

1 Friday, 9 November 2018

2 (10.00 am)

3 LADY SMITH: Good morning. As we explained yesterday, we  
4 start this morning with evidence that is being given by  
5 video link. As you may already have noticed, I think  
6 I see we have a witness ready to give evidence at the  
7 other side. Is that right, Ms Rattray?

8 MS RATTRAY: Yes, my Lady. The first witness is someone who  
9 wishes to retain their anonymity and has chosen the  
10 pseudonym "Helen".

11 LADY SMITH: Helen, good morning, can you hear me?

12 THE WITNESS: Yes.

13 LADY SMITH: I'm Lady Smith, I chair the Scottish Child  
14 Abuse Inquiry and I am going to start by asking you to  
15 take an oath to tell the truth. What I want you to do  
16 is raise your right hand. I think I won't stand up in  
17 case you lose the view of me, although I'd usually stand  
18 up. If we both raise our right hand.

19 "HELEN" (sworn)

20 (The witness appeared via video link)

21 LADY SMITH: That link seems to be working clearly. I can  
22 hear you very well and I can see you very well. Will  
23 you please let me know if anything goes wrong at your  
24 end with your view of us here or your ability to hear  
25 us? Will you do that?

1 A. Yes, yes.

2 LADY SMITH: What's going to happen next is I'm going to ask  
3 Ms Rattray, who's one of the counsel to the inquiry, to  
4 begin her questioning of you. All right?

5 A. Okay, yes.

6 Questions from MS RATTRAY

7 MS RATTRAY: Good morning, Helen.

8 A. Good morning, Ms Rattray.

9 Q. You will have close to you -- and I think your support  
10 officer, Mark, will help you with that -- a copy of the  
11 written statement that you gave to the inquiry.

12 A. Yes.

13 Q. Just for our purposes and our recording, that statement  
14 has been given a reference by the inquiry and that  
15 reference is WIT.003.001.7616.

16 A. Yes.

17 Q. What we'll do, just to start with, if you could turn to  
18 the back page of that written statement.

19 A. Yes.

20 Q. For our records, that's page 7628. Can you confirm that  
21 you have signed your statement?

22 A. Yes, I have, yes.

23 Q. And do you see above your signature at paragraph 58,  
24 you have no objection to your witness statement being  
25 published as part of the evidence to the inquiry and you

1 believe the facts stated in this witness statement are  
2 true?

3 A. Yes, that's fine, yes.

4 Q. Just to start, will you confirm your year of birth?

5 I don't need the date or the month, simply the year.

6 A. 1935.

7 Q. Helen, I'm now going to ask you some questions based on  
8 your statement about some of your experiences working  
9 for Quarriers. What I'll do -- first we'll look at some  
10 background information about how you came to be working  
11 at Quarriers. Second, I'll ask you about some of your  
12 experiences in Quarriers. Thirdly, what I'm going to do  
13 is ask you to comment about some specific allegations  
14 that have been made about you.

15 LADY SMITH: I can see you're nodding, Helen, so you  
16 understand how that's going to work?

17 A. Yes.

18 LADY SMITH: Before Ms Rattray turns to asking you  
19 particular questions about your time at Quarriers, there  
20 is an important thing that I want to tell you.

21 In the course of that questioning, if you are asked  
22 any questions about whether or not you abused children  
23 when you were at Quarriers, you don't ask to answer  
24 them. That's because you are entitled, as we say, not  
25 to incriminate yourself. You are entitled not to admit

1 to having done anything that could be classed as  
2 a crime.

3 If, however, you choose to answer any such  
4 questions, you need to appreciate that that evidence  
5 would be available at a later date to be used if anyone  
6 wished to do that, including in a court. Your evidence  
7 today is being recorded and it is being transcribed, so  
8 there will be a permanent record of it.

9 So just to repeat, in this inquiry, even although  
10 it's not a courtroom or a trial, you have the right not  
11 to incriminate yourself. Do you understand that?

12 A. Yes, yes. Whatever happened, I'm just going to be  
13 honest about it and straightforward.

14 LADY SMITH: Well, you've taken an oath to tell the truth.

15 That's fine. But so long as you appreciate that if  
16 there are questions of that type, you don't have to  
17 answer them, you just tell me that you choose not to  
18 answer. All right?

19 A. Yes, yes.

20 LADY SMITH: Thank you. Ms Rattray.

21 MS RATTRAY: Helen, in relation to allegations, I'm not  
22 going to ask you about those just now, but you have  
23 obviously been given some notice as to what these  
24 allegations are and who has made those allegations.  
25 When I refer to the person who made the allegation, that

1 lady, who was a girl in care when you were at Quarriers,  
2 she also has a pseudonym and her pseudonym is  
3 "Elizabeth". So just to be clear, if I refer to  
4 Elizabeth, I'm referring to the person who you know  
5 about.

6 A. Yes.

7 Q. To start with, just to get some background and general  
8 information, Helen, you've told us in your statement  
9 about your qualifications. At paragraph 2 of your  
10 statement, you tell us that you have qualifications in  
11 large-scale catering, institutional management and  
12 cookery demonstration.

13 A. Yes.

14 Q. You gained these qualifications at Atholl Crescent  
15 College in Edinburgh?

16 A. That's right.

17 Q. That was in 1955?

18 A. Yes.

19 LADY SMITH: You may be interested to know, Helen, that the  
20 building that we are in is less than five minutes' walk  
21 from Atholl Crescent, which I'm afraid is now full of  
22 offices, including lawyers' offices. But we're very  
23 close to it.

24 A. That takes me back.

25 MS RATTRAY: I think from your date of birth, you would have

- 1           been about 20 when you gained your catering  
2           qualifications.
- 3       A.   Yes.
- 4       Q.   The part of your qualifications that deals with  
5           institutional management, can you tell me a bit more  
6           about what that involved?
- 7       A.   I can't think what would be now ... No, I can't think  
8           now what it was all specifically about.
- 9       Q.   Okay. Was your qualification -- it was mainly about  
10          cooking, is that what it was about?
- 11      A.   No, it was about ordering and dealing with staff and  
12          costs and that sort of thing, of an institution.
- 13      Q.   Right. Is it right that no part of the course would  
14          have involved any aspect of childcare?
- 15      A.   No. There wasn't any specific thing about childcare.
- 16      Q.   Did you find any part of your qualification and your  
17          time at college helpful when you were later involved in  
18          looking after children?
- 19      A.   Well, when we were looking after the house in Quarriers,  
20          there was the cooking, the running of the actual house.  
21          It was a fair size institution, yes.
- 22      Q.   So you found your college course -- that was quite  
23          useful when you were doing the management side of  
24          running the cottage in Quarriers?
- 25      A.   Yes, yes.

1 Q. You say at paragraph 2 in your statement that before you  
2 worked at Quarrier's Village, you were a house parent at  
3 Beechholme, Barnstead, for three years.

4 A. In Banstead.

5 Q. Banstead?

6 A. Banstead, yes.

7 Q. How did you come to be working as a house parent there  
8 when you had been studying catering and cooking?

9 A. I just ... It was something interesting and I started  
10 as an assistant house parent and then gradually got my  
11 own house there.

12 Q. So what was involved in the job you were doing there?

13 A. It was children in care.

14 Q. How many children were you looking after?

15 A. I think there would have been about 10 at that time.

16 Q. How old were these children?

17 A. Starting from quite young to teenagers, right through  
18 the ages.

19 Q. You say you started as an assistant house parent?

20 A. That's right, yes.

21 Q. Do I take it from that you had someone there throughout  
22 who was supervising you?

23 A. Yes. Yes.

24 Q. For how long were you an assistant house parent?

25 A. I would say about a year and a half. And about a year

- 1           and a half as the house parent in charge of the house.
- 2       Q.   So what kind of things would you do, either as an
- 3           assistant house parent or a house parent?
- 4       A.   Well, there was the main running of the home, cooking,
- 5           then taking care of the children and doing out of school
- 6           hours things with the children.
- 7       Q.   So what kind of things were you doing with the children?
- 8       A.   It would be playing out in the gardens and that sort of
- 9           thing.   Going -- taking them to the swimming.   Taking
- 10          them to Scouts and collecting them back again.   That
- 11          sort of thing.
- 12       Q.   Were you involved in the kind of activities of getting
- 13          children up in the morning and putting them to bed at
- 14          night?
- 15       A.   Oh yes, yes.   Yes.
- 16       Q.   Do you remember then where you were working, were there
- 17          any children who wet the bed?
- 18       A.   I think there probably was.   Possibly.
- 19       Q.   Can you remember how bed-wetting was managed where you
- 20          were working?
- 21       A.   Well, you just tried to help the children by getting
- 22          them up, maybe once if they were, you know -- you could
- 23          get them to go up some time in the night and you just
- 24          cleared the bed in the morning and let it dry.   You
- 25          didn't sort of make a big thing about it, just a help --

1           be helpful and try and get them be used to going up to  
2           the loo.

3           Q. At Beechholme was a child ever punished for bed-wetting?

4           A. No, no. I mean, that's a normal thing, isn't it? Some  
5           children take longer to get used to not wetting the bed  
6           and that's it.

7           Q. I think you indicated you didn't try to make a big thing  
8           out of it. So can I take it from that there wasn't  
9           a practice where it was made common knowledge that  
10          a child had wet the bed, that they were told off in  
11          front of other children, for example?

12          A. No, no, definitely not. Mind you, the children that  
13          were in the same room with them knew, but it wasn't  
14          a thing that we pointed out and made a big thing of.

15          Q. When you became a house parent, so when you moved up  
16          from being an assistant house parent, in what ways did  
17          your job change?

18          A. Well, you were in charge of the family and the staff and  
19          you met the people who came from the offices about the  
20          children and worked out about the children's background  
21          and what they went through and how to help them and  
22          that, what to work.

23          Q. When children were admitted to Beechholme, were you  
24          given information about their background?

25          A. A little bit. You didn't get as much as what in later

1           years, when they had their own childcare person coming  
2           in and telling you, working with the children. We were  
3           told a little bit.

4       Q. When you were there, when you first arrived at  
5           Beechholme, were you given any particular training  
6           before you started?

7       A. Yes. Yes, we had talks from the people that were in  
8           charge of Beechholme.

9       Q. For how long did the training last?

10      A. It wasn't actually training on its own, we went so long  
11       each day or each week and got trained, you know, got  
12       child trained, otherwise we were in the house and the  
13       house parent would show us and tell us what they wanted,  
14       how they wanted things done.

15      Q. I appreciate it's a long time ago, but can you help us  
16       at all with what kind of things you were told in the  
17       talks you were given at Beechholme?

18      A. Pardon?

19      Q. I'm sorry. Can you help us at all as to what was the  
20       subject matter of the talks that you were given in  
21       Beechholme when you first arrived?

22      A. I think it was aimed -- that we had things we had to aim  
23       for with the children and how to deal with them, that  
24       sort of thing.

25      Q. Okay. So you were given aims?

- 1 A. Mm-hm.
- 2 Q. And were those aims generally or aims for each child?
- 3 A. Aims for children that had particular needs and that  
4 sort of thing if I can remember right.
- 5 Q. Can you give us an example of the kind of aims that you  
6 were given?
- 7 A. Not really, no. It's a long time ago.
- 8 Q. Okay, fair enough. When you were at Beechholme do you  
9 remember whether you are ever given any written guidance  
10 or instructions as to how to look after children or  
11 manage the home?
- 12 A. I don't remember getting anything like that, but I might  
13 have done.
- 14 Q. You can't remember if there was something like a staff  
15 handbook or written rules?
- 16 A. I can't think (inaudible: distorted) I can't remember  
17 that, no.
- 18 Q. At Beechholme, children who didn't behave, how were they  
19 disciplined?
- 20 A. Well, it depended what their misbehaviour was and the  
21 reasons and you work it out as a parent, how you could  
22 sort it out for them.
- 23 Q. So what types of discipline or punishment were used at  
24 Beechholme?
- 25 A. There wasn't all that much punishment. Maybe to go to



1 Q. I think what it says in your statement at the last  
2 sentence of paragraph 2 is:

3 "In 1959 or 1960, I went to work at a school near  
4 Heywood Heath."

5 Sorry, second last sentence:

6 "I worked at that boarding school for two to three  
7 years and I met my husband whilst working there."

8 LADY SMITH: Might that be [REDACTED] in the south?

9 A. That's right. [REDACTED] yes.

10 LADY SMITH: Not Heywood, [REDACTED]?

11 A. Yes, that's before I worked at Quarriers. I thought you  
12 were asking me after I left Quarriers, sorry.

13 MS RATTRAY: No, no.

14 So why did you change job from being a house parent  
15 to working at the boarding school?

16 A. Just to do something different.

17 Q. What was your role at the boarding school?

18 A. I was the ... I was to do with the running of the  
19 domestic side of it, like a domestic bursar, catering  
20 and that sort of -- and staff. Domestic staff, not  
21 teaching staff. Domestic staff and the catering and  
22 that sort of thing.

23 Q. So was your role there as domestic bursar more a sort of  
24 management and administrative role?

25 A. Yes.

- 1 Q. Did you have any involvement at the boarding school of  
2 looking after children who were boarding?
- 3 A. No, not a lot. Some, but not a lot, no. I was working  
4 in the office mainly.
- 5 Q. And you say you had some involvement with the children.  
6 What kind of involvement did you have there?
- 7 A. I don't think it would be anything other than just if  
8 you were meeting them in passing or ... I think I had  
9 to book if they had to have an injection or anything  
10 like that. But I didn't actually handle it, I just did  
11 the booking.
- 12 Q. Right, okay. You say in your statement that you wanted  
13 to work with children.
- 14 A. Mm-hm.
- 15 Q. Why did you want to work with children?
- 16 A. I just liked it. I was an only child. I lost my  
17 brother when I was 11 and I think I just liked and  
18 wanted to be with young people.
- 19 Q. Okay. At paragraph 3 you tell us that you met your  
20 husband whilst you were working at the boarding school  
21 and I understand you got married and you had a daughter  
22 in 1963.
- 23 A. That's right, yes.
- 24 Q. And you were looking after your daughter so you weren't  
25 able to work?

- 1 A. Mm-hm.
- 2 Q. And you found house prices quite high where you were  
3 living.
- 4 A. Yes.
- 5 Q. You went to visit your parents in Scotland and saw  
6 a cottage that you could afford and decided to buy it.
- 7 A. I asked John first. It was a joint thing.
- 8 Q. It was joint, you and your husband?
- 9 A. Yes.
- 10 Q. So you were moving to Scotland and you say that you  
11 needed more money?
- 12 A. Mm-hm.
- 13 Q. So you were looking for a job as well at that stage; is  
14 that right?
- 15 A. That's right, yes.
- 16 Q. You saw an advert for staff required at Quarriers and  
17 decided to apply for that?
- 18 A. Yes.
- 19 Q. I know it's a long time ago, but can you remember what  
20 the advert said? I don't need the exact words, but  
21 generally what was being advertised?
- 22 A. Just a house parent job.
- 23 Q. Okay. At paragraph 4 you say that you went for an  
24 interview with Mr Holman.
- 25 A. That's right, yes. He was head of Quarriers at the

1           time.

2           Q.   What was his role at Quarriers, do you remember?

3           A.   He was the general -- I don't know they would call him,

4           but he was the head.

5           LADY SMITH:   Was he the superintendent?   Was that what

6           he was called?

7           A.   Yes.   I would think that would be what he would be, yes.

8           MS RATTRAY:   You had an interview with him but you can't

9           remember, not surprisingly, what questions were asked.

10          But you think he asked about your experience to do the

11          job?

12          A.   Yes.

13          Q.   Do you know whether they were looking for any

14          qualifications in childcare at all?

15          A.   Well, I expect they would be, yes.   I had experience.

16          Q.   You think that this was in late 1964 or early 1965?

17          A.   Yes, yes.

18          Q.   In some of the records that we've recovered from

19          Quarriers, there is a reference possibly to you having

20          served at Quarriers since [REDACTED] 1964.

21          A.   Right.

22          Q.   Would that be right, do you think?

23          A.   That could be correct, yes.

24          Q.   You obviously had had some experience in working as

25          a house parent, although you didn't have childcare



- 1 Q. But your husband shared in that responsibility?
- 2 A. At night, yes.
- 3 Q. You say in your statement that you provided a reference  
4 and that was from [REDACTED]
- 5 A. Yes.
- 6 Q. Was that your employer?
- 7 A. At Banstead, yes.
- 8 Q. So when you arrived at Quarriers, were you given any  
9 training for the job?
- 10 A. I think we were given quite a few talks, general talks  
11 about the place and what was expected. But it wasn't an  
12 actual training course. But we were given a lot of  
13 interview talks. And explaining what they were aiming  
14 for and what they wanted.
- 15 Q. Can you remember in general terms what they told you  
16 they were wanting or what they were aiming for?
- 17 A. Not really, no. Just generally what we -- you know, run  
18 a decent household and the children's aims and what you  
19 aimed from them.
- 20 Q. Do you remember at all who it was who was giving these  
21 talks?
- 22 A. It might have been Mr Holman, but I can't remember who  
23 it was, who spoke.
- 24 Q. Who attended these talks? Was it just you and your  
25 husband or were there other people there?

- 1 A. No, just us.
- 2 Q. Do you remember for how long the period of listening to  
3 talks lasted? Was it just a day, was it a week, was it  
4 a month?
- 5 A. I think it possibly was two or three times a week. Two  
6 or three weeks once a week, sort of for a week or two,  
7 and I think then we could -- they'd ask us if there was  
8 anything we wanted to bring up and ask about.
- 9 Q. Were you given any written guidance or instructions at  
10 Quarriers as to how you should do your job as  
11 a house parent?
- 12 A. I can't remember about any of that.
- 13 Q. You say in your statement at paragraph 5 that you can't  
14 recall any staff handbook being issued to you, but you  
15 make reference to:
- 16 "There was a policy book in the main office."  
17 Can you help us at all with what the policy book  
18 was?
- 19 A. I think it possibly was if there was anything we were  
20 needing to make our mind up about or how to deal with  
21 something, we could go and have a look in the office and  
22 ask someone ...
- 23 LADY SMITH: Just one moment. Ms Rattray, can you get  
24 nearer the microphone and see if that helps? Obviously  
25 Helen is hearing you okay, but I think not everybody

1 in the room is picking up the sound from your  
2 microphone. If I could invite you just to say  
3 something, Ms Rattray.

4 MS RATTRAY: Helen, are you still able to hear me?

5 A. Yes.

6 LADY SMITH: What about everybody? It's not coming through  
7 the sound system.

8 MS RATTRAY: Helen, I think you're able to hear me, but it's  
9 not coming through our sound system here, so the other  
10 people who are in the hearing room are not able to hear  
11 me.

12 (Pause)

13 LADY SMITH: I'm sorry about this, Helen. It may be because  
14 the microphone is now feeding two different systems.

15 MS RATTRAY: Can you hear me now?

16 LADY SMITH: I think you're facing away from the microphone.  
17 Can you talk into the microphone?

18 (Pause)

19 LADY SMITH: I wonder if we can deal with this the  
20 old-fashioned way, Ms Rattray, by asking you really to  
21 speak up. Those of us who can hear through the system  
22 I think will be able to cope with that.

23 Helen, if you're not coping with Ms Rattray speaking  
24 as loudly as she is now going to speak so that -- you  
25 see, there are some people in the room who are having

1 difficulty hearing her because our electronic system  
2 isn't delivering to people in the room, although it's  
3 obviously working for you. So she's going to speak more  
4 loudly. Let me know if that's a problem for you. All  
5 right? Do you understand, Helen?

6 MS RATTRAY: Helen, can you hear us?

7 A. Yes.

8 LADY SMITH: Okay. If it's too loud, tell me.

9 MS RATTRAY: Helen, we were speaking about a policy book and  
10 you thought there was a book in the main office --

11 A. Yes.

12 Q. -- that you could go and read if you had any questions.  
13 Is that what you're saying?

14 A. Yes. And we could always ask to talk to Mr Holman or  
15 other -- I can't just remember who else, but there was  
16 a sister there or ... We could always ask. And I've  
17 got a feeling that there was a staff meeting every  
18 month, but I'm not quite sure whether it was Quarriers  
19 or whether it was Banstead. But I know there was  
20 a staff meeting where you could talk about things.

21 Q. And what kind of things could be talked about in a staff  
22 meeting?

23 A. Just things that we wanted to bring up and discuss about  
24 what was happening or that sort of thing. Anything that  
25 we weren't sure about or pleased with.

1 Q. Did that involve questions about how to look after the  
2 children?

3 A. It could do, it could do, yes.

4 Q. Can you remember at all what kind of questions came up  
5 or issues came up about looking after the children?

6 A. Not really, no. I can't remember that. It's been  
7 a long while.

8 Q. So you were given a cottage; is that correct?

9 A. Yes.

10 Q. And do you remember which cottage you were in?

11 A. Cottage 3.

12 Q. When you first arrived at Quarriers, did you move into  
13 cottage 3 straightaway?

14 A. Yes.

15 Q. Was there any induction at cottage 3 on your first day  
16 or first few weeks or anything of that nature whereby  
17 someone would be in the cottage with you showing you  
18 what to do?

19 A. I'm sure there was, yes. I think there was a matron as  
20 well as Mr Holman. They showed us round and told us  
21 what was expected. That sort of thing.

22 Q. Was there anything like a handover period when perhaps  
23 the previous house parents in cottage 3 were there with  
24 you, showing you how they did things?

25 A. No.

- 1 Q. Did you ever meet --
- 2 A. The lady had already gone; I think she retired.
- 3 Q. So you didn't meet the previous house parent?
- 4 A. No, no. I think she called in one day. She was coming  
5 through the area and said hello. But that was all.  
6 I think it was Miss McNair(?) her name was.
- 7 Q. If there wasn't a sort of handover period, were you left  
8 with records that you could consult and read to find out  
9 about the children in your care?
- 10 A. I think there must have been because I knew a bit about  
11 each of the children, so I must have been told and  
12 possibly had records.
- 13 Q. Can you remember where those records were kept, whether  
14 they were kept in the cottage or kept elsewhere in  
15 Quarriers?
- 16 A. I think they were down in the office. I don't think  
17 they were in the cottage. The cottage was more like  
18 a home and the children were about everywhere.
- 19 Q. Were there any other staff members in your cottage?
- 20 A. Yes. We had one assistant and a domestic help who came  
21 in daily.
- 22 Q. Did either of these people live in the cottage with you?
- 23 A. No. No.
- 24 Q. How many children were in your cottage?
- 25 A. I think there was about 15.

1 Q. Were they boys or girls or boys and girls?

2 A. Boys and girls.

3 Q. What was the age range of the children in your cottage?

4 A. Well, it started off about 6 or 7 and then there were  
5 teenagers and then we hadn't been there very long when  
6 there was a family came in, there was five of them.  
7 Three of them were at school, of the age range that we  
8 already had, and there were two little toddlers, and  
9 normally up until then they would go and live in  
10 a separate house for children who were toddlers and that  
11 age, and we were the first people who had little  
12 toddlers in with the rest of their family in with us.

