18 gone on and had a family and you have built a strong and
19 happy family life.

20 A. I have, yes. They're gorgeous, my kids. You've seen
21 pictures -- honestly, they're beautiful kids. I'm
22 really chuffed actually myself because I've brought them
23 up -- although I didn't have a good childhood, I've
24 brought them up really well, they've never given me any
25 problems or worries or anything. They're good kids and

1 I love them to -- in fact, my son messaged me this
2 morning. He said, "Mum, good luck today and I love
3 you". It was just so nice. Sorry.

4 Q. No, please.

5 A. My daughter's with me. She said, "I can't come in, mum,
6 because I'm going to cry".

7 LADY SMITH: But she's there waiting for you?

8 A. She's going to come and pick me up, yes. They're good
9 kids and I love them to bits and I'm so proud of myself
10 that I managed to bring them up in a good way and
11 they're not any trouble to me, never. They've never
12 given me trouble.

13 MS RATTRAY: Okay. Well, it just remains for me to
14 thank you very much for answering the questions and for
15 explaining so clearly the experiences you had.

16 A. I just all this helps, I really hope this helps. I hope
17 everybody's information helps you for future children
18 because I just -- it's quite sad, actually, for kids.

19 And obviously, I was never abused in that manner,
20 but I sometimes think I was abused in a sense by my mum,
21 really, because -- I know it wasn't her fault because
22 she has suffered -- but when you're a child --
23 I actually hated my mum at one time, I did, I hated her,
24 because I think, I need you, I need you, we all need
25 you, but obviously she suffered mental health and

1 that is major now, isn't it? It is hard for someone
2 that suffers like that, and I think, well, what can you
3 do? You've just got to get on.

4 Obviously, mum's gone now and I wish to God she
5 could have seen my kids because she would have loved
6 them, I know, but it's happened and that's it. We all
7 have things that go on and we just have to try and move
8 on. But I just pray to God that you can help these kids
9 with all the experience we've had and just talk more,
10 like me. No, really, seriously.

11 MS RATTRAY: Thank you.

12 A. Thank you very much.

13 LADY SMITH: Are there any outstanding applications for
14 questions? No.

15 Dianne, those are all the questions we have for you.
16 Thank you very much for engaging with the inquiry in the
17 way you have, both by providing your written statement,
18 which is evidence to the inquiry, and by adding to it
19 with what you have talked about today. Don't apologise
20 for talking, it's been very helpful to hear it.

21 A. I was so anxious about it. Last night we had --
22 yesterday we had a bit of a nightmare because I went to
23 the airport with no ID and I couldn't get on the plane
24 in the morning, I couldn't board, so I had to change it
25 and come last night and we didn't get to bed until

1 12 o'clock and I was kind of snoring a little bit and my
2 daughter was going, "Mum, I can't get to sleep", so
3 she's having a nightmare, you know.

4 Anyway, we eventually got here and I'm glad that
5 I come. But yesterday was a real disaster during the
6 day. It was just so funny, when I think about it, you
7 go through your bit and you get the train, and I came
8 back and one of my boots had gone missing, I don't know
9 where it was. They found that and everything seemed to
10 escalate, and obviously because I didn't have ID --
11 I thought, I'm going to Scotland, you don't need ID --
12 I don't travel on planes because I'm not a lover of
13 planes and then when I got there, she said, do you have
14 any driving licence, I said I have not got a photo on
15 it, it's an old one -- I've never updated my driving
16 licence.

17 Of course they were, no, you cannot go, and I said,
18 I've got to go, I've got to go to a meeting, and they
19 said you can't go. So they took me to immigration,
20 I don't know why, but I said I'm 66, I've never done
21 drugs, and just told them I'm an old granny, sort of
22 thing. And then of course we come last night, a bit of
23 a bumpy landing. It was awful, I was so frightened
24 because I don't like flying.

25 LADY SMITH: I'm sorry to hear you had a rotten day

1 yesterday.

2 A. I'm glad to have done it, but please help these kids now
3 because they need it. I ended up working in school with
4 special needs and I worked in secondary school, I looked
5 after boys with cerebral palsy and it's the best thing
6 I ever did. They're great kids --

7 LADY SMITH: I hope you're now able to relax. Please be
8 assured, we are here for the children of today and the
9 children of tomorrow and you have helped us with that
10 work. Thank you.

11 A. I am so glad, thank you very much. Thank you.

12 (The witness withdrew)

13 LADY SMITH: Ms Rattray.

14 MS RATTRAY: That concludes the evidence for today.
15 Tomorrow we're expecting to have two more oral
16 witnesses.

17 LADY SMITH: At 10 o'clock tomorrow morning?

18 MS RATTRAY: 10 o'clock.

19 LADY SMITH: Thank you very much. I'll rise now.

20 (2.47 pm)

21 (The inquiry adjourned until 10.00 am
22 on Friday, 30 November 2018)

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