13 We had two. One was 2 years old and one was 3 years  
14 old. They settled in nicely and they just did well and,  
15 as I say, we were the first household that had the  
16 little nursery school age children staying, which  
17 I think was good, they were with their siblings, their  
18 two brothers and sister, and they went on to do well.  
19 One of them even became a music teacher when she grew  
20 up.

21 LADY SMITH: Helen, when you and your husband moved into  
22 Quarriers, was your daughter about a year old, have  
23 I got that right?

24 A. Yes. She was.

25 LADY SMITH: There was her then in addition to these other

- 1 children?
- 2 A. That's right, yes.
- 3 MS RATTRAY: I think we've actually seen some records which  
4 suggest that in January 1965 there were 14 children in  
5 your care, seven boys and seven girls.
- 6 A. Mm-hm.
- 7 Q. And that seven of the children were under the age of  
8 6 years old; does that accord with your memory?
- 9 A. Yes, about that, yes.
- 10 Q. So you had a large group of very young children to care  
11 for?
- 12 A. Well, especially when we had the two little girls. That  
13 made quite a few -- and the rest would be another three  
14 smallish, youngish children. Their brother and sister  
15 were a little bit older, but they were quite young as  
16 well and (inaudible: distorted) --
- 17 Q. How -- sorry, carry on.
- 18 A. And [REDACTED] wasn't all that older, I think she may have  
19 been 6 or 7 when we got there.
- 20 Q. How did you manage to cope with looking after such  
21 a large number of very young children?
- 22 A. We managed fine. I had the help of the assistant and  
23 our domestic help was a good worker and we all worked  
24 together and it was fine. I was used to working with  
25 children, so yes.

- 1 Q. What did the children call you?
- 2 A. I think it was Auntie [REDACTED] QEA but I'm not sure. I think  
3 that's what it was, yes.
- 4 Q. So you were referred to as auntie, and was your husband  
5 referred to as uncle?
- 6 A. Yes.
- 7 Q. Who was it that decided that you should be called that?
- 8 A. I think it was us. I think we were -- it was open to  
9 what we wanted -- yes, I think so.
- 10 Q. We've spoken about the young children, but you had older  
11 children to look after as well.
- 12 A. Yes, we had teenagers.
- 13 Q. How old was the oldest child in your care?
- 14 A. I would think 14, 15 maybe towards the end. We had one  
15 teenager who was moved from another cottage to be with  
16 us. I don't know whether he wanted to be moved or  
17 whether the people in the other cottage wanted him  
18 moved, but he was moved to be with us and he was  
19 a teenager and he turned out to be a lovely chap.
- 20 Q. Okay.
- 21 A. There was [REDACTED] QNS he was a teenager, and then  
22 [REDACTED] who was in a school for difficult  
23 children in Aberdeen, and they moved him down to  
24 Quarriers, and he came with us and he was another good  
25 teenager that was just moved in and was quite happy, no

1 problems.

2 Q. Did you encounter any problems with the behaviour of  
3 older children?

4 A. Not at all, no. No, they were fine. Only one, and it  
5 wasn't a problem, but it was -- QNS disappeared  
6 one night, and I think I told it before, I've spoken  
7 about it before, that he went missing and we were going  
8 out of our mind with worry. Late -- in the early hours  
9 of the morning one of the teenagers came downstairs and  
10 opened the front door and he said, "Come in, my friend",  
11 and it was QNS and he was absolutely -- he said,  
12 "You're cold". He had taken -- he had walked up to the  
13 main road, thumbed a lift up to Glasgow to be there to  
14 bring the New Year in.

15 Q. I think you tell us about that at paragraph 35 of your  
16 statement. You say that you phoned the office to report  
17 that he was missing.

18 A. Yes.

19 Q. Do you remember what happened when the office was told  
20 that he was missing?

21 A. Well, I expect they -- I don't know whether they  
22 sent ... I don't know how they dealt with that, whether  
23 the police were looking for him or what, I don't really  
24 know, but I know we were going out of our minds. He was  
25 absolutely frozen and we had night store heaters and

1 I got him something hot to drink and a little snack and  
2 got him off to bed. The next day, we sat him down and  
3 we said how worried we were because it was a dangerous  
4 thing to go out at that time of night on his own,  
5 especially never to go into a car with people that you  
6 don't know, and we pointed out all the dangers.

7 He said, "Yeah", and he had to go up to the office  
8 to tell them what had happened because, obviously, we  
9 had reported it to them, and that was that. Apart from  
10 that, he was absolutely wonderfully behaved.

11 Q. Was there any sanction or punishment for running away?

12 A. No. No, no. I think we just wanted to make it -- for  
13 him to understand what a daft thing it was and  
14 a dangerous thing. He never did anything like that  
15 again.

16 Q. Did you ever experience any other children running away?

17 A. No, no.

18 LADY SMITH: Were you aware of children running away from  
19 any other cottages?

20 A. Not that I can remember. I mean, it's 40-odd years ago.  
21 There might have been, but I can't remember of any  
22 particular case.

23 LADY SMITH: Thank you.

24 MS RATTRAY: Going back to the behaviour of the older  
25 children, although you're having to manage teenagers and

1 a boy who's transferred cottage for a reason you weren't  
2 told and a boy who had previously been, I think, in an  
3 approved school, your position is that there were no  
4 problems at all with the children's behaviour?

5 A. None.

6 Q. What about Elizabeth, the person who we've spoken to you  
7 about? Elizabeth is her pseudonym. Can you remember?  
8 Because you say in your statement at paragraph 55 you  
9 say that:

10 "Elizabeth was never difficult, she wasn't cheeky."

11 A. No.

12 Q. "She never ran away and the relationship between her and  
13 her brother was good."

14 A. That's right, yes. Definitely (inaudible: distorted).

15 Q. Did you ever have problems with her behaviour?

16 A. Never had any problems with her behaviour.

17 Occasionally, if I was saying, you know, "You shouldn't  
18 do that", she might say, "I don't like you", but that  
19 was about it. There was never any problems that were  
20 difficult. It was just kids -- ordinary kids' sort of  
21 problems.

22 Q. And how would you describe your relationship with  
23 Elizabeth?

24 A. It was lovely. I've got fond memories of her. I can  
25 remember dressing her up in my wedding dress once. I've

1           been trying to look for the photograph, I've still got  
2           the photograph. She was lovely.

3           Q. Because Elizabeth, in her statement, takes the view that  
4           she felt that you and your husband hated her and her  
5           brother. Did you hate her and her brother?

6           A. No, no. No, they were lovely kids.

7           Q. Can you help us at all as to why she might feel that she  
8           was hated?

9           A. I think it might have been when the last person was  
10          there, she was the youngest little person in the cottage  
11          and felt special, and although we didn't make any  
12          special -- the youngsters coming into our cottage, much  
13          younger than her, we didn't make them any more special,  
14          we had to do more for them, wash them and do more things  
15          for them, more attention, but it wasn't because we liked  
16          them more, it was because they needed it and I think  
17          QDR ight have felt a bit left out because of that.

18          Q. Can you help us to describe the general atmosphere  
19          in the house? Because Elizabeth suggests that there was  
20          a lot of tension in the house.

21          A. I don't -- I didn't feel that there was any tension.  
22          There wasn't at all. But I think she obviously felt  
23          something.

24          Q. Do you think with the passage of time, that's perhaps  
25          affected your memory about --

1 A. No, no.

2 Q. -- the children not being a problem in terms of  
3 behaviour?

4 A. Definitely not. I would remember that.

5 Q. And the reason that I say that, Helen, is because we are  
6 aware that in January 1965, there was an inspection of  
7 Quarriers by Central Government, who were responsible  
8 for carrying out inspection.

9 The inspection involved going into quite a lot of  
10 the cottages and preparing a report about that. There  
11 is a report about cottage 3 when you and your husband  
12 were house parents there. Just for our records the  
13 reference is QAR.001.001.1554.

14 In that report, you are described, you and your  
15 husband, as house parents. It says that you're a young  
16 married couple with one child, a girl aged 3, and that  
17 you worked for three years in Beechholme, a large  
18 children's home in the south of England, that you have  
19 served at Quarriers since [REDACTED] 1964 -- and that's where  
20 I got the date that may be the date that you started at  
21 Quarriers -- your husband is a plumber by trade and  
22 serves as such at Quarriers, you are fairly well in  
23 control of this cottage, but have difficulty with older  
24 children, such as -- and they name a child who I think  
25 is the child you have named in your statement, who was

1 transferred from another cottage.

2 So they go on to say that you -- and I think they're  
3 referring to you and your husband:

4 "... are pleasant, sincere people who would profit  
5 from support and training."

6 There appears to be, from the inspection,  
7 a suggestion -- or not a suggestion but a statement --  
8 that you and your husband had difficulty with the older  
9 children, and an example of that was the boy who  
10 transferred from the other cottage.

11 A. No. Definitely not. I can't remember ever having any  
12 difficulty with him at all.

13 Q. Can you remember having difficulty with any of the  
14 children?

15 A. Not really, no.

16 Q. Just while we're on this report, the report concludes  
17 that:

18 "The house parents [that's you and your husband] are  
19 young and capable of learning."

20 There is reference to the state of the shed, which  
21 causes doubt as to the housekeeping standards of you.  
22 I'll come back to that.

23 They're also critical, not of you but of perhaps  
24 Quarriers, of the fact that five young people -- I think  
25 of you, that five young children were unattended in

1 a room at one stage and that wasn't satisfactory and  
2 that seven children under 6 years of ages should be  
3 placed in the cottage with a young married couple with  
4 a young child of their own points to bad grouping. And  
5 in the opinion of the inspector, the children in this  
6 cottage are not receiving the standard of individual  
7 care which they require.

8 I think that, in fairness to you, is about the  
9 number of children you're looking after, their ages, and  
10 perhaps the lack of training and support. Can you give  
11 me your response in general terms to what is said here?

12 A. Well, if you think that a normal family would be two or  
13 three little 'uns, there were all those and we coped  
14 very well with all the youngsters and they all seemed  
15 happy enough.

16 But if they think they ought to have had more  
17 one-to-one, then Quarriers maybe should have had smaller  
18 numbers in the cottages. But they were big cottages and  
19 I suppose the places were needed, but they always seemed  
20 to be as happy as they could be.

21 I mean, you think about their backgrounds and away  
22 from their parents and whatever happened to them, then  
23 they were doing well.

24 Q. Do you remember the inspection at that time?  
25 Do you have any memory of that?

- 1 A. No, no.
- 2 Q. Do you remember at all anyone from Quarriers coming to  
3 speak to you about life in the cottage and how maybe it  
4 could be changed to reduce the number of children?
- 5 A. No, no, not at all. I mean, if they had wanted to  
6 reduce the number of children, then they could have done  
7 it. But obviously, they were satisfied that things were  
8 okay. If I was worried about any of the children not  
9 doing well, then I would have taken it up with them.
- 10 Q. I think you say that at paragraph 16 of your statement  
11 that:
- 12 "None of the children that you took in [I think  
13 that's the children in your cottage] left us when  
14 we were there. They were all still in our cottage by  
15 the time we left after five years."
- 16 Is that right?
- 17 A. That's right. At one point, Elizabeth, she said that  
18 she and her brother had asked to be removed from our  
19 cottage. Well, that didn't happen in our time. They  
20 were still there and ... There was nothing like they  
21 wanted to be removed or weren't happy or anything with  
22 the cottage while we were there.
- 23 Q. So one time Elizabeth and her brother asked to be moved;  
24 do you know why they asked to be moved?
- 25 A. They didn't, not while we were there. I think going

1 through what Elizabeth was saying about other things,  
2 she might have mixed us up with the next people because  
3 when something else happened to her later on, as you  
4 know, she said that I had sent her to the hospital on  
5 her own. But I didn't even know that that had happened  
6 to her. It hadn't happened in our time.

7 Q. I think you are right there, Helen. We have heard from  
8 **QDR** since she wrote her statement and she's given oral  
9 evidence, as you're giving oral evidence, and I think  
10 we've clarified that that particular event that she  
11 refers to -- and you know about that because you've been  
12 told by the inquiry about it -- happened in a different  
13 cottage. And you're quite correct, it didn't happen  
14 with you.

15 A. No, no.

16 LADY SMITH: Helen, could I just take you back to the time  
17 of that inspection? You've heard that was in  
18 January 1965; right?

19 A. Yes.

20 LADY SMITH: At that time you'd have been 29? 29 years old?

21 A. Yes.

22 LADY SMITH: You'd have had your 30th birthday later in  
23 1965.

24 A. Yes.

25 LADY SMITH: And you had taken up this role at Quarriers as

1 a means of you and your husband getting a house, apart  
2 from anything else.

3 A. Yes.

4 LADY SMITH: You tell us that quite frankly in your  
5 statement, because you couldn't see any way of affording  
6 to buy a house when you were looking at that time with  
7 a small child and so on.

8 You did say just a few minutes ago that if you were  
9 worried about children, as you put it, not doing well,  
10 you'd have taken it up with the Quarriers management.  
11 But just putting yourself back in your 29-year-old  
12 shoes, new job, got the house that you needed, your own  
13 small child to look after, wouldn't you have been  
14 worried that if you did that, Quarriers might interpret  
15 it as an admission on your part of inability, an  
16 admission that you couldn't do the job? Do you see what  
17 I mean?

18 A. No. I don't see what you mean, sorry.

19 LADY SMITH: I'm trying to be fair to you, humanly. You  
20 were young, you were married, you needed a house, you'd  
21 got a house, you'd got a job. You had an awful lot of  
22 children to look after, particularly a large group of  
23 young children. You wouldn't have wanted to lose the  
24 job, so it would be only natural to be reluctant to say  
25 to your employers, "I'm struggling here", to use

1 a colloquialism, wouldn't it?

2 A. I didn't -- the sound wasn't quite ...

3 LADY SMITH: Okay, let's try again.

4 WITNESS SUPPORT OFFICER: Excuse me, my Lady, you may be

5 slightly too close to your microphone.

6 LADY SMITH: I'll try again. Can you hear me now, Helen?

7 A. A bit better, yes.

8 LADY SMITH: Okay.

9 We've agreed you were 29 at the time of the

10 inspection. That report you looked at a few minutes

11 ago, that was the beginning of 1965 and you were 29

12 then.

13 A. Mm-hm.

14 LADY SMITH: You had been glad to get a job that gave you

15 a house to live in; yes?

16 A. We already had a little cottage.

17 LADY SMITH: Yes, because you tell us in your statement that

18 you and your husband had not been able to afford to buy

19 a house; do you remember that?

20 A. We had bought a cottage, but it was living -- you need

21 two incomes sometimes [OVERSPEAKING] --

22 LADY SMITH: So you needed more income?

23 A. Yes.

24 LADY SMITH: And what the Quarriers job gave you was more

25 income and actually somewhere to live at the same time?

1 A. That's right, yes.

2 LADY SMITH: Did you rent out your own house?

3 A. We did for a little while.

4 LADY SMITH: Okay. I was just wondering whether, putting  
5 yourself in your 29-year-old shoes, it might have been  
6 very natural to be reluctant to go to your employer to  
7 say, "You're asking too much of me, I can't cope with  
8 all these children, particularly a group that has so  
9 many young children in it".

10 A. Well, I never, ever felt that way.

11 LADY SMITH: No?

12 A. Never, ever. All the time we were there I never felt  
13 that we weren't coping with the children we had.

14 LADY SMITH: I see.

15 A. We had five happy years and we were never, ever uptight  
16 about having those children there.

17 LADY SMITH: Thank you, Helen.

18 MS RATTRAY: Helen, do you know whether -- you felt you were  
19 coping with the children?

20 A. Yes.

21 Q. Do you know whether your husband felt the same or  
22 whether he might have felt differently at all?

23 A. No, he felt the same. I mean, he was at work during the  
24 day and would come home and he felt exactly the same.  
25 We were quite happy with the life that we had there and

- 1 with the children.
- 2 Q. So your husband, he was out at work during the day?
- 3 A. Yes.
- 4 Q. When did he come back to the cottage? Did he just come  
5 back in the evening or did he come back during the day  
6 at all?
- 7 A. I think he came back for his lunch but I can't remember  
8 whether he took a sandwich for his lunch. I think he  
9 probably did come back for his lunch. I can't just  
10 remember. Yes, he came back in the evening and he was  
11 quite happy with the situation.
- 12 Q. Because we also know that in relation to Elizabeth,  
13 there was a time in 1965 that Elizabeth was referred, we  
14 think by your husband, and presumably with your  
15 knowledge, to the psychologist at Quarriers because you  
16 thought there were problems with her behaviour.
- 17 A. Never, ever. Never, ever.
- 18 Q. The reason I say this, Helen, is I'm not simply relying  
19 on what Elizabeth has told us, but in addition to that  
20 we have seen a psychologist's report from the records,  
21 the children's records of Elizabeth, which is dated  
22 6 February 1965. What that says is that the  
23 psychologist, a Mrs or Dr Schaffer, saw Elizabeth at the  
24 request of her house father, who was concerned by her  
25 brutal behaviour towards the younger children. Is this

- 1 something you are aware of?
- 2 A. Never, ever. That's definitely not right.
- 3 Q. Because we know --
- 4 A. I mean, **QEK** wasn't in charge of the children. He was  
5 just the part-time dad, and if there had been any  
6 request, it would have come from me, and definitely not  
7 **QEK** - John.
- 8 Q. So do you remember at all suggesting --
- 9 A. Never.
- 10 Q. -- that Elizabeth should be referred to a psychologist?
- 11 A. No, never.
- 12 Q. Because we do have a report from a psychologist that  
13 suggests that the psychologist saw Elizabeth at the  
14 request of her house father in February 1965 and I think  
15 we're all quite clear that you were Elizabeth's  
16 house parents in February 1965.
- 17 A. Yes, we certainly were.
- 18 Q. What the psychologist says is that, and I'll read  
19 this -- and just for our own transcript record, this  
20 report can be found at QAR.001.007.7495.
- 21 What the psychologist says is:
- 22 "At present I feel her [referring to Elizabeth]  
23 misdemeanours are being rather exaggerated by her  
24 house parents. I can believe that she is an irritating  
25 and unresponsive child, but the behaviour which is being

1           complained of seems to be fairly normal of this age, eg  
2           she frequently offers to do tasks in the house, such as  
3           turn out cupboards and then makes the most appalling  
4           mess which then has to be cleaned up. Most children do  
5           this and there is no suggestion that the messes  
6           Elizabeth makes are the result of anything other than  
7           over-enthusiasm about and underestimation of the task in  
8           hand."

9           Does that sound familiar to you at all, the  
10          situation of **QDR** being overenthusiastic with a task,  
11          making a huge mess and you maybe thinking that there's  
12          a problem with her and she should see a psychologist?

13         A. Not one bit. I mean, kids do that sort of thing. It  
14          definitely wouldn't have come from John. I mean, if she  
15          needed anything it would have come from me. There was  
16          never any thought of that. Whether it was the school or  
17          wherever else, I don't know, that felt that she needed  
18          it, but it definitely didn't come from us.

19         Q. Is it possible that, with the passage of time, you're  
20          now speaking from a perspective, as an older and  
21          experienced lady, that such behaviour would be normal  
22          for a child of that age but perhaps that wasn't  
23          something you fully appreciated back in 1965?

24         A. I don't think so, no. No. Definitely not.

25         Q. What the psychologist then goes on to say is:

1            "I wonder whether there is any possibility of moving  
2 Elizabeth to a cottage where there are not many much  
3 younger children and where the house mother might have  
4 more time to direct Elizabeth's enthusiasm into  
5 acceptable channels."

6        A. Yes, that is what I feel about how she felt, but we  
7 didn't know that it bothered her. What she's been  
8 saying is -- I think she must have felt that she was  
9 being left out a bit because there were so many  
10 youngsters and we didn't make more of a fuss of them, we  
11 just were doing our work, they needed more practical  
12 work doing with them.

13        Q. Certainly the psychologist indicates or states that her  
14 behaviour was being complained of and the implication is  
15 it was being complained of by you and your husband.

16        A. No, never.

17        Q. One other thing. Although the psychologist suggested  
18 it would be better for QDR to move cottages in 1965,  
19 she remained with you --

20        A. Yes.

21        Q. -- but you indicated that all the children were with you  
22 when you left Quarriers.

23        A. That's right.

24        Q. But we have seen other records which demonstrate that  
25 QDR moved cottage in [REDACTED] 1967.

- 1 A. No. Whatever -- I can't understand that, because QDR  
2 was definitely there when we left.
- 3 Q. Can you remember exactly when or even roughly when you  
4 left Quarriers?
- 5 A. Roughly coming up to 1970.
- 6 Q. Because we have certainly seen records -- and we looked  
7 at those records in our hearing of Elizabeth -- that she  
8 was moved to cottage 7 in [REDACTED] 1967.
- 9 A. No. Elizabeth was with us the whole time we were there.
- 10 Q. Is it possible that the passage of time has affected  
11 your memory of events?
- 12 A. No, definitely not. I would remember that because I can  
13 remember the other children that were moved from other  
14 places and I would remember that.
- 15 No, no, she was definitely there. I don't know  
16 what's gone on there.
- 17 Q. Okay. I'm going to move on to a different topic and  
18 that's the topic of supervision. We've spoken about an  
19 inspection that was carried out by an external agency,  
20 it was a government inspection of Quarriers generally.  
21 What other inspections, whether by outside agencies or  
22 by other people in Quarriers, were carried out that you  
23 can recall?
- 24 A. No, I can't recall any inspections.
- 25 Q. Can you recall any arrangement whereby someone such as

- 1 Mr Holman would come into the cottage and just check  
2 whether everything was okay and see how the children  
3 were?
- 4 A. No.
- 5 Q. You indicate in your statement, I think, that at one  
6 stage Mr Holman is replaced and I think you had  
7 Joe Mortimer. Do you remember that name?
- 8 A. Mr Mortimer, yes.
- 9 Q. Do you remember any arrangement whereby Mr Mortimer  
10 would come into the cottage and just check out whether  
11 everything was in order?
- 12 A. No. No. Never.
- 13 Q. I'm going to ask you now about records. You mentioned  
14 earlier on that when you came into the cottage, you  
15 think you might have seen records which were kept in the  
16 office or been told in some way about the children who  
17 you were going to care for. Were there any records that  
18 you kept in the cottage about the children or what  
19 happened in the cottage?
- 20 A. No, I don't think so.
- 21 Q. For example, if someone came to visit the cottage, was  
22 there any record written down about who came to visit,  
23 who they were visiting and when they visited?
- 24 A. I don't think so, no. I might be wrong there, but I've  
25 got no recollection of keeping a record of who visited.

- 1           There wasn't many visitors.
- 2       Q. Do you have any recollection of any records at all or  
3       any notes that you may have been asked to keep about the  
4       children or events in the cottage?
- 5       A. No, no.
- 6       Q. I'm going to move on now, Helen, to the question of  
7       discipline. Can you describe what you remember about  
8       the approach to disciplining children or punishing  
9       children in cottage 3?
- 10      A. What do you mean, the approach? It was just what was  
11      going on with each child at the time and how to help  
12      them through it, but there was no big discipline going  
13      on.
- 14      Q. Your position is, as you've stated already, that you  
15      didn't have problems with the behaviour of children in  
16      cottage 3?
- 17      A. No.
- 18      Q. Were the children ever naughty?
- 19      A. Not really naughty as really naughty, but they might  
20      have done little things and you just sort of said,  
21      "Don't do that, don't do that", to them, that's it --
- 22      Q. And if --
- 23      A. -- or, "You should be doing such-and-such", or, "You  
24      shouldn't do that".
- 25      Q. So a child might be told off if they were naughty?

- 1 A. Mm-hm, yes, yes.
- 2 Q. And what would happen if the child didn't listen to that  
3 and kept on being naughty?
- 4 A. Well, we'd just say, you know, "I shall have to report  
5 you to the office if you keep on doing this", or  
6 something like that. But there was never any big  
7 problems.
- 8 Q. So did you ever report a child to the office?
- 9 A. I don't think so, no. There might have been the odd  
10 time, but I can't remember. As I say, it was **QNS**  
11 was -- when he disappeared, but I can't remember doing  
12 any other big reports.
- 13 Q. Did you ever encounter a situation where a child was  
14 misbehaving, you told off the child, the child didn't  
15 listen and continued to do whatever they were doing, and  
16 you had to impose some form of sanction or punishment  
17 because of what they were doing?
- 18 A. Not really, no. No, just tell them not to do this again  
19 and that was it. I never had a lot of problems of them  
20 being really, you know, anything (inaudible: distorted)  
21 naughty (inaudible: distorted) carry-on.
- 22 Q. Would you agree that some of these children may have  
23 come to Quarriers from a quite troubled background?
- 24 A. Oh gosh, they must have done, yes. They must have come  
25 from troubled backgrounds.

- 1 Q. Is it not then rather likely that children who had  
2 a troubled childhood would perhaps misbehave on some  
3 occasions?
- 4 A. They might have misbehaved a bit, but nothing that would  
5 stand out and had to be really dealt with.
- 6 Q. So are you saying that the only sanction or punishment  
7 or way of dealing with misbehaviour that you ever did  
8 was to tell a child off?
- 9 A. Yes, that's right. Or, you know, if they had something  
10 that they did special, say, "Well, you're not doing that  
11 today or next week", or that sort of thing. But it  
12 wasn't any big question. No, it was nothing really ...
- 13 Q. I think in your statement you mention that you might  
14 send a child to bed. Is that the kind of thing you  
15 would do?
- 16 A. That's right, yes. Go to bed early or something like  
17 that.
- 18 Q. Might you give a child a job to do as a sanction?
- 19 A. Yes, it might be a wee job, but nothing like cleaning  
20 all the shoes that was mentioned, but yes.
- 21 Q. What kind of --
- 22 A. Drying up, doing the dishes, drying dishes and helping  
23 with putting the bags out for the laundry and things  
24 like that.
- 25 Q. So if a child wasn't behaving and they needed some form

1 of discipline and sanction, you might give them a job to  
2 do?

3 A. Yes, but nothing really that wasn't suitable for their  
4 age.

5 LADY SMITH: Tell me about putting bags out for the laundry.  
6 What did that involve?

7 A. When the beds were changed, we'd fold them -- not  
8 particularly -- and put them in a bag ready to be  
9 collected to be laundered at the laundry.

10 LADY SMITH: Were these big bags?

11 A. They were just made of material, they weren't all that  
12 big, they'd not be heavy or anything.

13 LADY SMITH: If you take account of the children, and no  
14 doubt yourselves, we're talking about 16 sets of sheets?

15 A. Mm-hm.

16 LADY SMITH: What would the children who were given this  
17 chore have to do with the laundry bags?

18 A. Well, they wouldn't be given the chore, they'd be  
19 helping the member of staff that was doing it, just  
20 pushing them in the bag. We'd never ask them to take  
21 them downstairs, which could be dangerous, or anything  
22 like put them by the door -- I can't remember whether we  
23 put them outside or kept them by the door to be  
24 collected.

25 LADY SMITH: I see. So when you said they might have to put

1           the bags out for the laundry, you didn't actually mean  
2           putting the bags out for the laundry; is that what  
3           you're telling me?

4           A. No.

5           LADY SMITH: All right.

6           MS RATTRAY: You mentioned, as you are aware, that Elizabeth  
7           said in her evidence that she might have been given the  
8           job of polishing everyone's shoes as a sanction.  
9           Is that something you did?

10          A. Well, definitely not. One member of staff would do it  
11          because it would be far too filthy for them to put the  
12          shoe polish on. They would mess up their clothes and  
13          wherever they were doing it. But they might have -- the  
14          member of staff would be putting the polish on and doing  
15          a bit of polishing, and there might have been a little  
16          bit of dusting at the end, but there was never any big  
17          cleaning.

18          Q. But a child might at some stage be helping the staff  
19          member to dust off or polish the shoes?

20          A. Just maybe a little bit of a dust-off or something like  
21          that, yes, but definitely not putting polish on.

22          Q. Right. If the member of staff applied the polish then  
23          the child might be asked or told to dust off? Is that  
24          not just polishing?

25          A. No, no. Do it with a brush first and then in the end

- 1           give a little bit of a rub, a polish over with the  
2           duster just to finish it off.
- 3       Q.   So would the children help with the brush?
- 4       A.   I would have thought no because that could be dirty on  
5           their clothes and things.
- 6       Q.   Whereabouts were the shoes kept in the cottage?
- 7       A.   I think ... I'm not sure. I think there was a sort of  
8           shed with a passage towards it. I think the shoes were  
9           probably out there.
- 10      Q.   So when children came in from outside, they would take  
11         their shoes off and leave them in the shed?
- 12      A.   Mm.
- 13      Q.   So is the shed not a place that it would be all right to  
14         make a mess, polishing the shoes?
- 15      A.   Well, not so much the mess there, but their clothes and  
16         themselves would be messy. I think possibly the  
17         polishing was probably done a bit further in than the  
18         shed.
- 19      Q.   So it's your position that Elizabeth at no time was told  
20         to polish shoes, polish everyone's shoes?
- 21      A.   Well, help, help a member of staff to do the -- to  
22         polish the shoes, but it wasn't (inaudible: distorted)  
23         the dirty bit of it.
- 24      Q.   Right. She might have been told as a sanction, "You can  
25         go and help this member of staff to polish all the

1 shoes"; that's possible?

2 A. Yes.

3 Q. And would your husband's boots have been included

4 in that?

5 A. No.

6 Q. Did your husband wear big, heavy boots for work?

7 A. I wouldn't have thought so.

8 Q. Can you remember any big heavy boots?

9 A. I can't remember him having big heavy boots -- but even

10 the staff wouldn't be cleaning my husband's boots, he

11 would be doing it himself, if he ever did it with work

12 boots.

13 Q. Whose shoes did the staff clean?

14 A. The children's shoes.

15 Q. So if your shoes or your husband's shoes happened to be

16 there in the shed with the children's shoes, they would

17 simply leave them to one side?

18 A. They wouldn't be there, they'd be up in our room, our

19 shoes.

20 LADY SMITH: Ms Rattray, it's 11.30. Is that a convenient

21 point to have the break?

22 Helen, we normally take a mid-morning break at this

23 point, so that's what I'm going to do now, for about

24 15 minutes; that will give you a break as well at your

25 end.



- 1 A. Mine, yes.
- 2 Q. Was it also the rule of Quarriers, because you mention  
3 that your job might be on the line?
- 4 A. I don't know. I mean, I'm just thinking that if  
5 I smacked a child that I would, you know ... It  
6 wouldn't be allowed.
- 7 Q. Because obviously, we're talking about a time in the  
8 1960s when smacking a child may well have been  
9 considered an appropriate form of chastisement.
- 10 A. Yes.
- 11 Q. But that's not something that you would ever have done.  
12 Is that what you say?
- 13 A. No, that's right.
- 14 Q. It was your rule and you don't know if it was Quarriers'  
15 rule. Were you at any stage given any guidance or  
16 instruction by Quarriers as to what would be  
17 an appropriate way of punishing a child?
- 18 A. I don't think so, no, I don't think so. I might be  
19 wrong, but I can't remember ever being told anything  
20 about that.
- 21 Q. If you did punish a child by whatever means, did you  
22 keep a record of that?
- 23 A. No, because there was never any sort of heavy  
24 punishment, you know. It was just everyday living, like  
25 any mum would do.

1 LADY SMITH: I thought you said, Helen, that you might, for  
2 example, deprive a child of a treat that was coming up,  
3 like a trip somewhere.

4 A. No. If there was a trip coming up, I wouldn't have  
5 stopped that.

6 LADY SMITH: Well, you said earlier that a punishment you  
7 might use was not letting a child have something or do  
8 something that was coming up. I'm using the word  
9 "treat", it may not have been your word, but that was  
10 the idea, I think, that you were giving us:  
11 a deprivation of privilege.

12 A. It might have been some small privilege, but not if it  
13 was like going on a trip or anything like that.

14 LADY SMITH: All right. Well, let's say it's a small  
15 privilege. Are you telling me you wouldn't have kept  
16 a record of that?

17 A. No, no.

18 MS RATTRAY: Do you remember there ever being something  
19 called a punishment book or log in the cottage --

20 A. No.

21 Q. -- that you were expected to record any details of  
22 punishment of a child in?

23 A. There might have been. I can't remember having that,  
24 but there might have been.

25 Q. Can you remember ever writing down anything that might

1           have happened if a child misbehaved and a sanction was  
2           imposed?

3           A. No, no.

4           Q. Helen, I'm now going to ask you about mealtimes. If I  
5           understand correctly, you with your catering and cooking  
6           background, you were the person who cooked the meals in  
7           the cottage?

8           A. Yes, except on a Friday.

9           Q. What happened on a Friday?

10          A. On a Friday night, my husband used to do -- fry the fish  
11          and chips.

12          Q. Did you have any help in preparing meals?

13          A. No, and I definitely didn't get them to peel the  
14          potatoes, if that's what you're going to bring up.

15          Q. You've got a cottage of 14 children, that's a lot of  
16          mouths to feed. If you're going to have potatoes or any  
17          other vegetables, there will be a fair amount of  
18          prepping, preparing of the vegetables. Was that not  
19          a chore or a task that you might ask an older child to  
20          help with?

21          A. Well, there were three of us. There was my assistant,  
22          my domestic help and me, and they were at school, the  
23          kids, during the week. They used to go to different  
24          things, Quarriers used to put loads of things on at the  
25          weekend for them up in the hall or in the garden, the

1 field and things like that. They were busy doing  
2 things.

3 Q. So did you ever ask a child to help peel potatoes?

4 A. Not that I can remember them peeling the potatoes and  
5 getting annoyed at them peeling it too thick. You'd  
6 just say, "Can you peel them a bit thinner?" but I can't  
7 remember it being a thing that was done, you know --

8 Q. Because you're aware --

9 A. -- on a regular basis.

10 Q. When you say on a regular basis, you may not have asked  
11 on a regular basis. Did you ever ask? Would there ever  
12 be an occasion?

13 A. On a varied occasion. I have no recollection of it  
14 being a thing, a set thing for the children to do.

15 Q. So it may not have been a set thing for children to do,  
16 but there may have been occasions on which --

17 A. There might have been the odd time. I've got no  
18 recollection of that. But it's safe to say that if they  
19 were peeling it too thick, I'd just say, "Can you peel  
20 them a bit thinner?" It's very difficult -- if you've  
21 got children that you're in charge of, to let them loose  
22 with a -- I don't think there were potato peelers in  
23 those days, it was sharp knives, you've got to be a bit  
24 careful.

25 Q. So if Elizabeth has said that she would be told off for

- 1 peeling the potatoes too thickly and that you would  
2 check in the bins, what do you say to that?
- 3 A. Well, I've got no recollection of that. But so what?  
4 If she -- I can't think that it was any big thing if, on  
5 the odd occasion -- I've got no recollection of her  
6 peeling potatoes -- there obviously might have been.  
7 But if I checked in the bins they were a bit thick,  
8 well, you would say, "Can you peel these a bit thinner  
9 if you do it again because when you grow up, it's going  
10 to cost you a lot of money, the potatoes if you peel  
11 them more thick". But there wasn't any big thing  
12 about ...
- 13 Q. If I understand correctly what you're explaining to us,  
14 whilst you have no specific recollection of an event,  
15 it is possible that there might have been an occasion  
16 where a child such as Elizabeth was peeling potatoes and  
17 you may well have pointed out to her that they were  
18 peeled too thick?
- 19 A. It's possible, but that's a thing that if you've got  
20 a kid doing something, then you've got to show them what  
21 to do as they grow up and do it right, but not push on  
22 about it, just say, "The next time you do that, cut them  
23 and peel them a bit thinner because you're wasting a lot  
24 of potato", something like that. There wasn't any big  
25 deal. It wasn't a big thing, I don't think, that the

1 kids did.

2 Q. As I understand it, your position is such an event could  
3 well have happened, but from your perspective it wasn't  
4 a big deal?

5 A. That's right, yes.

6 Q. If I can put the perspective of Elizabeth. Her  
7 perspective, as she expanded on in her oral evidence,  
8 was that when it was pointed out she wasn't peeling the  
9 potatoes thinly enough by you, she was:

10 "... scolded, rowed, put down or maybe, you know,  
11 sometimes a push."

12 Did that ever happen?

13 A. No, no, no.

14 Q. Her view is that she was scolded and there was a row and  
15 there was a put-down and sometimes a push, and that was  
16 to put you in a more authoritative state to get control  
17 over her behaviour and to do things your way; is that  
18 right?

19 A. Well, not ... There wasn't a -- it wasn't a big thing.  
20 There wasn't any great thing about it. It was a case  
21 of: this is the way that you do potatoes.

22 Q. Is it possible that Elizabeth might have experienced it  
23 as a row and felt put down by it?

24 A. Well, she might have done, but I can't see that any big  
25 deal was made of it. I don't know.

- 1 Q. Do you think it might have involved a push?
- 2 A. No, no. What would I push her for? Especially if she  
3 had a knife in her hand. I mean, what would I push her  
4 for?
- 5 Q. You might have pushed her, for example, to assert your  
6 authority, as it appears to be in Elizabeth's view. Do  
7 you think you could have done that?
- 8 A. No, definitely not.
- 9 Q. When meals were served, what would happen to children  
10 who didn't want to eat their dinner, if they didn't like  
11 the food, for example?
- 12 A. I know what's coming up, with liver.
- 13 Q. Well, just before we move on to the specific issue, just  
14 in general terms, how were children managed who, you  
15 having cooked all this food and served it to them, and  
16 they said, "I don't like that, I don't want it"? How  
17 would you respond to that?
- 18 A. Well, I'd tell them two or three times, "You'd better  
19 try and eat a bit of that?" and eventually if they  
20 didn't, that was it. What would any family do?
- 21 Q. Well, was there ever an occasion when you made a child  
22 sit there when everyone else had left the table?
- 23 A. I don't think so, but there might have been. I don't  
24 think so. There might have been a time, but what would  
25 be the point? Because if they sat there after everybody

- 1           else was finished, it would be stone cold.
- 2       Q.   Perhaps the point would be that if the child then had to  
3           eat their food cold, it might encourage them next time  
4           to eat it when it's hot.  Would that be something that  
5           you might have done to encourage children to eat?
- 6       A.   Not really.  I wouldn't have ...  I would leave it there  
7           for a while until everybody had cleared the first course  
8           up and I'd dished the puddings up, and eventually I'd  
9           say, "Right, that's it", and take it away.
- 10      Q.   So everyone else would be having their pudding and the  
11           child who wasn't eating would still have their main  
12           course there?
- 13      A.   And then later on, before everybody had finished their  
14           pudding, they'd get their pudding.  I'd take it away and  
15           that would be it.
- 16      Q.   So children who refused to eat their main course were  
17           still given pudding?
- 18      A.   Yes.
- 19      Q.   At this stage, Helen, I'm going to move on to the third  
20           part and that is to put to you specific allegations  
21           which have been made by Elizabeth and of which you've  
22           been given earlier notice.  At this stage, this is just  
23           to remind you of the warning that Lady Smith gave to you  
24           at the outset, that you are not required to answer the  
25           questions in relation to allegations.  That is because

1           you don't have to admit to committing an offence but if  
2           you do tell us about it, then I will ask you more  
3           questions about that --

4           A. Right.

5           Q. -- and anything you say to us might well one day be used  
6           in another setting, such as a court.

7           A. Dear, dear, dear. I mean ...

8           Q. What I'm explaining to you, Helen, is that you have the  
9           right not to answer the questions if you choose not to.

10          A. I will be answering everything.

11          Q. There are some specific allegations that have been made  
12          and some of them are more serious than others.

13                 One of the allegations that Elizabeth has made is,  
14          she talks about being very attached to a white teddy  
15          bear and that you removed it from her and she never got  
16          it back again. Is that something you remember at all?

17          A. I don't remember the teddy bear, but what I say is  
18          this: if that teddy bear was hers, and she was getting  
19          a bit older and maybe one of the younger ones wanted it,  
20          I would ask her, "Can you give that or can they borrow  
21          or can they have it for a little while?" and if she said  
22          no, then no would be no. Because that teddy bear would  
23          be hers and that's how I dealt with kids and their  
24          belongings: if it's theirs, it's theirs. People who  
25          have got teddies, they've still got them when they're

- 1 grown up, they love them, they love their teddies.
- 2 Q. So if someone had taken a cherished toy, such as a teddy  
3 bear, from a child in care, you do take the view that  
4 that would have been a cruel thing to do?
- 5 A. It would have been, and I would never, ever do that.  
6 Never. I'd never do it to any kid. I mean, if it's  
7 hers, it was hers. The only way if some -- if it was  
8 some of the little ones needing something, I would ask  
9 her, "Would it be all right if so-and-so had it?" and if  
10 she said, "No, it's mine, it's mine", I would say,  
11 "Okay, it's yours, you keep it". But I'd never, ever  
12 take something that somebody, a child or a grown-up,  
13 really wanted and loved. I'd never take it from them.  
14 Never. Never, ever.
- 15 Q. Moving on to the next specific allegation made by  
16 Elizabeth, that was in relation to being asked to -- or  
17 told to polish everyone's boots, including your  
18 husband's big heavy boots, as a punishment. But we've  
19 already talked about that and you've already given your  
20 response in relation to that.
- 21 A. Yes.
- 22 Q. So the next matter I'm going to turn to: did you ever  
23 make a child eat something that they didn't like?
- 24 A. No. No.
- 25 Q. That never happened?

- 1 A. Never happened, no.
- 2 Q. In relation to any child?
- 3 A. No, no.
- 4 Q. Did you ever force-feed a child?
- 5 A. No. Most definitely not, because (a) that would be  
6 a very dangerous thing to do, they could choke, and  
7 secondly, it's not my way of doing things.
- 8 Q. Did you ever make Elizabeth face the wall, pull her hair  
9 back and ram food, liver, cold, down her throat?
- 10 A. Never, ever. I just don't know where it's coming from.  
11 I mean, that's just not my way of doing things. And to  
12 be a person who is responsible for a whole household of  
13 children, to push something down their -- I mean, you  
14 just couldn't do anything like that. That's  
15 irresponsible and dangerous and I would never do it.
- 16 Q. Is it possible --
- 17 A. I never did that to Elizabeth, never.
- 18 Q. Is it possible something of that nature could have  
19 happened if you lost your temper?
- 20 A. No, definitely not. Most definitely not. That is an  
21 irresponsible, dangerous thing to do. If I caught any  
22 of my staff doing it, I would be really cross.
- 23 Q. Did you ever catch any of your staff doing it?
- 24 A. I didn't, no.
- 25 Q. So what I'll say, just to give you very full

1 information, because Elizabeth spoke about it in more  
2 detail when she gave her oral evidence, she explained  
3 that there was food she wouldn't eat but when her  
4 brother was there, she was able to pass the food to her  
5 brother. But after he left, she was told by you that --  
6 what she said is this:

7 "She said that if I don't eat it, I'm getting it for  
8 teatime and she gave me it cold and she took me from the  
9 dining area to sit in the kitchen and she put a chair by  
10 the table facing the wall."

11 Did that happen?

12 A. That definitely didn't happen because her brother didn't  
13 leave while we were there. Her brother was there all  
14 the time we were there, so that must have happened after  
15 we left by -- from someone else. Her brother didn't  
16 leave while we were there.

17 Q. She goes on to say:

18 "She kept coming in to check whether I'd started on  
19 the food and made an effort, and I hadn't, and she was  
20 pointing and doing all this, and I'm going like this  
21 with her."

22 And I think we saw some waving of the arms:

23 "And she said, 'You will eat it', and she'd be  
24 shouting at me. Then she totally lost it. She pulled  
25 my hair back and she's moving it [and I think it's the

1 food] up to my mouth. She pulled my mouth open and  
2 shoved a big thick piece of liver in my gob and it was  
3 vile and I clamped my chin and that made her angrier.  
4 I would not eat this."

5 A. I mean, anybody with any sense and any responsibility  
6 would never do that to a kid. Apart from it being  
7 horrible, it's too dangerous, and another thing is  
8 I didn't like liver when I was a kid, so I know what it  
9 was like.

10 Most definitely that didn't happen. Whether it  
11 happened after we'd gone -- because she's going on about  
12 when her brother left. Her brother didn't leave while  
13 we were there, so it must have been after we left,  
14 someone else. It's the same with the business of going  
15 to the hospital on her own: that didn't happen when  
16 we were there.

17 Q. Just to be clear, I'm not going to put to you the issue  
18 of going to the hospital on her own because Elizabeth  
19 has accepted that that wasn't you, that she had moved to  
20 another cottage by that stage.

21 A. Yes.

22 Q. Okay?

23 A. Yes. I mean, I think we've got to try and put ourselves  
24 in her position. She was growing up away from her  
25 parents and she had house parents, one after the other,

1           and all these memories. It must be difficult for her to  
2           accept who did what and when.

3           Q. So are you suggesting that Elizabeth could actually have  
4           experienced such an event but she's become confused  
5           about which house parent it was?

6           A. Well, I know it wasn't us, so ...

7           LADY SMITH: Were the children in your cottage given liver  
8           to eat?

9           A. Yes, I think so.

10          LADY SMITH: Thank you.

11          A. It's not a popular thing with children, but we didn't  
12          have that choice. We had to cook what was sent and  
13          delivered to the house.

14          MS RATTRAY: Moving on to a further allegation, did you ever  
15          make a child sit on a bench where the children took  
16          their shoes off as a sanction for misbehaving?

17          A. Take their shoes off for misbehaving?

18          Q. Sorry, did you ever make a child sit on a bench in the  
19          place where the children took their shoes off as  
20          a sanction for misbehaving?

21          A. I don't think -- I don't really know. Maybe the child  
22          would go and sit out on the bench for misbehaving.

23          Q. Yes, I think you've already told us that the children  
24          took their shoes off in a place that you refer to as the  
25          shed. I think we spoke about that when we were talking

1           about polishing shoes. Is that a place where you might  
2           have sent a child to sit if they hadn't behaved?

3       A. I might have done, but I can't see -- I can't remember  
4           anything like that. But what problem would it be if  
5           they had to sit in the shed for a little while? Is  
6           there more to it?

7       Q. Yes, there was more to it. Did you ever hit a child  
8           with a wooden spoon or anything else?

9       A. No. Never. That I most definitely didn't do.

10      Q. Did you ever make Elizabeth sit there on the bench  
11         in the shed as a sanction for misbehaving?

12      A. I don't know.

13      Q. Did you ever bend over Elizabeth and lean right up into  
14         her face?

15      A. No. I wouldn't have thought so. It's not my way of  
16         dealing with --

17      Q. Did you ever hit Elizabeth with a wooden spoon?

18      A. No, definitely not. Most definitely not. A wooden  
19         spoon? I mean ...

20      Q. Elizabeth says that you hit her three times with  
21         something like a wooden spoon and that left a raised  
22         imprint on her leg. What's your response to that?

23      A. Definitely not. Why didn't she go and tell somebody and  
24         report it?

25      Q. Well, I think we can move on to an event of that nature.

1 Do you ever recall an occasion where Elizabeth ran to  
2 Joe Mortimer and complained about your behaviour towards  
3 her?

4 A. She might have done, but I've got no ... I never got  
5 any complaints from Mr Mortimer about that if she did  
6 that. Never got any complaints from Mr Mortimer.

7 Q. What Elizabeth tells us is that:

8 "[You] had started hitting her again, it was quite  
9 late at night, it was bedtime, and I'd had enough and  
10 I ran from number 3 down to Mr Mortimer's house, knocked  
11 on his door, and this was a big deal, this is the big  
12 man, the superintendent, the man to be feared".

13 Do you remember an occasion when you had started to  
14 hit Elizabeth and it was late at night, it was bedtime,  
15 and she ran from cottage 3 down to Mr Mortimer's house?

16 A. No. She never -- I have never hit Elizabeth. Never,  
17 ever. And she never, ever ran out late at night down to  
18 Mr Mortimer and told him anything. So either she's  
19 making it up because she feels bad about things, or it  
20 was at a time when it was somebody else that was there.  
21 But there was never any occasion when I hit anybody in  
22 my care, ever.

23 MS RATTRAY: My Lady, I have no further questions for this  
24 witness.

25 LADY SMITH: Thank you very much.

1           Are there any outstanding applications for questions  
2           of this witness? No.

3           Helen, those are all the questions we have for you.  
4           Thank you very much for engaging with the inquiry, both  
5           in relation to your written statement, which we have,  
6           and in talking to us today over the video link. That's  
7           been very helpful to me in the work I have to do here  
8           and I'm now able to let you go. Thank you.

9                           (The video link was terminated)

10          MS RATTRAY: My Lady, perhaps at this stage it would be  
11           helpful to have a short break while we set up the next  
12           witness.

13          LADY SMITH: The next witness is also coming by video link  
14           as well. Yes.

15          (12.17 pm)

16                           (A short break)

17          (12.42 pm)

18          LADY SMITH: This witness is, I think, John; is that right?

19          MS RATTRAY: Yes, that's right, my Lady. A witness who has  
20           the right to remain anonymous and has chosen the  
21           pseudonym "John".

22          LADY SMITH: Can you hear me, John?

23          THE WITNESS: Yes, thank you.

24          LADY SMITH: Let me just explain who I am: I'm Lady Smith  
25           and I'm the chair of the Scottish Child Abuse Inquiry.

1           What I would like to do is have you take the oath, so  
2           you need to raise your right hand, please.

3                               "JOHN" (sworn)

4                               (The witness appeared via video link)

5       LADY SMITH:   John, what happens next is I'm going to pass  
6           you over to Ms Rattray, who will explain what approach  
7           she is going to take.  Ms Rattray is one of the counsel  
8           to the inquiry.  All right?

9       A.   Yes, thank you.

10      LADY SMITH:  Can I just say that if at any time you can't  
11           hear us or you can't see us properly, please say.  It's  
12           very important that you feel that you're communicating  
13           fully with the inquiry.  All right?

14      A.   Yes, thank you.

15                               Questions from MS RATTRAY

16      MS RATTRAY:  Good afternoon, John.

17      A.   Good afternoon.

18      Q.   You should have a folder in front of you or at least  
19           a copy of the written statement that you gave to the  
20           inquiry.

21      A.   Yes.

22      Q.   I'm going to give the statement reference, which we've  
23           given, which is WIT.003.001.7629.  You'll see that  
24           number in the top right-hand corner of your statement.

25      A.   Yes.

1 Q. To start with, if we could turn to the back page of your  
2 statement, which is page 7641. Can you confirm that  
3 you've signed your statement?

4 A. Yes.

5 Q. And at paragraph 57, just above your signature, you  
6 confirm that you have no objection to your witness  
7 statement being published as part of the evidence to the  
8 inquiry and you believe the facts stated in this witness  
9 statement are true; is that correct?

10 A. Yes.

11 Q. I'm just going to ask you: what year were you born in?  
12 I don't need the date or the month, simply the year of  
13 your birth.

14 A. 1938.

15 Q. John, I'm going to ask you some questions about your  
16 experiences when you were working for Quarriers.

17 A. Yes.

18 Q. I'll first look at some background information about how  
19 you came to be working for Quarriers. Then I'll ask you  
20 some questions about what happened when you were at  
21 Quarriers. Then, thirdly, I'm going to ask you to  
22 comment on certain allegations that have been made by  
23 a child who was in the care of yourself and your wife.

24 These allegations -- you have been given some notice  
25 of them and when I refer to that person, I'm going to

1 call her by her pseudonym, which is "Elizabeth".

2 A. Okay.

3 Q. But you obviously know what Elizabeth's real name is,  
4 but for today we're just going to refer to her as  
5 Elizabeth.

6 A. That's fine.

7 MS RATTRAY: My Lady, perhaps at this stage, perhaps  
8 a warning. Although many of the allegations seem to be  
9 directed towards the previous witness, I think it would  
10 be sensible to have a warning.

11 LADY SMITH: Yes.

12 John, I don't know if you remember, but at the time  
13 of giving your statement it was explained to you that  
14 you have a right not to, as we say, incriminate  
15 yourself. Although this is not a trial and it is not  
16 a courtroom, that right applies here in an inquiry just  
17 as it does in a courtroom.

18 What that means in practice is that if you're asked  
19 any questions about whether or not you did something  
20 that could amount to a crime, you don't have to answer  
21 them because you're not bound to incriminate yourself,  
22 you have a right not to answer any questions. So if any  
23 such questions do arise and you don't want to answer  
24 them, you just tell me that. All right?

25 A. Certainly.

1 LADY SMITH: But if you choose to answer them, I should  
2 explain to you that all your evidence is being recorded  
3 and it will appear in a transcript, so if anyone wanted  
4 to rely on it at a later date, for example in  
5 a courtroom, it would be open to them to do that. Do  
6 you understand that?

7 A. Yes.

8 LADY SMITH: Thank you. If you have any queries about that  
9 later on, just ask me.

10 Ms Rattray.

11 MS RATTRAY: Yes, my Lady.

12 John, at paragraph 2 of your statement, you give us  
13 a general background, which is that you left school at  
14 the age of 15 with no qualifications and that you then  
15 worked for the gas board as a plumber.

16 A. Yes.

17 Q. Then you moved on to take a job with the Post Office, as  
18 it then was, and then you got a choice of where you were  
19 going to work, and you moved to Hastings; is that right?

20 A. Yes.

21 Q. It was at Hastings that you met your wife. Today, when  
22 we refer to your wife, we will either refer to her as  
23 your wife or we will use her pseudonym of Helen.

24 A. Yes.

25 Q. At the time Helen was working for a boarding school and

- 1           you got married?
- 2       A.   Yes.
- 3       Q.   Then you had your daughter in 1963?
- 4       A.   Yes.
- 5       Q.   After that, you both decided you were going to move to
- 6           Scotland?
- 7       A.   Yes.
- 8       Q.   The reason you wanted to move to Scotland is your wife's
- 9           parents lived in Scotland and you felt that it was going
- 10          to be easier for you to buy property there.
- 11       A.   Yes.
- 12       Q.   Then you saw an advert for staff required at Quarriers?
- 13       A.   Yes.
- 14       Q.   And you say that you applied to become house parents at
- 15           Quarriers because your wife had worked with children
- 16          before?
- 17       A.   Yes.
- 18       Q.   Obviously in terms of your own qualifications, you
- 19           hadn't worked with children before at this stage;
- 20          is that right?
- 21       A.   Yes.
- 22       Q.   Did you have any experience in caring for children with
- 23           the exception of your young daughter?
- 24       A.   No.
- 25       Q.   Can you tell us a bit -- I understand that you started

1 work in Quarriers -- in your statement you say it was  
2 either late 1964 or early 1965. From other documents  
3 that we have, we have seen a document which shows you  
4 starting in [REDACTED] 1964. Does that fit with your memory?

5 A. Yes.

6 Q. Can you tell us a little bit about what you remember  
7 about the recruitment process when you applied for your  
8 job at Quarriers? What happened after you applied?

9 A. They enquired about my behaviour and anything else  
10 concerning it. Did I have any experience. The answer  
11 to that was, no, I didn't have any experience.

12 Q. Did you attend an interview at all?

13 A. Yes, I think I did.

14 Q. Can you remember who was at the interview?

15 A. It was either Mr Holman or Mr Mortimer.

16 Q. What did they say when they asked whether you had any  
17 experience and you didn't have any experience? What was  
18 their position about offering you the job when you had  
19 no experience?

20 A. They said they thought if I needed more experience  
21 I could go on a course for it.

22 Q. What course was that?

23 A. I presume it was a Home Office course.

24 Q. Can you tell me a bit about what you understand the  
25 Home Office course to be?

1 A. Well, it was a course in London where they investigated  
2 all your background, et cetera.

3 Q. Right. Was it a course on childcare at all?

4 A. It would have been, yes. They would send me on  
5 a Home Office course to get experience of working with  
6 children.

7 Q. So did Quarriers send you on that course?

8 A. I'm not sure, but possibly yes.

9 Q. Do you remember being sent off to college somewhere to  
10 study childcare?

11 A. No. I think if anything, I would have gone to London,  
12 et cetera, and did the Home Office course on childcare.  
13 I remember going up to London, we had to go through the  
14 Underground to the place, but I can't tell you what it  
15 was now.

16 Q. Okay. So your recollection is that you may have done  
17 a childcare course in London?

18 A. Possibly, but as it was 40 years ago, my memory is not  
19 that good.

20 Q. Right, okay. Can you remember how long that course  
21 lasted?

22 A. No.

23 Q. Can you remember whether the course happened before  
24 you were at Quarriers or after you started to work for  
25 Quarriers?

1 A. Possibly before.

2 Q. Did your wife do the course as well?

3 A. I don't know. Possibly yes. But she'd had experience  
4 with children, yes.

5 Q. So you were offered the job at Quarriers?

6 A. Yes.

7 Q. Do you remember what particular job were you given?

8 A. I was given a house parent -- following my own  
9 occupation.

10 Q. So you were a house parent but you were also something  
11 else; is that right?

12 A. Yes. I was a plumber and we used to go and check on the  
13 houses for Quarriers.

14 Q. So is it correct to say that during the day, you would  
15 be out and about doing your plumbing work?

16 A. Yes.

17 Q. So was it your wife who in the main was looking after  
18 the children?

19 A. Yes, and I did it in the evening and the weekends.

20 LADY SMITH: What sort of plumbing work did you have to do  
21 at Quarriers?

22 A. I checked on the state of the houses, if there was any  
23 burst pipes, choked sinks, choked drains, et cetera,  
24 general plumbing.

25 LADY SMITH: Would the days be variable? I ask that because

1 I don't suppose there were choked drains or choked pipes  
2 every day.

3 A. It wasn't every day, but there was quite a few because  
4 of the state of the houses in Quarriers. They were  
5 rather antiquated as regards plumbing, et cetera.

6 LADY SMITH: I think these were houses that were built in  
7 the Victorian times, and you were there in the 1960s.

8 A. Yes. They hadn't improved a great deal.

9 LADY SMITH: Thank you.

10 MS RATTRAY: So when you weren't actually carrying out  
11 a plumbing job at Quarriers, would you go back to the  
12 cottage where you lived or would there be an office or  
13 a depot somewhere that you would otherwise spend the  
14 day?

15 A. When I was plumbing, I would go back to cottage 3 where  
16 my wife and the children were.

17 Q. Would you normally go back and have your dinner or your  
18 lunch at cottage 3 or would you take food out?

19 A. I would go back to the cottage, have a quick snack, and  
20 then go back to do my plumbing, if necessary.

21 Q. Am I correct in saying that the children would have  
22 a cooked meal at lunchtime?

23 A. Yes.

24 Q. Would you just get a quick snack and leave, or would you  
25 sit down with the children and have a meal with them?

- 1 A. I would sit down and have a meal with them.
- 2 Q. You've obviously had lots of experience as a plumber  
3 but, as you say, you didn't have experience in  
4 childcare. Once you started work at Quarriers, did they  
5 give you any training before you started to look after  
6 the children?
- 7 A. Honestly now, I can't remember, but they would have  
8 done.
- 9 Q. Why do you say that they would have done?
- 10 A. Well, because I didn't have any experience; they would  
11 check out what experience I needed.
- 12 Q. Okay, but you can't remember getting any training?
- 13 A. No.
- 14 Q. But you think it would have been reasonable to have  
15 given you training in the circumstances?
- 16 A. Yes.
- 17 Q. Is it possible that, although you didn't have experience  
18 or qualifications, they didn't in fact give you any  
19 training? Is that possible?
- 20 A. Yes, they possibly did. I remember going on a course up  
21 to London for training.
- 22 Q. So you earlier said you thought that course was before  
23 you started at Quarriers, but is it possible that it was  
24 after you started at Quarriers?
- 25 A. It's possible after I started at Quarriers, but I'm not

1 quite sure now; being 40 years ago, my memory's not as  
2 good as it should be.

3 Q. Of course.

4 Do you remember whether there was any what we would  
5 call today induction when you arrived at cottage 3? Was  
6 there anyone who showed you around and told you what to  
7 do and explained how things worked in cottage 3?

8 A. No. I was just shown where everything was, et cetera,  
9 what I was expected to do, et cetera.

10 Q. Were you given any written staff guidance about how to  
11 do your job as a house parent?

12 A. No.

13 Q. In your statement you make reference to a policy book  
14 in the main office. Can you help me with what that  
15 policy book was?

16 A. Not really. I would have had to have gone down and seen  
17 Mr Mortimer or Mr Holman and they would show me anything  
18 that I needed to know.

19 Q. Do you remember a policy book being there?

20 A. Honestly, now, I think there possibly would have been,  
21 but I couldn't remember it as it was such a long time  
22 ago.

23 MS RATTRAY: My Lady, perhaps that's a convenient point to  
24 stop for lunch.

25 LADY SMITH: Very well.



1 (2.00 pm)

2 LADY SMITH: Good afternoon.

3 Good afternoon again, John.

4 A. Good afternoon.

5 LADY SMITH: Are you ready to carry on?

6 A. Yes.

7 LADY SMITH: I will hand over to Ms Rattray again.

8 Ms Rattray.

9 MS RATTRAY: Good afternoon, John.

10 A. Good afternoon.

11 Q. Carrying on from where we left off before lunch, you

12 were in cottage 3; is that right?

13 A. Yes.

14 Q. Do you remember whether you met the house parent or

15 house parents who were previously in cottage 3?

16 A. Miss McNair that was. No.

17 Q. Right, okay. Did you have any other staff working in

18 cottage 3?

19 A. Yes, I had an assistant who came from the Isle of Skye,

20 I can't remember her name now. Jane would know; I just

21 can't remember her name -- sorry, Joan MacLeod.

22 Q. So you had one assistant and was it just one assistant

23 you had or was there anyone else?

24 A. I think there was another part-timer, Gerry. She came

25 from Glasgow. She had a boy.

- 1 Q. Did the assistants live in the cottage with you?
- 2 A. I honestly don't know now, I'm sorry.
- 3 Q. Okay, don't worry about that.
- 4 Do you remember how many children you were looking  
5 after in the cottage?
- 6 A. Fourteen.
- 7 Q. And were they all boys, all girls or a mixture of the  
8 two?
- 9 A. Mixed. The youngest -- there was a family of five and  
10 they said would I take them, because they didn't want to  
11 split them up. Normally, I would have taken the oldest  
12 three and the babies would have gone to a nursery, but  
13 we took the lot, the whole family of five.
- 14 Q. So what was the age range of the children in cottage 3?
- 15 A. 2, 3, 5 up to about 15, 16.
- 16 Q. I understand that you had quite a few children under the  
17 age of 6 to look after.
- 18 A. Yes, about five.
- 19 Q. Do you think you had enough support to look after quite  
20 so many young children in the cottage?
- 21 A. Yes. We just carried on and it went perfectly.
- 22 Q. What about the older children? Did they present any  
23 problems with regards to their care?
- 24 A. No. We had one boy -- I'll never forget this -- he was  
25 14 or 15, and he decided he wanted to go up to Glasgow

1 and see in the New Year. Off he went, and we reported  
2 him missing about 1 or 2 o'clock in the morning. He  
3 arrived back frozen and we said, "Welcome back", when he  
4 entered, and he went in and he hugged a night store  
5 heater. We said, "What did you do that for?" He said,  
6 "I just wanted to see in the New Year", he said, "but It  
7 was cold out there".

8 So he hugged the night store heater and the oldest  
9 boy said, "Welcome back, I don't think you'll do that  
10 again".

11 Q. So was he given any sanction or punishment for running  
12 off like that?

13 A. No. We were just more worried as to where he'd gone.  
14 We'd reported him missing. When he come back, I phoned  
15 up Mr Holman or Mr Mortimer and said he had arrived  
16 back. "Okay", he said, "sure." And that was that.

17 Q. Did you ever hear of any other children running away --

18 A. I don't think so.

19 Q. -- whether that's children from your cottage or perhaps  
20 another cottage?

21 A. They could have done, but I didn't know. I got taken --  
22 one from another cottage because he wasn't happy and  
23 they weren't happy and he come into our house and he  
24 fitted in just like that.

25 I had one boy, [REDACTED] he come down from

1 a home in Aberdeen and he just fitted in our house just  
2 like that and we never had any bother with him. His  
3 name was [REDACTED] and the one that come from  
4 another cottage was [REDACTED]

5 Q. So whilst you were looking after the children in the  
6 cottage, did anyone come in to check how you were  
7 getting on and to make sure you were doing your job  
8 properly?

9 A. Not as far as I know. They just accepted what we were  
10 doing and were quite happy with the way it ran.

11 Q. How did they know how it was run if they didn't come in  
12 to check?

13 A. Well, they could phone up and see how I was getting on,  
14 if at all, but I never had anybody actually come down  
15 and check. They could have done, but no one seemed to  
16 check.

17 Q. You've described the two boys who came to live in the  
18 cottage and you've indicated that you didn't have  
19 problem with children's behaviour; is that correct?

20 A. Yes.

21 Q. If a child did misbehave, how would you deal with that  
22 child?

23 A. I just spoke to them about what they'd done and that was  
24 it, left it to that. I mean, we never punished them at  
25 all. There was no point in it.

- 1 Q. Why wasn't there a point in punishing children who had  
2 misbehaved?
- 3 A. How could you punish them? The only thing you could do  
4 was take away privileges or send them to bed early, and  
5 there was no point in that.
- 6 Q. Were you given any guidance by Quarriers as to how you  
7 should deal with a child who had misbehaved?
- 8 A. No.
- 9 Q. So why did you choose perhaps sending them to bed or  
10 withdrawing a privilege?
- 11 A. It depends on what they'd done, but normally, if it was  
12 a trivial thing, I never used to bother.
- 13 Q. What kind of misbehaviour attracted being sent to bed  
14 early or having a privilege withdrawn?
- 15 A. If they stayed out late or ... That was more or less  
16 it. I mean, we never forced food down them at all. If  
17 they didn't like it, we used to leave it.
- 18 Q. I'll come on to that in a moment. So the behaviour  
19 issues you might have encountered were children staying  
20 out late?
- 21 A. Sorry, staying out late, yes, but that was about it.
- 22 Q. You didn't have any other concerns about the behaviour  
23 of the children?
- 24 A. Not as far as I can remember, no.
- 25 Q. Do you think it's possible that you may have found it

1           difficult at times to deal with behaviour of the older  
2           children?

3           A. No, not really. I mean, we just carried on regardless  
4           as to what happened. If they stayed out late, well,  
5           they used to come back, and that was it. We never  
6           punished them for staying out late. The same as that  
7           boy that, when he went up to Glasgow for the New Year,  
8           he just come back in, perishing cold, went to hug the  
9           heater, and the oldest boy said, "Welcome back", and  
10          that was it. We never punished him.

11          Q. Do you remember a time when a formal government  
12          inspector might have come out to carry out an inspection  
13          of Quarriers and come and looked at the cottages and  
14          come into the cottages?

15          A. Well, he could have done, but that would either have  
16          been Mr Mortimer or Mr Holman, but I honestly don't  
17          think -- I can't remember them coming round.

18          Q. We've got a record of an inspection that was carried out  
19          on behalf of the government of the whole of Quarriers --

20          A. Yes.

21          Q. -- in 1965. The inspector went into a lot of the  
22          cottages and prepared a report about each cottage.  
23          There is a report that we have that says that cottage 3,  
24          when it was run by you and your wife, was inspected on  
25          [REDACTED] 1965. Do you remember anything about that?

- 1 A. Not offhand -- I mean, it was a long, long time ago.
- 2 Q. I appreciate that. What the inspector said is that:
- 3 "[You and your wife] were a young married couple
- 4 with one child, a girl aged 3, and that [your wife] had
- 5 worked for three years in [REDACTED] a large
- 6 children's home in the south of England."
- 7 A. Yes.
- 8 Q. And that you had both served at Quarriers since
- 9 [REDACTED] 1964.
- 10 A. Yes.
- 11 Q. And that you were a plumber by trade and you served as
- 12 such at Quarriers.
- 13 A. Yes.
- 14 Q. And the inspector said that:
- 15 "[You and your wife] were fairly well in control of
- 16 the cottage but that [you] had difficulty with older
- 17 children, such as [a particular boy]."
- 18 And the boy he names is the boy that you explained
- 19 was transferred from another cottage.
- 20 A. Yes.
- 21 Q. Can you recall a situation where perhaps you were having
- 22 difficulty with older children, including that boy who
- 23 was transferred from the other cottage?
- 24 A. No, that was [REDACTED] He come from another
- 25 cottage and I can't remember -- no. But he just come in

1 and that was that. He just carried on -- that was

2 [REDACTED] We never had any problems with him at  
3 all.

4 Q. The inspector goes on to report that:

5 "[You and your wife] are pleasant, sincere people  
6 who would profit from support and training."

7 Do you think you would have benefited from more  
8 support and training back in 1965?

9 A. Perhaps, but it never happened. We didn't -- just  
10 carried on as usual.

11 Q. Because later in the report, at the conclusion, the  
12 reporter says:

13 "The house parents in this home are young and  
14 capable of learning. I do not think their competence is  
15 of a standard to justify placing with them a student."

16 I think at some stage there might have been talk of  
17 placing a student with you. Do you remember that?

18 A. Yes, we did have a student. She was Else and she came  
19 from the Netherlands and she had difficulty  
20 understanding the language. But once she was there, she  
21 got on and eventually we could understand her and she  
22 could understand us with the language. All I know is  
23 she was Else, E-L-S-E, and she came from the  
24 Netherlands.

25 Q. The reporter also mentions:

1           "The fact that five young children were unattended  
2 is unsatisfactory."

3           And the reporter says that because at the time she  
4 went into the cottage, there were five young children in  
5 a playroom on their own; would you know anything about  
6 that?

7       A. No, because -- not as far as I can recollect. They  
8 wouldn't have been left on their own, five young  
9 children.

10       Q. Well, what the reporter suggests is that there was an  
11 assistant who was doing some needlework in one room and  
12 the five young children were in another room, alone in  
13 the playroom. Is that an arrangement that you remember  
14 occurring?

15       A. No. It's possible, but I have no recollection of them  
16 being left alone, five young children. We wouldn't have  
17 had that happen.

18       Q. The reporter also says that:

19           "Seven young children under 6 years of age were  
20 placed in a cottage with a young married couple with  
21 a young child of their own."

22           And they thought that was bad grouping because there  
23 were so many young children to look after.

24       A. Well, we were asked if we could take this family of  
25 young children to save splitting them up and going to so

1           many -- the older ones staying with us and the  
2           youngsters, [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] ...

3           LADY SMITH: Don't worry about the names, John. They're not  
4           something that matters at this stage.

5                     But what you can tell me, if you can remember it, is  
6           who it was that asked you to take this family of young  
7           children? Do you remember that, who it was that asked?

8           A. Yes. It was either Mr Holman or Mr Mortimer --

9           LADY SMITH: Thank you.

10          A. -- asked if we could take them and save splitting the  
11          family up, which we did.

12          MS RATTRAY: Was there ever a time when Mr Holman or  
13          Mr Mortimer, or anyone else in Quarriers' management,  
14          came and asked you whether you needed more support or  
15          whether it would be better that there were fewer  
16          children in the cottage?

17          A. No.

18          Q. The inspector here concludes and says:

19                     "In my opinion the children in this cottage are not  
20          receiving the standard of individual care which they  
21          require."

22                     Do you have any comment to make on that?

23          A. No, because, as far as we were concerned, they were all  
24          having adequate care.

25          Q. Turning back to the behaviour of the older children, you

1 don't agree with the inspector that there was any  
2 problem about managing the behaviour of the older  
3 children. Do you remember whether there was ever  
4 a problem with the behaviour of the person who we're  
5 referring to as Elizabeth?

6 A. Not as far as I know. If that was somebody --

7 [REDACTED] QDR [REDACTED] we had her and her brother, [REDACTED] QDR and  
8 [REDACTED] QNS

9 LADY SMITH: John, if you just use the name Elizabeth for  
10 her, that would be helpful.

11 A. We had no problems with her as far as we knew. We never  
12 had any problem with her.

13 MS RATTRAY: In your written statement at paragraph 53, and  
14 I'll read it out for you, you say:

15 "[Elizabeth] [I'm using the pseudonym] was never  
16 difficult. She wasn't cheeky. She never ran away. The  
17 relationship between her and her brother was good.  
18 I never noticed any major change in Elizabeth's  
19 behaviour."

20 Is that what you remember about Elizabeth?

21 A. Yes.

22 Q. Is it possible that the passage of time may have  
23 affected your memory of Elizabeth?

24 A. No. As far as we knew, Elizabeth was still okay. All  
25 the time we were there we never had any problems with

1 her.

2 Q. Do you remember a time when Elizabeth moved to another  
3 cottage?

4 A. No, she did not move to another cottage. She was still  
5 there when we left.

6 Q. Do you remember when you left? Do you remember the year  
7 it was?

8 A. No, I don't.

9 Q. Do you remember how many years you worked in Quarriers?

10 A. About eight, as far as I can remember.

11 Q. So if you started in 1964, you would have been there  
12 until about 1972, you think?

13 A. Possibly, yes.

14 Q. Whatever the time period, your position is that  
15 Elizabeth didn't move to another cottage whilst you were  
16 looking after her?

17 A. No, she never moved to another cottage while we were  
18 there.

19 Q. We've seen a record and it was in Elizabeth's children's  
20 file. It's a record of a psychologist who had prepared  
21 a report about Elizabeth. It is dated 6 February 1965.  
22 The psychologist says:

23 "I saw [Elizabeth] at the request of her  
24 house father, who was concerned about her brutal  
25 behaviour towards the younger children."

- 1           Can you help me with that?
- 2       A. That is incorrect. There was no result of Elizabeth  
3       having difficulty with other children.
- 4       Q. It seems to refer to a request of her house father that  
5       Elizabeth should see the psychologist, and I think we're  
6       clear that you were her house father in February 1965.
- 7       A. Correct, but as far as I knew, we never had any problems  
8       with her or referred Elizabeth to a psychologist or  
9       a psychologist come and saw her.
- 10      Q. Do you remember speaking maybe to Mr Mortimer or  
11      Mr Holman or anyone like that about worries about  
12      Elizabeth's behaviour?
- 13      A. No.
- 14      Q. Because what the psychologist says in her report, she  
15      says:
- 16            "At present I feel her misdemeanours are being  
17      rather exaggerated by her house parents. I can believe  
18      that she is an irritating and unresponsive child, but  
19      the behaviour which is being complained of seems to be  
20      fairly normal of this age, eg she frequently offers to  
21      do tasks in the house, such as turn out cupboards and  
22      then makes the most appalling mess, which then has to be  
23      cleaned up. Most children do this and there is no  
24      suggestion that the messes Elizabeth makes are the  
25      result of anything other than over-enthusiasm about and

1           underestimation of the task in hand."

2           Does that help jog your memory at all as to what you  
3           might have thought was a problem with Elizabeth?

4           A. No. As far as we were concerned Elizabeth had no  
5           problems with anything in our house.

6           Q. So although this report appears to say that you referred  
7           Elizabeth to a psychologist because you complained about  
8           her misdemeanours --

9           A. No.

10          Q. -- you don't remember that?

11          A. We never had anything, referring Elizabeth to  
12          a psychologist or anything like that. We had no trouble  
13          with Elizabeth.

14          Q. The psychologist then says:

15                 "I wonder whether there is any possibility of moving  
16                 her to a cottage where there are not many much younger  
17                 children and where the house mother might have more time  
18                 to direct Elizabeth's enthusiasm into acceptable  
19                 channels."

20          Do you remember any discussion about Elizabeth  
21          moving cottage?

22          A. No, she never, ever decided she wanted to move and we  
23          never had any relation -- reason why she should. It  
24          never happened. Her and her brother just got on with  
25          cottage 3.

1 Q. We have also seen in records that Elizabeth moved from  
2 cottage 3 to cottage 7 in [REDACTED] 1967. Do you  
3 remember that?

4 A. Well, as far as we were concerned, Elizabeth was still  
5 there when we left.

6 Q. Do you remember any occasion when your wife might have  
7 removed Elizabeth's white teddy bear from her?

8 A. No. That never happened.

9 Q. Is it possible it could have happened but you weren't  
10 aware because you were out working?

11 A. No, that never happened. We wouldn't remove any toys  
12 from the children. It just wasn't our nature.

13 Q. Was there ever a time when Elizabeth was told to polish  
14 the children's boots or everyone's boots, including your  
15 own boots?

16 A. Definitely not. We would never have done that. If  
17 anything, we polished the shoes ourselves.

18 Q. So if you could just clarify, when you're talking about  
19 polishing the shoes, are you talking about polishing all  
20 the children's shoes?

21 A. Yes. I mean, we would never have expected the children  
22 to polish their own shoes. We might have given them  
23 a hand, but we never insisted they polished the shoes on  
24 their own, ever.

25 Q. Did you ever ask children to help to polish the shoes?

- 1 A. Not as far as I know. If anything, we would polish the  
2 shoes ourselves.
- 3 Q. As you have been previously told, Elizabeth, her  
4 position is that, as a punishment, she was given the job  
5 of polishing everyone's shoes, including your big heavy  
6 boots.
- 7 A. No. That would never have happened: (a) I never had big  
8 heavy boots and also we would never expect her to polish  
9 the shoes or anyone's in the cottage, especially my  
10 heavy boots. I would have done that myself, if at all.  
11 She would never have had to polish any shoes, especially  
12 mine.
- 13 Q. Is it not possible at all that Elizabeth or another  
14 child might have helped out polish the shoes?
- 15 A. Not as far as I know. They might have dusted them, but  
16 that would have been (inaudible: distorted) out. There  
17 was no recollection of us making them polish shoes.
- 18 Q. When you say dusting, is that not just another way of  
19 saying polishing?
- 20 A. No, it would be just if there had been any slight dust  
21 on, which -- we would never have expected them to polish  
22 or dust the shoes themselves.
- 23 Q. Did the children help out preparing vegetables,  
24 including potatoes, for meals?
- 25 A. No. If anything, I or the wife or an assistant would

1           have peeled potatoes, et cetera. Same as on a Friday,  
2           we had fish and chips and I used to peel the potatoes  
3           and chop them into chips and then fry them for fish and  
4           chips on Friday.

5           Q. Would it not have been a normal part of cottage life or  
6           family life for older children to help out preparing  
7           food, such as washing vegetables, peeling potatoes or  
8           tasks of that nature?

9           A. Not as far as I know, because if anything, preparing  
10          vegetables, et cetera -- we would have done it.

11          Q. Did children never help with that?

12          A. The only thing they might have done was if, when the  
13          vegetables came, they might have given us to them --  
14          given them to us to check. But we never actually  
15          enforced children to wash or clean any vegetables  
16          whatsoever.

17          Q. I'm not quite following what you're saying here. What  
18          is it that the children would be asking you to check?

19          A. Just the quantity that came into the cottage. Like if  
20          you had 20 or 30 potatoes, they might have said, "Count  
21          them", but that would have been all. We never expected  
22          the children to check what type of potato or vegetables  
23          they were.

24          Q. So if Elizabeth says that she was being told off by your  
25          wife for peeling potatoes too thickly and your wife was

1 checking the peelings in the bin --

2 A. No, that is prefabricated. We would never have done  
3 that.

4 Q. Is it possible something of that nature could have  
5 happened when you were out working and your wife was in  
6 the cottage with the children?

7 A. No. We would never expect the children to check that  
8 the potatoes or any vegetable were cleaned, et cetera.  
9 We would have done it ourselves.

10 Q. Were there any household tasks that the children did?

11 A. Not as far as I know. They might have swept under the  
12 beds, but that would have been all. There was nothing  
13 actually -- then checking.

14 LADY SMITH: John, you've been asked about a number of  
15 matters that Elizabeth has raised and I know you first  
16 heard of these when you were talking to members of the  
17 inquiry team to give your written statement. Would I be  
18 right in thinking that you were concerned to hear them?  
19 Were you concerned when you heard what was being said by  
20 Elizabeth?

21 A. Yes, because it never happened while we were there, if  
22 anything happened.

23 LADY SMITH: What about your wife? Was she concerned when  
24 she heard about these allegations?

25 A. Not in the sense of the word because, as far as we were

1           concerned, it never happened.

2       LADY SMITH: Okay. Have you discussed them with your wife?

3       A. Yes. We have both discussed anything that Elizabeth

4           said. It never happened while we were there. What

5           happened after we'd left, we don't know.

6       LADY SMITH: Something completely different that I maybe

7           should have raised with you earlier. When Quarriers

8           took you on to work as a plumber, did they provide you

9           with workwear, things to wear for your plumber's work?

10      A. No. I just used to wear my usual overalls, et cetera.

11      LADY SMITH: So what was the et cetera?

12      A. Jeans, trousers, boots.

13      LADY SMITH: Anything on your head?

14      A. There was no protective head covers in those days.

15      LADY SMITH: What about gloves?

16      A. Sorry?

17      LADY SMITH: Gloves? Did you wear gloves?

18      A. Generally, no, but if I had a choked drain, I might have

19           worn rubber gloves to stop it excreting, et cetera.

20      LADY SMITH: I can understand that, John. Thank you.

21      MS RATTRAY: John, turning now to specific allegations.

22           We have mentioned some things that Elizabeth has said,

23           but turning to some specific allegations, and just to

24           remind you again that, as with the warning that

25           Lady Smith gave you at the start of your evidence, you

1 don't have to answer any questions if you don't want to  
2 answer them. Do you understand that?

3 A. Yes.

4 Q. Okay. I'm going to ask you about mealtimes.

5 A. Yes.

6 Q. What happened if a child didn't eat the food that was  
7 given to that child?

8 A. Well, that was it. We never force-fed them or anything  
9 like that. If they didn't want to eat it, they didn't.

10 Q. Was there any encouragement to the child to eat?

11 A. Not really. If they wanted to eat it, they could. If  
12 they didn't, too bad.

13 Q. Was food ever re-served to a child later on?

14 A. Sorry?

15 Q. Was food ever put in front of a child later on when it  
16 was cold?

17 A. No. No, definitely not.

18 Q. Did your wife ever force-feed Elizabeth?

19 A. No, we never -- either of us never force-fed anyone.

20 Q. Did your wife ever force-feed Elizabeth liver?

21 A. No.

22 Q. Did your wife ever make Elizabeth face the wall, pull  
23 her hair back, and ram --

24 A. Sorry?

25 Q. Did your wife ever make Elizabeth face the wall, pull

1 her hair back --

2 A. No.

3 Q. -- and ram the food down her throat cold?

4 A. Definitely not.

5 Q. Is that something that could have happened at a mealtime

6 when you weren't there?

7 A. No. Well, possibly, but we would never have made

8 a child eat anything uncooked or ever.

9 Q. Did either you or your wife ever make a child sit on

10 a bench where the children took their shoes off as

11 a sanction for misbehaving?

12 A. No.

13 Q. That never happened?

14 A. No.

15 Q. Did you or your wife ever hit a child?

16 A. No.

17 Q. Did your wife ever hit Elizabeth with a wooden spoon?

18 A. Definitely not.

19 Q. Because Elizabeth says that your wife hit her three

20 times with something like a wooden spoon and left

21 a raised imprint on her leg.

22 A. That is incorrect. It never would have happened.

23 Q. Are you aware of a time when Elizabeth complained about

24 her treatment in cottage 3 by you and your wife and she

25 ran to Joe Mortimer's house to complain about it?

1 A. No. If she had done, Mr Mortimer would have come to us,  
2 but, as far as we were concerned, she never went to  
3 complain to Mr Mortimer about us. If she had done,  
4 we would never have got another job elsewhere.

5 Q. If these things didn't happen, can you help us to  
6 understand why it is that Elizabeth has come forward to  
7 the inquiry to tell us about these things that she says  
8 happened to her?

9 A. Well, the only thing we could have said or made was she  
10 was jealous, but we never, ever done anything or said  
11 anything about Elizabeth or her behaviour at all.

12 Q. Who was Elizabeth jealous of, do you think?

13 A. The younger children perhaps, but unlikely.

14 Q. So is it really your position that because Elizabeth may  
15 have been jealous of other children back in the 1960s,  
16 she would come forward to the inquiry in current times  
17 and make these allegations about you?

18 A. None whatsoever. I mean, all the time Elizabeth was  
19 there she never complained to us or any member of staff  
20 about anything.

21 Q. So it's unlikely that any jealousy back in the 1960s  
22 would be a motive for Elizabeth to make these  
23 allegations today? Do you agree with that?

24 A. None whatsoever. I mean, she had a brother, **QNS** and  
25 she wanted to speak to him about us, and he did not --

1 he refused to comment about our behaviour to him or her.

2 Q. When was that?

3 A. Offhand, I don't recollect, but it never happened while  
4 we were there.

5 MS RATTRAY: My Lady, I have no further questions for this  
6 witness.

7 LADY SMITH: Are there any outstanding applications for  
8 questions? No.

9 John, that's the end of the questions we have for  
10 you today. It simply remains for me to thank you for  
11 engaging with the inquiry, both by providing your  
12 written statement and by attending today to give  
13 evidence by video link. I know it's been a long day for  
14 you and I'm very grateful to you for bearing up as long  
15 as you have done, and I'm now able to let you go.  
16 Thank you very much.

17 A. So this is it finished with now?

18 LADY SMITH: Yes, that's it. We don't need you any longer  
19 as a witness. Thank you.

20 A. Thank you. Bye-bye.

21 LADY SMITH: Bye.

22 (The video link was terminated)

23 LADY SMITH: Yes, Ms Rattray.

24 MS RATTRAY: My Lady, perhaps we could have just a short  
25 handover period for the next oral witness who will be

1 giving evidence in the hearing room.

2 LADY SMITH: Yes. Would it make sense for us just to take  
3 an early afternoon break, a little longer than  
4 five minutes, now and then run straight through to the  
5 end of the next witness's evidence without breaking at  
6 3.00? Very well.

7 (2.46 pm)

8 (A short break)

9 (3.03 pm)

10 LADY SMITH: Before I ask Mr Peoples to call the next  
11 witness, can I just remind everybody, if they noticed,  
12 the last witness did mention the name of an applicant  
13 whose pseudonym is Elizabeth; Elizabeth was referred to  
14 in his evidence and in the previous witness's evidence.  
15 If any of you noticed that name, it cannot be repeated  
16 outside this hearing room because it's covered by my  
17 general restriction order, the individual in question  
18 being an applicant to the inquiry.

19 Mr Peoples.

20 MR PEOPLES: Good afternoon, my Lady. The next oral witness  
21 is a person who has an entitlement to anonymity and she  
22 has chosen the pseudonym "Violet".

23 LADY SMITH: Thank you.

24 "VIOLET" (sworn)

25 LADY SMITH: Violet, take your time, sit down and make



1 the transcript the identification number for the  
2 statement you've provided: it's WIT.003.001.7652.

3 Violet, if I could ask you firstly to turn to the  
4 final page of the statement in the red folder, if you  
5 could have that open; that's at page 7679. Hopefully  
6 it's the back page of the document. Could you confirm  
7 for me that you have signed your statement on that final  
8 page at page 7679?

9 A. Yes.

10 Q. And can you also confirm that you have no objection to  
11 your statement being published as part of the evidence  
12 to the inquiry and that you believe the facts stated in  
13 your witness statement are true?

14 A. Yes.

15 Q. If I could ask you to turn to the first page of the  
16 statement, I'm going to ask you some background  
17 information at this stage, just so that we have some  
18 context to the evidence you'll be giving today.

19 Firstly, can I ask you to confirm the year of your  
20 birth, that you were born in the year 1939? I don't  
21 need your birth date by the way.

22 A. Yes.

23 Q. You tell us a little bit about your background before  
24 you became an employee of Quarriers. In paragraph 2, on  
25 the first page of your statement, I think you tell us

1           that you grew up in [REDACTED] which I think is a small  
2           village near Bridge of Weir and indeed near  
3           Quarrier's Village; is that correct?

4           A. Yes.

5           Q. I think you were one of a large family; is that correct?

6           A. Yes.

7           Q. You were one of 12 children?

8           A. Yes.

9           Q. And you were the fourth youngest?

10          A. That's right.

11          Q. And you went to school in [REDACTED] both primary and  
12          secondary?

13          A. Yes.

14          Q. And you left school at the age of 15?

15          A. Yes.

16          Q. And thereafter, I think you worked for a period of about  
17          12 years in the Coats factory in Paisley?

18          A. That's right in the offices there.

19          Q. You left when you got married?

20          A. Yes.

21          Q. You tell us in paragraph 3 that you always wanted to  
22          work at Quarriers. Can you explain why that was one of  
23          your desires or ambitions?

24          A. Well, I always liked children and every Christmas  
25          Quarriers was on the television, and my mum and I used

1 to sit and watch it. And I used to always say to her,  
2 some day I'll go and work there. She said, well, dear,  
3 we'll see, it's hard work, but we'll see. And that just  
4 went on a long time -- once I was about 20, 21, I said  
5 to my mum, I think maybe it's time, because I was okay  
6 in the office, I was doing fine, I got a promotion, but  
7 I said I think I would like to go to Quarriers. She  
8 said, no, dear, don't do that, you're too young, it's  
9 too hard work for you, too young.

10 It was left aside and then she brought it up again  
11 and again, I'll tell you something, mum, if I'm not  
12 married by the time I'm 30, I'm going to Quarriers. And  
13 she said, right, fair enough.

14 I got married when I was 29. So I thought that  
15 would be it, and I was telling [REDACTED] my husband, and he  
16 says, why don't you go? And I said, I have not myself  
17 to think about now, I've got you to think about. He  
18 said, I don't mind, I'll come with you.

19 Q. So far as Quarriers was concerned, were you the first  
20 member of your family that worked in Quarriers?

21 A. Yes.

22 Q. So it wasn't something that the family had a connection  
23 with?

24 A. We used to go up quite often on our bikes and wander  
25 round and I always promised myself I would go in there

1           one day. We used to go up near where the baby homes  
2           were and the children were all out playing and I used to  
3           say, I'd love to be there. And that just never changed.

4       Q. On page 7653 you tell us a bit about how you got the job  
5           and as you've told us, having worked with Coats, and  
6           having got married, you then applied as you call it,  
7           speculatively, I think, to be a house parent. So do  
8           I take it there wasn't a specific job advert that you  
9           replied to, you were just seeing if you could get a job?

10       A. That's right.

11       Q. And did that mean you just wrote in and said is there  
12           any chance --

13       A. I spoke to this girl that I met through a friend of ours  
14           and she had just gone to work up to train for working  
15           with children. And I said, I'd love to go to Quarriers  
16           some day. And she said, why don't you, I have just  
17           started in Quarriers, I was in the hospital there and  
18           I just started in one of the units --

19       Q. Did you write in or did you simply get in touch --

20       A. What I did, she got me a form and I filled it out and  
21           sent it in --

22       Q. I think, as you tell us, you had to wait for a little  
23           while before you got any reply.

24       A. Yes, I did. I met my friend and she said, phone the  
25           office and she'll tell you whether your form's going

1 through or not. I phoned Isobel(?) and she was all  
2 apologies and said it's okay, I've had a look at it,  
3 Mr Mortimer had left it in his tray and forgot all about  
4 it, could you come next Tuesday for an interview.

5 Q. And you mentioned a name, and we can take it we do have  
6 a knowledge of some of the names that you're probably  
7 going to mention at times. Mr Mortimer at that stage,  
8 I understand, was the superintendent?

9 A. Superintendent.

10 Q. I think that was his title --

11 A. That's right.

12 Q. -- in those days?

13 A. Yes.

14 Q. And so you got a contact from Quarriers and you were  
15 asked to attend an interview, and I think as you tell us  
16 at paragraph 5 of your statement on page 7653, you were  
17 interviewed by Dr Davidson, was he really the overall --

18 A. General director. Both Mr Mortimer -- maybe  
19 Mr Mortimer. I had to go and see him first and then to  
20 go and see Dr Davidson.

21 Q. So you have a memory that you spoke to --

22 A. Both of them, yes.

23 Q. Together at interview or separately?

24 A. No, no, separate.

25 Q. Do you remember what sort of questions you were asked

1 about?

2 A. Yes. Mr Mortimer just asked me did I ever work with  
3 children before and why do I want to go and work with  
4 children, why Quarriers. And Dr Davidson had said, what  
5 experience did you have working with children? And  
6 I was able to say to him I've always looked after  
7 children and looked after neighbour's children, looked  
8 after the mance child for up to when I went to school.  
9 And then I told how I always wanted to come and work  
10 with Quarriers children.

11 LADY SMITH: When you said you looked after the mance child,  
12 is that the church mance?

13 A. The church mance child, yes.

14 LADY SMITH: The minister's child?

15 A. Yes.

16 MR PEOPLES: I think you tell us a little bit about that  
17 experience later on in your statement. Because do  
18 I understand that at the time that you had this  
19 interview, you didn't have anything that would be  
20 a formal childcare qualification to look after children  
21 in residential care; is that correct?

22 A. That's right. But I was in the Brownies, I had run  
23 a Brownie pack since I was 16. In fact, when I went,  
24 they had -- Girl Guides cadets had started. They don't  
25 go now, but they had them to train Guiders to be Guiders

1           either with Brownies, Guides or the Seniors. And so  
2           I joined that when I was 18 --

3       Q. Right.

4       A. -- no, 16. Because I couldn't become a Guider until  
5           I was 18. I joined that and that was training on how to  
6           deal with children, how to cope with children, how to  
7           respond to children, and it covered Brownies up to the  
8           Guiders. So I had experience with all types and all  
9           ages.

10      Q. I think you tell us about that background in  
11         paragraph 10 on page 7654 of your statement, the extent  
12         to which you had previous experience with children and  
13         your connection with the Brownies and Girl Guide and  
14         cadets and the training you got to deal with those  
15         responsibilities.

16                 Can I just be clear. Obviously you said you had no  
17         formal qualifications like a residential childcare  
18         certificate or anything like that? You didn't have  
19         that?

20      A. No, I didn't.

21      Q. Because I think we understand there were courses  
22         available from perhaps -- certainly from the early 1960s  
23         for people who might wish to work in residential  
24         childcare, but that's not something you had done --

25      A. No.

- 1 Q. -- prior to going to Quarriers?
- 2 A. No.
- 3 Q. Were you aware there were such courses?
- 4 A. Not really. But I know -- I was quite friendly with the  
5 village nurse and my sister was having a child and I was  
6 up helping her and helping the nurse. She said to me,  
7 why don't you -- have you ever thought of going to  
8 working with children or babies? And I said, yes, I've  
9 always thought about it. But she said, you've not done  
10 anything about it? No. Quarriers, I always wanted to  
11 go to. And she just said, oh, I think you should think  
12 further that and go into hospital, but I wasn't  
13 interested. It's Quarriers I wanted to go and work in.
- 14 Q. When you had your interviews with both Mr Mortimer, the  
15 superintendent, and the general director, Dr Davidson,  
16 did either of them raise with you the possibility that  
17 you should or would be given the opportunity to go on  
18 a residential childcare course?
- 19 A. No, but they did have their own courses at times and  
20 when you came --
- 21 Q. I'll maybe come to that. I wanted to check what they  
22 were saying at the date you started, whether they raised  
23 this matter and said, you don't have the qualification,  
24 but there are qualifications and indeed some of our  
25 staff do have these qualifications. Was there any

1 discussion along those lines?

2 A. No, I don't remember. There may have been.

3 Q. You don't have a memory of it?

4 A. No, no memory of it.

5 Q. And while I will come to the training you did get, so  
6 far as that type of qualification or coursework is  
7 concerned, you didn't do that during your time as  
8 a house parent at Quarriers; is that correct?

9 A. Yes. We did it -- we had in-service courses.

10 Q. But you didn't do something like an external course?

11 A. I didn't do a college --

12 Q. Because we have heard of Langside College in Glasgow --

13 A. Yes, that's right.

14 Q. -- and you may have heard of that and it did offer  
15 courses --

16 A. I have heard of that and in fact a few of my assistants  
17 went on that once I was in.

18 Q. Were you ever offered the opportunity when you were  
19 a house parent to go to Langside College?

20 A. No, I never thought about it. They said they had their  
21 own in-service courses. We all had to take part in  
22 that.

23 Q. Okay, well I'll come to that perhaps in a moment because  
24 you do deal with it and I would like to know what the  
25 position was.

- 1           So you have the interview, it's a success,  
2           obviously, but --
- 3       A.   Yes.
- 4       Q.   -- I think they told you that there wasn't at least  
5           a vacancy to become a house parent immediately; is that  
6           correct?
- 7       A.   Yes.
- 8       Q.   But that you were asked to come as what you call  
9           a reliever, a relief --
- 10      A.   Relief, yes.
- 11      Q.   -- for cottages when the house parents were not  
12           available --
- 13      A.   Yes.
- 14      Q.   -- for holidays or other reasons?
- 15      A.   There was one particular one, the house mother was  
16           having a baby, so she was going to be off for some time,  
17           so would I go in and work with her --
- 18      Q.   Was that the first position you had when you joined  
19           Quarriers then as a relief?
- 20      A.   Yes, as a relief worker.
- 21      Q.   Can you remember which cottage you went to?
- 22      A.   Cottage 3.
- 23      Q.   And who was the person you were relieving for?
- 24      A.   ████████████████████
- 25      Q.   She was, did you say --

1 A. She was a nurse, the house mother .

2 Q. The reason you were standing in, did you say was it

3 maternity?

4 A. Yes, she would soon be going off to have her baby.

5 LADY SMITH: Do you remember what year that was or how old

6 you were? We know you were born in 1939.

7 A. I would be maybe 39/40, probably.

8 LADY SMITH: You were born in 1939 I think.

9 A. Sorry.

10 LADY SMITH: How old were you?

11 A. 19 when I left -- then I would be -- I was 30 when

12 I went there, so I would be about 32, 33.

13 MR PEOPLES: That would be 1971.

14 A. That'd be right.

15 Q. I think we've some information, if I can assist you --

16 Quarriers have provided some information which may

17 suggest that you may have started around [REDACTED] 1971.

18 A. That'd be right.

19 Q. That could be right?

20 A. Yes.

21 Q. And initially as a --

22 A. It wasn't [REDACTED] it was [REDACTED]

23 Q. You think [REDACTED]

24 A. I started work in [REDACTED]

25 Q. That might make sense because I think perhaps the date

- 1           that I'm working from may be the date that you became  
2           a house mother. Is that --
- 3           A. Probably, yes. That was the date.
- 4           Q. So can we take it that it's probable that you started in  
5           this relief capacity in perhaps around [REDACTED] 1971?
- 6           A. Mm-hm.
- 7           Q. And for a period of perhaps maybe about six months or  
8           thereabouts, you were acting as a relief house mother in  
9           cottage 3?
- 10          A. Uh-huh, that's right.
- 11          Q. And then, by [REDACTED] 1971, you were given the job of  
12          house mother, is it in cottage 33?
- 13          A. Yes.
- 14          Q. Does that fit in with your --
- 15          A. That fits in, yes.
- 16          Q. Just during the period that you were a relief  
17          house parent, were you effectively then a house mother?
- 18          A. No. Dorothy stayed on, she was still staying in the  
19          unit and I just came in.
- 20          Q. To assist her?
- 21          A. I came in each morning.
- 22          Q. So she was pregnant, she was in the house?
- 23          A. Yes.
- 24          Q. She was there --
- 25          A. Her and I was there to assist her.

1 Q. Were there other assistants in cottage 3?

2 A. At that time, no, I was the only one.

3 Q. So it was just to give her help during her maternity?

4 A. Yes.

5 Q. So far as since you had no prior connection with

6 Quarriers in terms of the way it operated or had been

7 run, how much instruction or supervision and guidance

8 did you get in that six-month period?

9 A. Well, [REDACTED] was -- although she wasn't really on duty,

10 she was always there, and we worked together actually

11 for doing what was to be done for the running of the

12 cottage. Her husband worked in the office. So it was

13 her and I and the cleaner and we just did the whole

14 thing between us, all of it.

15 Q. So there was a cleaner as well?

16 A. Yes.

17 Q. And this was -- did you say [REDACTED]?

18 A. [REDACTED]

19 Q. [REDACTED]

20 A. Yes.

21 Q. What was her husband?

22 A. [REDACTED] QFX

23 Q. When you started, can you recall whether either in that

24 six-month period or when you became the house mother in

25 the [REDACTED] of 1971, whether you were issued with any

1 form of written guidance or instruction to tell you what  
2 the responsibilities of a house parent was and how --

3 A. I presume that's why I was in with the house mother, to  
4 learn from them what the routines were, how to deal with  
5 the children, what food to give them -- although most of  
6 the food was all brought in, but how we were to cook it.  
7 It was just sort of normal.

8 Q. So do --

9 A. I worked with her.

10 Q. -- I take it that the answer is you didn't get any  
11 written guidance or instruction?

12 A. No, not written, just practical.

13 Q. It was practical?

14 A. Yes.

15 Q. And you learned by observation and seeing and being told  
16 how things were run in cottage 3?

17 A. Yes.

18 Q. Did you work in any other cottages before you took over  
19 cottage 33?

20 A. Yes. There was one cottage after -- yes, after [REDACTED]  
21 was coming back off leave, there was another cottage and  
22 the house parents were on holiday. The assistant went  
23 off so they brought me in to look after that cottage for  
24 a fortnight.

25 Q. Can you remember which cottage that was?

- 1 A. 38.
- 2 Q. Who was the house parents?
- 3 A. [REDACTED] QFG/QFH
- 4 Q. So you were relieving for them during their period of  
5 holiday?
- 6 A. Uh-huh, yes.
- 7 Q. So far as the two cottages were concerned, did you  
8 notice any difference between the way they were run?
- 9 A. To a degree, yes, because I think it was very much one  
10 was run the way they thought it should be run and the  
11 other ran how they though it should be run. There were  
12 slight differences but the main thing is when to attend  
13 to the children, have them at school, get them bathed,  
14 get their clothes, make the food, you know, just the  
15 normal things you'd do in a normal cottage. And both --  
16 that had to happen in both of them.
- 17 Q. You said when you started with Quarriers, you were in  
18 your early 30s. What age was [REDACTED] who was  
19 having a baby?
- 20 A. I wouldn't know. But she was a married woman with  
21 a child. And then she was pregnant with another one.
- 22 Q. Was she aged with you or younger?
- 23 A. She probably was.
- 24 Q. And had she been at Quarriers for very long at that  
25 stage?

- 1 A. I think a couple of years or something she said.
- 2 Q. What about the QFG/QFH were they the same sort of age?
- 3 A. Around about the same -- I think they were there a year
- 4 before me.
- 5 Q. So all of you would be relatively new to the job of
- 6 house parents at Quarriers?
- 7 A. I suppose you could say that.
- 8 Q. Because I think there would have been people there,
- 9 I take it, and you might know of them, that had been
- 10 there a very long time as house parents.
- 11 A. There was a lot -- they were all beginning to retire
- 12 off.
- 13 Q. Do you remember some that had been there for --
- 14 A. Yes, I remember quite a few that was there before.
- 15 Q. Did you have any chance to see how they ran things?
- 16 A. Well, not really, but Quarriers had been giving us an
- 17 in-service course, so we all had to go to that.
- 18 Q. Every cottage parent?
- 19 A. Every cottage had to go to that, yes, uh-huh.
- 20 Q. So you'd see every house parent there?
- 21 A. Yes.
- 22 Q. At the training?
- 23 A. Yes.
- 24 Q. And what happened when they were at the training, who
- 25 was looking after the children?

- 1 A. The school.
- 2 Q. Right. So you've told us about the position when you  
3 started and you became house parent of cottage 33 in, we  
4 understand, around [REDACTED] 1971.
- 5 A. Yes.
- 6 Q. You tell us a little at paragraph 7 of your statement of  
7 the number of children and you have an estimate there.  
8 Would that be about 14 children you think?
- 9 A. Yes.
- 10 Q. And a mixed cottage, boys and girls?
- 11 A. Yes.
- 12 Q. And the age range you have estimated was maybe the  
13 youngest was 4 and the oldest 15?
- 14 A. That's right, yes.
- 15 Q. Was there any -- in terms of the balance between young  
16 and old, was there any particular balance? Was there  
17 more younger or more older?
- 18 A. No, I would say maybe the older I would get because  
19 there were a few preparing to go home and at the  
20 weekend, five of them, two different families, went home  
21 at the weekends.
- 22 Q. So were you in a cottage where there were a number of  
23 families together or not?
- 24 A. Yes -- but that was two families, two boys, twin boys in  
25 one, and two brothers and a sister was the other one.

1           And also there was another wee family, the [REDACTED]  
2           family, two girls and -- one girl and two boys.

3           Q.   In the case of the children that were all part of  
4           a single family, you have said there would be boys and  
5           girls?

6           A.   Yes.

7           Q.   And were they together as siblings or did they have any  
8           siblings in other cottages --

9           A.   In.

10          Q.   -- these families or were they all together?

11          A.   Not then, no.  I had one girl -- there was one girl  
12          there and she had two brothers in another unit.

13          Q.   Do you know why that was?  Why they were separate?

14          A.   Yes, I was just going to say.  That's because I think  
15          the children had a terrible time before they came in.  
16          The two boys had a really hard time and they thought it  
17          was a lot for one parent to get all three of them  
18          settled.  So one was in one unit and the two boys was in  
19          another unit.  That's before I came, but the girl was  
20          still there when I came.

21          Q.   Just moving on a little in your statement, I'll just  
22          maybe briefly go back to your prior experience in  
23          paragraph 10 at page 7654.  Can I just ask you  
24          this: while you were given training when you were  
25          involved in the Girl Guide cadets on how to deal with

1 children, including matters of discipline, am I right in  
2 thinking that by the time you joined Quarriers in 1971,  
3 you wouldn't have had any experience of working with  
4 children who were living in care away from home?

5 A. No.

6 Q. Vulnerable children?

7 A. No, that was the first when I came to Quarriers.

8 Q. And so I suppose it would follow that you would not,  
9 when you started work at Quarriers, have had any  
10 training in how to handle vulnerable children who might  
11 be exhibiting challenging behaviour?

12 A. I suppose not, no. I suppose you're right.

13 Q. As you tell us, you didn't have any formal training  
14 prior to starting at Quarriers, at least in residential  
15 childcare. But you learned on the job, I think?

16 A. Yes, very much so.

17 Q. But so far as routine is concerned, you deal with that  
18 in your statement, starting at paragraph 12 on  
19 page 7654. If you have that in front of you. I think  
20 you tell us that:

21 "[You weren't] instructed by Quarriers as to what  
22 the children's routine should be. We were left to make  
23 a routine ourselves."

24 Was that the position?

25 A. Yes, each unit was individual units.

1 Q. So you had a lot of autonomy and freedom to choose what  
2 routine you had?

3 A. Yes.

4 Q. Did that extend to matters such as discipline and  
5 sanctions?

6 A. Yes.

7 Q. You weren't given specific instructions or guidance on  
8 discipline and punishment?

9 A. Not really, no.

10 Q. You tell us on page 7655, Violet, at paragraph 15, that  
11 so far as your cottage was concerned, it was mostly  
12 long-term children that you got?

13 A. The new children coming in were long-term.

14 Q. Long-term?

15 A. Yes.

16 Q. Was there any reason for that?

17 A. No, I think it's just the vacancies were there and they  
18 needed places to put the children. In those days,  
19 Quarriers had about 500 children in the village and they  
20 had 500 on the waiting list to come in.

21 Q. But you do say that when you did arrive in 1971, in  
22 cottage 33, you have a memory at least that you can  
23 think of at least three families in your cottage that  
24 were preparing for going back home?

25 A. That's right.

1 Q. When you say preparing to go back home, is that because  
2 they had reached the age of 15 or 16 or because it was  
3 decided that they could go home?

4 A. I think it was decided -- things had sorted themselves  
5 out in the home and they were preparing the children for  
6 going back to their home.

7 Q. I see. And I suppose -- would it be your view that you  
8 really don't want children to be in care any longer than  
9 is necessary? Would that have been a view you'd have  
10 held?

11 A. Yes.

12 Q. So if the circumstances were such that they could go  
13 home, that would be the best thing for them?

14 A. But it wouldn't be my decision, it would be the  
15 social worker's decision to do that. We went along with  
16 what they said was to happen.

17 LADY SMITH: By the time that you were at Quarriers, was the  
18 norm for children to be placed there by  
19 social workers --

20 A. Yes.

21 LADY SMITH: -- rather than directly by their parents or  
22 other members of their family?

23 A. Yes.

24 LADY SMITH: Were all the children in your cottage placed by  
25 social workers?

- 1 A. Yes.
- 2 LADY SMITH: Mainly Glasgow Local Authority or other local  
3 authorities?
- 4 A. I think mainly Glasgow, I think it was.
- 5 MR PEOPLES: And I think by the time you joined Quarriers in  
6 1971, an important piece of legislation had been passed,  
7 the Social Work (Scotland) Act 1968. Did you know about  
8 that? Were you given any guidance on the significance  
9 of that legislation?
- 10 A. What was the legislation? I don't remember.
- 11 Q. I just wondered if you'd been told. But it did  
12 introduce the concept of professional social workers who  
13 replaced what were previously known as childcare  
14 officers in children's departments, things of that  
15 nature. As part of the in-house training that you tell  
16 us about, you didn't have any guidance on that?
- 17 A. No.
- 18 Q. Did you become aware, though, when you started, that  
19 Quarriers themselves as an organisation were  
20 establishing a social work department in-house?
- 21 A. No, not until afterwards. There were actually three  
22 social workers there when I started.
- 23 Q. Can you remember their names?
- 24 A. Joe Nicholson, Bill Dunbar and ... Who was the other  
25 one?

- 1 Q. Was George Gill there?
- 2 A. He had just started. That was the three.
- 3 Q. Because I think you can take it, because we are aware  
4 from other evidence that we've been given, that  
5 Quarriers as an organisation did employ what I will term  
6 in-house social workers as opposed to local authority  
7 social workers, who were --
- 8 A. As far as I know, they had not long started having  
9 internal ones. It was mostly local authorities.
- 10 Q. You tell us a bit about the staff on page 7656, and  
11 you've already told us that Dr Davidson was in overall  
12 charge, this is at paragraph 20, overall charge as  
13 general director; is that right?
- 14 A. Mm-hm. Yes.
- 15 Q. And that Joe Mortimer was the superintendent?
- 16 A. Yes.
- 17 Q. You mentioned -- in fact you mention at paragraph 22 the  
18 names we've just spoken about: George Gill, Bill Dunbar  
19 and Joe Nicholson. So I understand the pecking order  
20 here, who was Joe Mortimer's number 2, if you like?
- 21 A. I think it was Bill Dunbar.
- 22 Q. And after that, who would be the next in seniority?
- 23 A. I don't know if there was any priority that way. It was  
24 just Bill Dunbar and then the other two.
- 25 Q. And who was your line manager? Who did you report to?

1 A. Joe Mortimer.

2 Q. Am I right in thinking the social workers that you've  
3 just mentioned who were starting in Quarriers, they  
4 weren't your managers and couldn't give you  
5 instructions; is that correct?

6 A. No, no.

7 Q. They were there to offer support?

8 A. They were there to offer support for the whole village.

9 Q. But --

10 A. Separated -- at different times they'd be set in  
11 different parts, but they were just there for the whole  
12 village.

13 Q. Did you find them helpful?

14 A. Sometimes.

15 Q. Not always?

16 A. Not always.

17 Q. Did you seek a lot of support from them?

18 A. No.

19 Q. Why was that?

20 A. I didn't think I needed it.

21 Q. Okay. Did you have a particular social worker that was  
22 assigned to cottage 33, because I think we've heard  
23 evidence that social workers, at least at one stage in  
24 the life of Quarriers, were assigned various cottages to  
25 be responsible for? Can you remember --

- 1 A. Not any particular one. They were all there  
2 if we needed them. We had to phone up for them if you  
3 needed it.
- 4 Q. You also mention at paragraph 23 a Dr Maurice;  
5 what was her role?
- 6 A. It was a man.
- 7 Q. Oh, it was a man? Sorry, yes, I think we have heard of  
8 a Dr Maurice. I think the spelling has thrown me a bit  
9 here.
- 10 A. He was a village doctor.
- 11 Q. But was there also another person called Jean Morris?  
12 Had you heard of her?
- 13 A. Jean Morris.
- 14 Q. A psychologist?
- 15 A. Yes.
- 16 Q. You didn't seem too sure.
- 17 A. Yes, she ...
- 18 Q. Was she a person that was there in your time?
- 19 A. She was in my time, yes.
- 20 Q. Did you use her services much?
- 21 A. Two or three times, yes.
- 22 Q. We also heard of another psychologist, who I think was  
23 there before Jean Morris called Mrs Schaffer. Was she  
24 there when you were --
- 25 A. Not in Quarriers, no.

1 Q. So you don't remember her --

2 A. The only way I know of a Mrs Schaffer was I got -- one  
3 of the persons involved in this was -- lived in a home  
4 in Glasgow and I got these three children in from our  
5 baby homes and the social worker from Glasgow that came  
6 down had said to me, "We've discovered they've got  
7 another sister up in Glasgow, could you take her?" and  
8 I said, "By all means".

9 So she obviously come down to see us and then I made  
10 arrangements for me to go to the Homeopathic Hospital to  
11 see this child, which I did go, and I had her two  
12 sisters, and I took [REDACTED] with me, which was the oldest  
13 one.

14 Q. Can I just say, was the child that you're referring to  
15 that you went to the Homeopathic Hospital, was that  
16 [REDACTED]?

17 A. No. Oh yes, it was, sorry, yes.

18 Q. That was [REDACTED]?

19 A. Yes.

20 Q. We've heard some evidence about [REDACTED].

21 A. Yes.

22 Q. Can I just say that we understand that [REDACTED] had two  
23 older sisters, one I will call sister A, and the one  
24 I will call sister E, if I may, if we can use that  
25 rather than the full names. I think sister A was older

1           than sister E.

2           A. That's right.

3           Q. And both were older than Samantha?

4           A. Yes.

5           Q. But you learned or you found out that Samantha was

6           related to sisters A and E --

7           A. Yes.

8           Q. -- through the social work?

9           A. Through social work. I think there was a new

10          social worker that had come on at the time and she

11          discovered this child up in this hospital and her two

12          sisters were in Quarriers.

13          Q. And I think, as we'll see later on, because we have to

14          deal with this particular family, I think you deal with

15          them in your statement, that at some earlier point, they

16          were together with you in cottage 33; is that right?

17          A. Yes. I had the two oldest ones and then we also got

18          Samantha; she was brought down to me.

19          Q. I'll maybe take the dates so we're clear. I think we

20          heard from Samantha that, or she accepted, that

21          according to the records, she was admitted to Quarriers

22          on [REDACTED] 1976 when she was 2 years and 9 months or so

23          old.

24          A. That could be right. She was only 2 years old when she

25          came.

- 1 Q. So she was under 3 and she stayed with you at Quarriers  
2 until she was about 18 years of age in 1991?
- 3 A. That's right.
- 4 Q. Am I right that for most of that time, you also had care  
5 of her older sisters, A and E?
- 6 A. Yes.
- 7 Q. Although I think by 1991, would they have still been in  
8 your care or had they left?
- 9 A. One of them had gone, the oldest one stayed.
- 10 Q. That's sister A.
- 11 A. Sister A. She stayed by her choice.
- 12 Q. Okay. If I go back to page 7656, having mentioned the  
13 right Dr Maurice, if I can go to the next name you  
14 mentioned, because I don't think it is a name we have  
15 heard before, but is it Matron McCreath?
- 16 A. Yes, she was the matron of the baby homes and the  
17 hospital.
- 18 Q. I think the spelling is maybe not correct there, but  
19 I might be wrong. I just make that point.
- 20 LADY SMITH: It would more usually be spelled E-A-T-H. It  
21 doesn't matter.
- 22 MR PEOPLES: The matron, what exactly was her role and  
23 function at this time?
- 24 A. She was in charge of the baby homes, plus she was in  
25 charge of the Elise Hospital and she dealt with the

1 children as they came up to see the doctor.

2 Q. Did she have any responsibilities for the cottages where  
3 house parents were looking after children?

4 A. Not to my knowledge, no.

5 Q. It was more for the younger children?

6 A. It was all for the younger children, yes.

7 Q. And you tell us, I think, about two years after you had  
8 started at Quarriers in 1971, I think Dr Davidson was  
9 replaced by Dr Minto.

10 A. Yes. That's right.

11 Q. And I think we've already heard, Dr Davidson had  
12 a medical background?

13 A. Yes.

14 Q. Dr Minto had an educational background; is that right?

15 A. Yes, that's right.

16 Q. You tell us that when you started in cottage 33, this is  
17 at paragraph 24 on page 7656, that you had one  
18 assistant, a cottage assistant to start with. I think  
19 they're referred to as cottage aunties sometimes.

20 A. Yes.

21 Q. Can you remember who that was? I know it's a long time  
22 ago.

23 A. I think it was Dinah Maccorrie(?) -- Dinah went -- she  
24 was going to Langside and after she came out of  
25 Langside, her mum had died while she was away, so she

- 1           didn't want to come back to Quarriers.
- 2       Q.   But you'd have other aunts that replaced her --
- 3       A.   Yes.
- 4       Q.   -- as assistants for you?
- 5       A.   Yes.
- 6       Q.   So far as your husband was concerned that you mentioned,
- 7           you'd obviously be staying in cottage 33 yourselves, and
- 8           the cottage auntie would be staying elsewhere; is that
- 9           right?
- 10      A.   They had their own cottage, a cottage for all the
- 11           aunties to stay.
- 12      Q.   Did your husband have a role with Quarriers at this
- 13           stage?
- 14      A.   By that time -- when we first came we decided we would
- 15           just stay in case I didn't suit in, in case I didn't
- 16           like it for whatever, and when he seen me settled then
- 17           he decided he would -- he was an engineer, he would give
- 18           that up and come and work in Quarriers.  And they gave
- 19           him a job as house father with the others and working
- 20           in the epilepsy centre with the residents with epilepsy.
- 21      Q.   So to some extent during the day he had responsibilities
- 22           at the epilepsy centre but he was obviously also
- 23           performing the role of house father as well?
- 24      A.   Yes.
- 25      Q.   Just moving on in your statement at page 7658, I think

1           you tell us a bit about the routine at mealtimes and you  
2           tell us you were responsible for cooking the meals.

3           A. Yes.

4           Q. That's what you did?

5           A. Yes.

6           Q. With some help from the, I think you seem --

7           A. Assistants.

8           Q. Two assistants by then?

9           A. Yes.

10          Q. And a domestic?

11          A. Yes.

12          Q. You say it was a rule at Quarriers that dinner was -- or  
13           lunch, I suppose we might say, was at 12 noon and tea  
14           was at 4.30. Where did this rule derive from?

15          A. In those days, that was normal in most homes in those  
16           days. The children went home at lunchtime for their  
17           dinner and at night-time it was a high tea and that's  
18           how Quarriers was when I started and we kept that going  
19           until the children went to other schools.

20          Q. And I suppose if the children were going to the school  
21           in Quarrier's Village, they would have to be at school  
22           and then come home for lunch and then come back to  
23           school in the afternoon; is that right?

24          A. Yes.

25          Q. So there would have to be a set time for lunch --

1 A. Yes.

2 Q. -- for the schoolchildren?

3 A. That's why lunchtime was made they would come home and  
4 then they went back to school after.

5 Q. And you tell us that children could ask friends from  
6 school to come for tea in the cottage?

7 A. Now and again, yes.

8 Q. Could they not bring them whenever they wanted?

9 A. Well, when you've got 15 children, four adults, you  
10 know, you've got to be prepared --

11 Q. I see.

12 A. -- for the extras.

13 Q. So it might be difficult with that number of children --

14 A. Sometimes.

15 LADY SMITH: In fairness, I suppose you always need to know  
16 whether you've got an extra mouth to feed at the next  
17 meal, however big the group.

18 A. Yes, although food was never a problem. They got plenty  
19 of food, but yes.

20 LADY SMITH: You'd want to know?

21 A. Mm-hm.

22 MR PEOPLES: I suppose the food that Quarriers provided was  
23 based on the number of children that you were looking  
24 after.

25 A. That's right.

1 Q. So if all the them brought a friend, you wouldn't  
2 necessarily have food for 30 people.

3 A. Yes.

4 Q. Did it happen that children in your cottage would come  
5 home for tea?

6 A. Oh yes.

7 Q. And did Samantha bring friends home?

8 A. Not very often -- no, I don't even know if she brought  
9 anyone home.

10 Q. And did her sister A?

11 A. No, I don't think she did either, simply because she was  
12 going to a special school.

13 Q. I see.

14 A. And she went to school in Paisley. So she couldn't --  
15 it wouldn't be easy --

16 LADY SMITH: Her timing might be a bit different then, might  
17 it, if she had to get back from Paisley?

18 A. We always had the tea at the same time when they got  
19 home from school.

20 MR PEOPLES: What about sister E?

21 A. Yes, I don't ... They weren't children -- that family  
22 weren't children who played too much with people outside  
23 the unit. They were more inclined to play wit children  
24 in our unit.

25 Q. Some of the other children in the unit, did they play

- 1 with other children in other cottages?
- 2 A. Yes, but they all did.
- 3 Q. But maybe Samantha and her sisters less so?
- 4 A. Maybe Samantha less because -- no, she played with the  
5 children in the village, but she didn't bring any friend  
6 home from school because it was a special school.
- 7 Q. Did she bring friends from other cottages?
- 8 A. Sometimes.
- 9 Q. And did they sleep over?
- 10 A. We didn't have room for them all to sleep over.
- 11 Q. Would she ever sleep over at other cottages?
- 12 A. I don't think so, no.
- 13 Q. Would any of your children do that?
- 14 A. No, not in our units. The thing is, they all went to  
15 youth club together, they all went to the swimming or  
16 football, all the sports and things that was in the  
17 village, and then of course, first of all, they came  
18 home and they had their dinner, tea, teatime we had it,  
19 and then I set that time after for them to do homework  
20 and once they did their homework they were free to go  
21 out and go to whatever was one, whatever they wanted to  
22 go to.
- 23 Q. I suppose children get to an age, particularly as  
24 teenagers, where they might want to have a sleepover at  
25 a friend's house.

1 A. Oh aye, and the person we're talking about, she did, at  
2 a house in Linwood when she went to the high school.

3 Q. In the house in Linwood?

4 A. Yes.

5 Q. Did she sleep in any other cottage? A sleepover? Did  
6 she have those?

7 A. I don't think she was ever asked.

8 Q. I see.

9 You tell us a bit about what would happen at  
10 mealtimes if someone didn't like the food. Can you tell  
11 me what the situation was there if they didn't like what  
12 you'd served up?

13 A. Generally speaking they were really quite satisfied --  
14 there was the odd one who maybe had something they  
15 didn't like and I always said -- I used to else say,  
16 take a wee teaspoonful, if you like it, finish it, if  
17 you don't, leave it. Generally speaking, they just ate  
18 it. On the odd occasion, the odd one, this boy didn't  
19 like a particular thing, I just said leave it and I'll  
20 remember the next time not to give you any.

21 Q. Did you give that boy something different if you were  
22 serving up this dish?

23 A. Yes. They always had at least two or three veg with  
24 their meals?

25 Q. On the occasions when a child said, "I don't want to eat

1           this "even if they were encouraged, would they be  
2           offered something else?

3           A. Oh yes, if there was anything -- depends on what we had  
4           (inaudible) it would be probably be a sandwich or  
5           something made up for them.

6           Q. So they would be offered a sandwich?

7           A. Yes.

8           Q. And then you tell us a little bit -- and you told us  
9           earlier on -- that there was some staff training after  
10          you joined Quarriers and I just want to ask you about  
11          that. You deal with that at page 7658 where you say not  
12          long after you started you received in-service training,  
13          you say, from a man at Quarriers whose name you can't  
14          remember, but had a job -- his job was to train staff.  
15          You had to go for training twice a week.

16          A. That was Bill Dunbar that had arranged that. It was  
17          someone senior in social work, I don't remember his  
18          name. I think he was a senior from down Ayrshire way  
19          and he came up and Bill Dunbar was then responsible for  
20          the training. And it was him that would bring somebody  
21          up to give us extra on certain subjects.

22          Q. So Bill Dunbar would organise this and these training  
23          sessions you recall were twice a week?

24          A. No, no. No, no. We got one every now and again, just.  
25          We also had to go -- the one when we went to ...

1 a training course -- we went to Dumbarton. Is that one  
2 you're talking about?

3 Q. I will start with paragraph 33. It's just looking at  
4 something you've told us in your statement, that said:

5 "This person that came and was involved in  
6 in-service training, I think we had to go twice a week."

7 And I just wonder what you were referring to there.  
8 You do say something about going to other places. What  
9 do you remember about the twice-weekly training?

10 A. That I can't remember.

11 Q. So that may not be in fact the way it was?

12 A. That may not be a fact, I can't remember that, quite  
13 honestly.

14 Q. You do say that your understanding was that before  
15 Dr Minto arrived, which was I think you said was  
16 a couple of years or so after you joined, he replaced  
17 Dr Davidson, that Bill Dunbar was, as you understand, in  
18 charge of the training, responsible?

19 A. He was for us when I came. Any training that was done,  
20 it was Bill Dunbar that done it with us.

21 Q. He gave you the training?

22 A. Yes.

23 Q. He didn't use external trainers?

24 A. No, no, it was Bill -- and then there was one  
25 occasion -- I can see the man, I can't remember the

1 man's name, he was a senior social worker somewhere  
2 else -- and he came and was giving us training. I can't  
3 remember the subjects but I just remember the man  
4 coming.

5 Q. Did it happen once or more than once?

6 A. I think -- no, I think now and again. The next thing,  
7 Bill Dunbar was giving us the training and then we had  
8 to go to Dumbarton every day --

9 Q. For a week?

10 A. Yes.

11 Q. Did that happen once?

12 A. Oh, it was once, yes.

13 Q. Just once?

14 A. Yes.

15 Q. You had a week-long spell of going to Dumbarton to the  
16 Social Work Department there?

17 A. Yes.

18 Q. And you say that you would be trained about how to  
19 handle children. What sort of training do you recall  
20 getting?

21 A. Well, I think it was just for the children -- I can't  
22 even remember, to be honest. It was just like a normal,  
23 natural training, dealing with children, as far as I can  
24 remember.

25 Q. Did you get training in child protection? Do you

1 remember?

2 A. No.

3 Q. You didn't?

4 A. No.

5 Q. Or dealing with -- or looking for signs of children  
6 being abused?

7 A. Oh yes.

8 Q. You got that?

9 A. Oh yes, we got that.

10 Q. How long had you been at Quarriers before you went to  
11 Dumbarton to get this training?

12 A. That was on my first year.

13 Q. So in about 1971/1972 you had a week in Dumbarton?

14 A. Yes.

15 Q. You weren't getting -- you can't recall training in  
16 child protection as such, but you said you got some  
17 training about child abuse, is that right, in 1971/1972?

18 A. Well ...

19 LADY SMITH: I wonder if you're talking at cross-purposes,  
20 and please correct me if I'm wrong. When you say you  
21 got training in how to look for signs of children being  
22 abused, are you talking about how to assess a child  
23 that's newly come into Quarriers --

24 A. Yes.

25 LADY SMITH: -- and work out --

1 A. And what to look out for --

2 LADY SMITH: -- whether in some way they had been given a  
3 hard time before they arrived?

4 A. Yes.

5 LADY SMITH: Not once you have got children, to keep looking  
6 out for signs of new abuse?

7 A. No, when they first come in.

8 MR PEOPLES: So you weren't being told, well, a child can be  
9 abused, it can happen at any time, and these are the  
10 signs to watch for, the indicators to look for?

11 A. No, no.

12 Q. You didn't get any training of that description?

13 A. No, I think we would have seen that because up to  
14 a certain age we bathed them, so if there was any abuse  
15 on their bodies or anything like, that we'd have seen  
16 it.

17 Q. You mean marks and bruises?

18 A. Yes.

19 Q. Signs of non-accidental injury perhaps?

20 A. Yes.

21 Q. You'd have to at least look for and perhaps --

22 A. Yes.

23 Q. -- investigate them if you saw them?

24 A. Yes.

25 Q. So you went to Dumbarton, you say, and in fact you say

1           that you think you went to two of these training  
2           sessions in all; is that right?

3           A. No, I went every day to Dumbarton.

4           Q. I'm just wondering what -- in the last sentence of  
5           paragraph 34 you said:

6                         "We went to Dumbarton for a whole week."

7                         Then you said you were taught various things:

8                         "I think I went to two of those training sessions."

9           A. Mr Mortimer and Bill Dunbar had some in the village.

10          Q. I see.

11          A. We went to trainings in the village then.

12          Q. Just help me: we didn't really establish when you ceased  
13          to be a house parent of cottage 33. I know you had  
14          Samantha until 1991 when she was 18, but I think you  
15          tell us she was almost the last child in Quarriers.

16          A. She was the last child in Quarriers.

17          Q. So I'm just wanting to get from you just now, you became  
18          a house parent in 1971, I think you'll tell us, and  
19          I think you do tell us in your statement, that you  
20          became a foster parent around 1982; is that correct?

21          A. That'd be right.

22          Q. So can we take it that between 1971 and 1982 -- and  
23          we can look at the arrangement that happened in 1982 in  
24          due course -- you were a house parent in cottage 33 from  
25          1971, [REDACTED] until some time in 1982? So about

1           21 years?

2       A. Yes.

3       Q. No, not 21 --

4       A. It was actually --

5       Q. 11 years.

6       A. I was 23 years in Quarriers.

7       Q. 1971 means 11 years you'd be a house parent in

8           cottage 33 before you became what you describe as

9           a foster parent? Is that the situation?

10      A. Yes.

11      Q. So far as training is concerned, you've mentioned this

12           week in Dumbarton, and some training sessions arranged

13           by Bill Dunbar at Quarrier's Village?

14      A. Yes -- and sometimes Joe Mortimer took them.

15      Q. Were these happening throughout the 11 years you were

16           a house parent?

17      A. Most of it.

18      Q. Most of it?

19      A. Most of it.

20      Q. So from 1971 until 1982 you'd be having training

21           sessions in-house?

22      A. Yes.

23      Q. How frequently?

24      A. Maybe once every month or something.

25      Q. You don't sound too sure about the frequency there.

- 1 A. It's so long and so much has happened.
- 2 Q. I appreciate that.
- 3 A. No, we used to have a staff meeting every two weeks, and  
4 in the other two weeks Bill would have indoor  
5 training -- sometimes he took one down in Girvan.
- 6 LADY SMITH: You said in your statement that the staff  
7 meetings were monthly, not fortnightly; is that right?
- 8 A. Yes. The staff meetings were, yes.
- 9 LADY SMITH: They were monthly?
- 10 A. Yes.
- 11 LADY SMITH: Okay.
- 12 MR PEOPLES: But you think, so far as these training  
13 sessions were concerned, they were weekly, did you say?
- 14 A. Not weekly, no, no.
- 15 Q. Not as frequently as that?
- 16 A. No.
- 17 Q. How frequently then?
- 18 A. I can't remember, quite honestly, I don't know.
- 19 Q. Did you benefit from them?
- 20 A. Some of them, yes. Some of them were -- a lot of it was  
21 bringing us up-to-date in social work, with what was  
22 happening in social work and that sort of thing. That  
23 was most of what we got.
- 24 Q. Nothing about the Social Work (Scotland) Act 1968 --
- 25 A. No.

- 1 Q. -- and the effect of that?
- 2 A. Well, not to my knowledge, I don't remember.
- 3 Q. And then you tell us on page 7659, at paragraph 35, that
- 4 after Dr Minto took over from Dr Davidson, he was
- 5 responsible for introducing weekend training sessions
- 6 and that there were sessions held at Peebles Hydro and
- 7 Dunblane Hydro for a full weekend.
- 8 A. Yes, he might have done two there: one one year and one
- 9 another year.
- 10 Q. And was that happening annually?
- 11 A. No, no. That was just two years: one one year and one
- 12 another year.
- 13 Q. And what years were these? How far back are we going
- 14 here? You joined in 1971 and Dr Minto maybe came in
- 15 1973/1974.
- 16 A. I'm guessing -- a couple of years after Dr Minto came.
- 17 Q. Were they the only two --
- 18 A. That was the only ones we had and then there was the odd
- 19 in-service course after that that Bill Dunbar took.
- 20 Q. Just an odd one?
- 21 A. Yes.
- 22 Q. So the weekly training sessions dried up as well --
- 23 sorry, the training session, I don't think you said
- 24 weekly. The training sessions you mentioned earlier,
- 25 they dried up after a time?

- 1 A. Yes, they did.
- 2 Q. You tell us that at paragraph 36 that in terms of  
3 equipping you to deal with the emotional and  
4 developmental needs of children, really essentially, you  
5 learnt these skills on the job?
- 6 A. Yes.
- 7 Q. So you didn't get any guidance or training or  
8 instruction on these matters?
- 9 A. Not really, unless we enquired about it, unless we had  
10 a particular problem.
- 11 Q. And did you tend to enquire about things like that?
- 12 A. Yes, one or two of them. Not a great deal, but we did.
- 13 Q. As you say, you did have, in your time, the ability to  
14 seek support and assistance from the social work  
15 department. I take it that's the in-house department?
- 16 A. Yes.
- 17 Q. Or the psychologist at Quarriers?
- 18 A. Or the psychologist -- most of the children really had  
19 great difficulties going to a psychologist. I had one  
20 or two that had gone over a period of time.
- 21 Q. Correct me if I'm wrong, but I'm getting the impression  
22 that you took the view that you probably didn't require  
23 a huge amount of support from either of these sources  
24 during your period as a house parent; is that correct?
- 25 A. Yes.

1 Q. And of course, you do tell us at paragraph 37, as we've  
2 just discussed, there were regular staff meetings --

3 A. Uh-huh.

4 Q. -- in the church building --

5 A. Yes.

6 Q. -- which were effectively chaired by Mr Mortimer;  
7 is that right?

8 A. Yes, that's right.

9 Q. Were there minutes kept of those meetings?

10 A. I'm not sure. I really don't know. There might have  
11 been, because he would be there, Bill Dunbar would be  
12 there, and the others would all be there -- certainly  
13 not from the cottage staff, but it must have been the  
14 office staff if there was.

15 Q. And if minutes were kept, you weren't given them, copies  
16 of them?

17 A. Not unless it was something very special that had been  
18 on.

19 Q. You wouldn't have a copy of the minutes from the  
20 meetings that were distributed to you?

21 A. No, I don't think so, no.

22 Q. You deal specifically at paragraph 38 with the in-house  
23 Quarriers social workers and you say that:

24 "They would come in if and when we needed them, but  
25 it depended entirely on us needing them."

1           The way you put that suggests to me that it was very  
2           much up to the individual house parent to decide whether  
3           they wanted support and whether the social worker should  
4           be called in to give support or assistance. Is that the  
5           way it was?

6           A. It was, yes.

7           Q. That's the way it was for you?

8           A. That's the way it was -- for most people.

9           Q. Just on that matter, it might be as convenient as any to  
10          deal with a point that I think has been raised, that  
11          I think you're aware of. There was an in-house  
12          social worker who has in that time, called  
13          Stuart Mackie(?). Does that name ring a bell?

14          A. Yes.

15          Q. I'll just say that he was an in-house social worker at  
16          Quarriers between 1973 and 2004, so his period there  
17          spanned a lot of time that you were a house parent.

18          A. Yes, but when he came he wasn't a social worker. When  
19          he came he worked for the sports, and then things didn't  
20          work out too well for him there and he went to college  
21          and became a social worker. And mostly he worked with  
22          the people with difficulties, learning difficulties.

23          Q. But he was a residential social worker?

24          A. Oh yes, yes.

25          Q. And he was part of a team?

1 A. Yes.

2 Q. Which had their office at Holmlea; is that right?

3 A. Yes, that's right.

4 Q. And were they headed up by any individual, do you  
5 remember?

6 A. I would say -- I think it was Joe Mortimer, Bill Dunbar.  
7 I think Bill was the main one. There were quite a few  
8 of them.

9 Q. He comments on your cottage, and I think you have  
10 perhaps seen some of the things he said. I'll maybe  
11 raise them with you at this stage -- this is probably as  
12 good a time as any.

13 One of the points he tells us about is that you  
14 insisted that children in cottage 33 called the children  
15 in your care mummy and daddy (sic). Is that true?

16 A. No, that's lies.

17 Q. That's lies?

18 A. That's lies. We had a wee child come in, she was only  
19 3, 2 and a half maybe, and she couldn't say mummy. We  
20 had her big sister who was 14 and we had her three  
21 brothers, and we used to try and get her to say  
22 Auntie **QAH** because that's what the children called us  
23 then, Aunt **QAH** and Uncle **██████** She would never say it  
24 and she kept going "An-an-an-auntie mummy". And we went  
25 over it over and over and over. And I think, deep down,

1 her big sister was wanting to call us mummy because  
2 mummy was dead and she was going to have nobody to call  
3 mummy. Deep down I think that's what it came from,  
4 because [REDACTED] says, "Just let her go, she's okay".  
5 She just grew up and always just called us mummy.

6 Dr Davidson was coming down the village one day and  
7 he was speaking to us, and she says to me "mummy". He  
8 said, "Oh, does she call you mummy?" and I said,  
9 "Uh-huh, we've been trying to get us to call us  
10 Aunt QAH, and I said to [REDACTED] "You tell  
11 Dr Davidson, where's Auntie QAH and again she went,  
12 "An-an-an-auntie mummy".

13 Q. Just so we're clear --

14 A. First of all, he says, "Don't worry about it, it'll all  
15 sort its own self out".

16 Q. Okay. So you had something like 14 children?

17 A. Yes.

18 Q. Did the majority of them then call you auntie and uncle?

19 A. Auntie QAH and Uncle [REDACTED]

20 Q. What did Samantha call you?

21 A. She called us Auntie QAH and Uncle [REDACTED]

22 Q. What about sister A?

23 A. So did she. They all did.

24 Q. What about sister E?

25 A. They all did.

- 1 Q. So most of the children would call you aunt and uncle?
- 2 A. Yes.
- 3 Q. So if Mr Mackie thinks otherwise, he is mistaken?
- 4 A. Yes, I think there's a -- I hardly ever saw Mr Mackie,  
5 let me say, let me be honest, I hardly ever seen him.  
6 I knew he was in the village and he worked in the  
7 residents who had difficulties, but he was never near my  
8 house. I never needed him because he was never on duty  
9 any time if I did need anything.
- 10 Q. He does say about how house parents should be addressed,  
11 I think he tells us at least in the period that he was  
12 there that all the social workers would not have  
13 approved of cottage parents being described as mummy or  
14 daddy because these children would have their own  
15 parents.
- 16 A. Some of these children didn't have mummies.
- 17 Q. Didn't have mummies who were alive?
- 18 A. That's right.
- 19 Q. But they would have had a mummy at some --
- 20 A. They would have, but a lot of them didn't have them, and  
21 as far as I'm concerned it was the children's choice.
- 22 Q. Would you agree with what Mr Mackie says --
- 23 A. No, I totally disagree. I think Mr Mackie's looking for  
24 brownie points there somewhere. I had a girl that --  
25 the two of them came in and both were teenagers, not

1 teenagers, there were 7 and 8, and one of them heard --  
2 they had just lost their mum and one had heard [REDACTED]  
3 saying mummy and she says, "Can I call you mum?"  
4 I says, "Darling, you call me what you like, it doesn't  
5 matter to me what you call me" --

6 Q. Did you mean that literally?

7 A. No, I didn't, it's up to her, she could call me what she  
8 wanted, there's nothing in a name because I told her:  
9 you tell me what you want me to call me. And to this  
10 day she calls me mummy.

11 Q. Okay. One other thing he says -- and I think you're  
12 aware of this -- is that he says that you, Violet,  
13 really didn't like in-house social workers or local  
14 authority social workers going to your cottage. I think  
15 you said to me earlier maybe there's some truth in that.

16 A. Local authorities? That's rubbish. Local authority  
17 social workers came to my house when they did come.

18 Q. They had a statutory responsibility to do so.

19 A. That's right and they did come.

20 Q. You couldn't stop them coming.

21 A. I wouldn't even try to stop them coming in --  
22 I encouraged them to come in.

23 Q. What about in-house social workers; did you like them?

24 A. Yes, as far as I was concerned, they were there  
25 if we needed them.

1 Q. But did you like them coming to see you?

2 A. I never had anyone coming to see me except

3 Joe Nicholson.

4 Q. Because the other thing he says on this matter is that

5 the way things ended up, so far as cottage 33 was

6 concerned, is that the social workers, the in-house

7 social workers, received what he describes as

8 a directive, in other words an instruction, from

9 Dr Minto stop all in-house social workers going to

10 cottage 33 and to leave you, Violet, and your husband

11 alone. Did that happen?

12 A. I think that -- yes. I didn't know that, but I'm sure

13 it did happen because there was one time I got a phone

14 call from Mr Mortimer, I had to go down and see him and

15 he says, QAH -- and in the office was Jean Morris,

16 another social worker, and a woman who helped children

17 with homework at night-time. And there was myself and

18 he says, QAH we've had a complaint. I said what

19 about? He says, "The complaint is you treat those

20 children as if they were your own, you forget they're

21 just children in care". And I says, "Oh, what was

22 Quarriers all about? What are the children here for?

23 They're here to be cared for".

24 The reason why they complained that -- I was going

25 up to the hospital actually for a full three weeks every

1 day because I had a teenager who was at school, fell off  
2 a bus, almost had her arm ripped off, and there was talk  
3 of the arm being amputated, so therefore between my  
4 husband and I, we went up -- I went up in the afternoons  
5 when my staff was there and my husband went up at the  
6 night-time to make sure she was okay.

7 Q. So who made this complaint, do you understand?

8 A. Joe Mortimer said, we didn't see who made the complaint.

9 Q. But he called you in because someone had made a  
10 complaint?

11 A. I think it was Jean Morris and the woman that helped  
12 with the homework at night-time and -- who was the other  
13 one? I said that one a minute ago. Where are we now?  
14 There were three of them anyway.

15 Q. There was a delegation, obviously, who went and made  
16 some form of complaint, you were called in to  
17 Joe Mortimer and you do have a recollection that there  
18 came a time about the in-house social workers were not  
19 visiting cottage 33; is that what happened?

20 A. Well, I mean, there was hardly any social workers left  
21 in the village at that time.

22 Q. That's not the point I'm --

23 A. I never needed any of them.

24 Q. No, but I'm asking a different point. Did there come  
25 a time when none of the in-house social workers visited

- 1 cottage 33, whatever the reason might have been?
- 2 A. Yes, Dr Minto came to me and told me that social workers  
3 were complaining that here was I down in the house with  
4 these children, and nobody -- no social worker going  
5 into them. He says, leave it to me. And he says to  
6 Joe Mortimer -- at that time the village was empty.  
7 There were practically no children in the village at all  
8 by that time. It was only the last few that I had and  
9 Dr Minto says it me, look, I've spoken to Joe, we'll be  
10 your manager, I'll be your manager, Joe can't -- Joe's  
11 the manager of the rest of the village, but he says I'll  
12 be your manager, and then they can't complain because  
13 I know what your house is, I know what your children is  
14 and I know what goes on, I speak to your children all  
15 the time.
- 16 Q. Right. So I'm just clear on this point, between 1971  
17 and 1982, when you were a house parent in cottage 33,  
18 there did come a point when the in-house social workers  
19 ceased to be visiting cottage 33, that's the fact of the  
20 matter. But that you tell us that, thereafter, Dr Minto  
21 told you something to the effect that he would  
22 effectively be the person that would come and take over  
23 the role of the social worker. Is that what you're  
24 saying?
- 25 A. No, what I'm saying is the role of the social workers

1           wasn't applied to any particular cottage. As far as  
2           I was concerned, and I was told, they only came when  
3           they we asked for them and when they were needed.

4           Q. Yes, I know, I think I follow that, but I'm just putting  
5           to you the point that Mr Mackie has said that he said  
6           that the social workers were told at some point not to  
7           go to see you at all, and I thought you were agreeing  
8           with me that that did happen, but what I'm now trying to  
9           seek to establish is, once that happened, did anyone  
10          else from Quarriers come to cottage 33?

11          A. Yes, it was arranged -- Dr Minto himself. He says for  
12          Mr Mortimer to do it -- but it was the last cottage that  
13          was in the village, you see, there was very, very few  
14          cottages in the village -- and he left it to  
15          Mr Mortimer, spoke to him, and he said -- Mr Mortimer  
16          said, I'm the manager of all the units here, and he  
17          says, well, I'll go and see if -- I'll do it.

18          Q. So who did it then?

19          A. Dr Minto came down and said this to me and I says to  
20          him, well, what about Bill, Bill Dunbar? He says,  
21          Bill's in the --

22          LADY SMITH: Violet, you weren't being asked how you learned  
23          what was to happen; I've got that from you; you said it  
24          was Dr Minto who spoke to you.

25                 Did either he or Joe Mortimer visit your cottage in

1           their social work capacity after that?

2           A. Well, they came every six weeks -- he made arrangements  
3           every six weeks to come down and see how the children --  
4           everywhere -- how the books was going and everything.

5           LADY SMITH: That's fine. I think that's what we needed to  
6           know.

7           It's 4.15 at the moment, Mr Peoples. I really can't  
8           sit much beyond 4.30 today.

9           MR PEOPLES: I'll try to make as much progress as I can.

10           If you can maybe stick to the question I'm asking  
11           you, we can maybe get through this a little quicker.

12           So far as the position about external social workers  
13           is concerned, what was the situation? Did you welcome  
14           them with open arms?

15           A. Very much so.

16           Q. Can I ask you to look at certain documents then  
17           in relation to that? The first is GLA.001.002.4207.  
18           That'll come up on the screen, I hope.

19           That is an external record, handwritten record, in  
20           1985 relating to Samantha and her sisters, sister A and  
21           sister E. It says at the foot of that page, page 4207  
22           that:

23           "The social worker is reporting that there's little  
24           scope in their case for social work input, certainly not  
25           in the foreseeable future, and indeed the agreed

1 social work input at the present is monthly visiting  
2 only. When I first contacted the girls, I could only  
3 see them if I promised to give an assurance that they  
4 could not be fostered. This request came from Violet,  
5 the house mother, who seemed to have made the girls very  
6 uptight about leaving Quarriers."

7 Have you seen that before?

8 A. No, that's not right. It was Jean Morris. It was the  
9 psychologist that made the girls uptight about that,  
10 told them they were getting fostered.

11 Q. And just on page 4208, about ten lines down, there's  
12 another entry that says -- and this is a reference to  
13 Samantha and her sisters:

14 "They always tended to be heavily chaperoned by  
15 Violet and had been conditioned into thinking of  
16 fostering as something akin to transportation."

17 How do you respond to that?

18 A. I don't understand it.

19 Q. I think they're saying that you were chaperoning them  
20 and perhaps turning them against the idea of going into  
21 foster care.

22 A. Rubbish.

23 Q. That's rubbish?

24 A. That's rubbish.

25 Q. Okay. Then I think if we go on to page 4210, two thirds

1 of the way down, there's an entry there on 4 April 1986  
2 to the effect that:

3 "The external social worker and senior social worker  
4 have concerns about the placement but agreed the  
5 children have been totally absorbed and  
6 institutionalised and previous attempts to  
7 alter/discourage this have failed."

8 This is, I think, a continuing theme that they were  
9 simply being institutionalised and therefore were not  
10 going to be suitable for fostering placements. Did you  
11 play any part --

12 A. No, I never. That's the first I've heard of that.

13 Q. Okay. I'll just lastly, perhaps, refer you to some  
14 other entry that was made about a visit that was paid to  
15 cottage 33 on [REDACTED] 1988. That's at page 4213 if  
16 you could have a look at that.

17 This is another external social worker who's  
18 writing. About six lines or so down:

19 "She called as planned to introduce herself to  
20 Violet and the girls [Samantha and her sister]. Violet  
21 at home alone on my arrival. She was not very welcoming  
22 and I had to make a great deal of effort to keep  
23 conversation going."

24 She later says about halfway down:

25 "Violet stated that they had been forced to attend

1 a case review and had not liked the experience."  
2 Then towards the end of that page she tells us that:  
3 "Sister A and sister E arrived home and also  
4 Samantha during this visit and tells us that sisters A  
5 and E attend the same college ... were very chatty  
6 towards me. When I discussed case review with them they  
7 were quite eager to attend, which Violet said surprised  
8 her. Samantha arrived, she was not very forthcoming  
9 with me. She did not seem keen on attending the case  
10 reviews. But this was, I think, due to Violet's  
11 interference in discussion as Samantha was almost told  
12 by Violet that she shouldn't attend review."  
13 A. That's rubbish.  
14 Q. That's all rubbish?  
15 A. That's all rubbish. I don't recognise any of that at  
16 all, sorry.  
17 Q. Did you ever hit Samantha?  
18 A. Never.  
19 Q. Because you know that there have been allegations that  
20 you hit her on various occasions.  
21 A. Never.  
22 Q. Well, perhaps again I should remind you that obviously  
23 you have the right not to answer questions about these  
24 allegations, but I'm going to ask you questions, and if  
25 you feel at any point that you don't wish to answer,

1           then that's your right.

2           LADY SMITH: I should confirm that, Violet, since Mr Peoples  
3           is moving to this chapter of your evidence.

4           Although this is a public inquiry and not a court,  
5           and not a trial nor a court case of any sort, anybody in  
6           this country has the right to not answer questions that  
7           could incriminate them in the sense of leading them to  
8           admitting the commission of something that amounts to  
9           a crime. That applies here so you don't have to answer  
10          any such questions. But if you do, they are being  
11          recorded and your answers will be in the transcript and  
12          available to anybody at a later date. Do you appreciate  
13          that?

14          A. Right.

15          MR PEOPLES: So did you tell me there that you deny ever  
16          hitting Samantha at any time?

17          A. Well, I will deny that because I never lifted my hand to  
18          any of the children, never.

19          Q. You never hit her in any way?

20          A. Never.

21          Q. Never clipped her round the ear or done anything of that  
22          kind?

23          A. Never.

24          Q. Because you do know that, I think, that she's alleged  
25          that you did these things?

1 A. Yes, I know that and it's lies.

2 Q. It's just all lies?

3 A. Yes, lies.

4 Q. I don't need to take you through the detail of what she  
5 said because it's in your statement. You just say on  
6 that matter it's all lies?

7 A. Yes.

8 Q. Just help me with this then: so far as these occasions  
9 when she said you hit her, there is a record that  
10 we have, and I'd ask you just to look at  
11 GLA.001.002.4215. It should come up shortly. It is  
12 a record made by an external social worker on  
13 27 November 1990 when Samantha was aged 17, which  
14 records that the individual -- and I think it's  
15 a Mr Freeler, a senior social worker:

16 "... received a phone call from Samantha from her  
17 work [and records] that she's unhappy at home and has  
18 been thinking about leaving. She feels that the  
19 difficulties with her mother over a long period [and  
20 I think mother is you] have got so serious at that  
21 stage. She says that her mother [that's you] has hit  
22 her and has threatened to phone her employer, has kept  
23 her in and has made hurtful references to her real  
24 parents."

25 Were you asked about this matter?

1 A. No.

2 Q. Because if you read on in this entry, towards the foot  
3 of that page, it says:

4 "It was agreed between us [that's between the senior  
5 social worker and Samantha] that since she had made  
6 serious allegations about her mother [that's you]  
7 I should hear her mother's version."

8 Were you asked about this matter?

9 A. No -- I'm Samantha's mother?

10 Q. Well, you're Samantha's mother for these purposes.

11 A. Oh right.

12 Q. I don't think there is any doubt that you are the  
13 reference here, not here real mother.

14 A. Okay.

15 Q. Were you asked about this allegation by a senior  
16 social worker from the local authority?

17 A. No.

18 Q. Because if we read on to the next page, 4216, we'll see  
19 that the phone call received by the senior social worker  
20 was followed up -- this is at page 4216 -- by a visit to  
21 Samantha, and followed up by a visit to an address in  
22 [REDACTED] which I think was your address at the time.

23 A. Mm-hm.

24 Q. And it says:

25 "The responsibilities of the department and my

1 version of the responsibilities was given over and the  
2 three of them left to get on with things."

3 It sounds as if there was a discussion about this  
4 matter. Did you not recall that happening? Was there  
5 a discussion?

6 A. No, I don't remember any discussion at all.

7 Q. Could there have been one?

8 A. Nobody came to my house in (inaudible) Drive.

9 Q. Nobody came?

10 A. No.

11 Q. So that just didn't happen?

12 A. That just didn't happen.

13 Q. So it's not just Samantha telling lies, that visit  
14 didn't happen?

15 A. That didn't happen, no.

16 Q. I'll just touch on this, and I don't want to -- you've  
17 already said that you didn't hit Samantha at any time.  
18 Just to be absolutely clear, what she told the inquiry  
19 was that you did hit her from time to time and that  
20 involved clips round the ear, wee nips, as she said,  
21 elbows to the body, wee slaps and smacked on the back of  
22 the head with a hairbrush. Now I think you have seen  
23 these allegations.

24 A. Never, never once.

25 Q. Not once?

- 1 A. No. Not my style.
- 2 Q. And that there was an incident at C&A in Glasgow that  
3 I think you're aware of where she says that you took her  
4 outside after she objected to clothing that you --
- 5 LADY SMITH: I think Violet's aware of the allegation.  
6 Looking at her statement, she doesn't accept she was at  
7 C&A in Glasgow.
- 8 A. I wasn't in C&A.
- 9 Q. You just say you weren't there?
- 10 A. I wasn't there.
- 11 Q. Who chose Samantha's clothing when she was a teenager?
- 12 A. She herself.
- 13 Q. She could choose what to wear?
- 14 A. Yes.
- 15 Q. Who chose how her hair was styled and cut?
- 16 A. She did.
- 17 Q. Because I think she says the opposite --
- 18 A. She'd only go to her normal hairdresser -- normal hair  
19 because she had very thin, fine hair and it was always  
20 kept quite short so that she could -- so that we could  
21 do something with it.
- 22 Q. Because I think her position, as I think you are aware,  
23 is that she wasn't allowed to choose the clothes she  
24 wore or the hairstyle she wanted or even to get things  
25 like her ears pierced. Is that all just lies?

- 1 A. Lies, yes.
- 2 Q. I'm not going to mention the detail, but I think you  
3 know the one I'm about to say. There was a Bermuda  
4 shorts incident which you have told us about. We have  
5 the detail about that and we can see the statement. Is  
6 your position that never happened?
- 7 A. No. Never.
- 8 Q. And of course, you were also accused of saying hurtful  
9 remarks about her mother. Again you deny that?
- 10 A. Totally not me. I have admitted sometimes people in the  
11 village who knew her mother made comments and I would  
12 say to them, "Listen, that's unfair, she's just a child,  
13 she wasn't there, you can't take it out on her".
- 14 Q. That's the point I wanted to make. You accept that you  
15 were aware that there were people in the village that  
16 made hurtful remarks about Samantha's mother?
- 17 A. Yes.
- 18 Q. Were they staff at Quarriers?
- 19 A. No, no, just workmen.
- 20 Q. Sorry?
- 21 A. It was the workmen.
- 22 Q. They weren't employed by Quarriers?
- 23 A. I suppose they were right enough -- but the stories that  
24 I got, they said to me -- they says to me -- I spoke to  
25 one of them and I says, did you say anything to her

1 about her mother, and they said, I said, oh, you're your  
2 mother's double, I hope you're not like her, and that  
3 was it.

4 Q. Did any child in your care or young person in your care  
5 at any time disclose abuse by another member of staff or  
6 any other adult to you? Did you ever have a child in  
7 your care who ever said to you they had been abused by  
8 a member of staff or another person --

9 A. No.

10 Q. -- such as another adult who came to visit?

11 A. No.

12 Q. You never had anything --

13 A. No, nothing like that at all. Absolutely not.

14 MR PEOPLES: I think, my Lady, these are probably all the  
15 questions I need to ask at this stage of the day. We've  
16 got your statement, Violet, and we can obviously read  
17 the detail of your response, but I think your position  
18 is very clear from the evidence you've given orally  
19 today and I just thank you for attending.

20 LADY SMITH: Are there any outstanding applications for  
21 questions of this witness?

22 Questions from MS DOWDALLS

23 MS DOWDALLS: My Lady, if I may. I don't have an  
24 outstanding application for a question, but there is  
25 a matter that has come up in the course of the witness's

1 evidence and that is something I would like to clarify,  
2 if I may.

3 LADY SMITH: What is it?

4 MS DOWDALLS: It is the duration of her employment as  
5 a house parent at Quarrier's Village. My understanding,  
6 having considered the records, which we see extend to  
7 1991 -- and we heard evidence from Samantha that she  
8 left in 1991 and she was discharged in 1991 -- is that  
9 Violet was a house parent between 1971 and 1991. So  
10 therefore about 20 years and not 10 or 11 years, as has  
11 been put and accepted. I wonder if we might clarify.

12 LADY SMITH: Is that possible, Violet? Ms Dowdalls speaks  
13 for Quarriers and she has been looking at the records.  
14 The records are showing you as carrying on as  
15 a house parent right up to 1991. I think what was  
16 suggested earlier, either by you or by Mr Peoples or  
17 a combination of you, was that you were a house parent  
18 for just 11 years, which would take you to 1982.

19 A. No. I was a house parent -- as I was saying -- I tried  
20 to say that I was a house parent in Quarriers for  
21 23 years.

22 LADY SMITH: I don't think it was 23. That would be -- am I  
23 right, Ms Dowdalls, the records are showing about 20?

24 MS DOWDALLS: My understanding is about 20 and the last  
25 child to leave was Samantha in 1991.

1 LADY SMITH: Yes.

2 MS DOWDALLS: Unless Violet remained as a house parent  
3 beyond 1991, but I wouldn't understand there to be any  
4 circumstances in which that would be necessary.

5 LADY SMITH: Right, okay.

6 Further questions from MR PEOPLES

7 MR PEOPLES: My Lady, can I just clarify? The reason I put  
8 it that way was based on the witness' own ...

9 I think in 1982, for the avoidance of doubt, you and  
10 Quarriers came to an arrangement whereby you were  
11 designated or termed a foster parent from 1982 onwards  
12 and during the period thereafter, you were treated as  
13 the foster parent of Samantha and her sisters and  
14 perhaps other girls in the care of Quarriers, but you  
15 were paid by Quarriers during that time until perhaps  
16 1991 --

17 A. Yes.

18 Q. -- but you saw yourself as a foster parent rather than a  
19 house parent from 1982 onwards, is that the way you saw  
20 it, but you were still an employee of Quarriers?

21 A. Yes, I was still an employee of Quarriers. Nothing had  
22 changed so far as I was concerned until I got more  
23 children in. And it's after we got more children in,  
24 then I decided I'd had enough with Quarriers.

25 MR PEOPLES: My Lady, I didn't want to take too much time,

1 but I think we can see that from the documents.

2 LADY SMITH: I think we've sorted that out.

3 A. And that's when I moved out.

4 LADY SMITH: The records seem to be right. It may be just  
5 a question of what particular description is used, but  
6 you were there until 1991?

7 A. Yes.

8 LADY SMITH: Violet, thank you very much. Thank you for  
9 engaging with the inquiry. We have your detailed  
10 written statement, which is very helpful, and thank you  
11 for coming along today to answer the questions that have  
12 been put to you on the basis of that certainly adds to  
13 my understanding of what you have to offer. So  
14 thank you very much. I am now able to let you go.

15 A. Thank you.

16 (The witness withdrew)

17 MR PEOPLES: I think that concludes matters for today, after  
18 another long day, and we'll resume with some more oral  
19 evidence on Tuesday.

20 LADY SMITH: On Tuesday at 10 o'clock? Until Tuesday at  
21 10 o'clock.

22 (4.35 pm)

23 (The hearing adjourned until 10.00 am  
24 on Tuesday, 13th November 2018)

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