

1 Tuesday, 14 June 2022

2 (10.00 am)

3 LADY SMITH: Good morning and welcome back to our hearings
4 in relation to the provision of foster care. We're
5 into, I think, the third week of the case study sessions
6 just now, with a witness who I'm told is ready to give
7 evidence, yes; is that right, Ms Innes?

8 MS INNES: Yes, my Lady. 'John' was in the care of
9 Edinburgh Corporation, now the City of Edinburgh
10 Council. He was boarded out at [REDACTED] 1959 and
11 remained in that placement for the remainder of his
12 childhood.

13 LADY SMITH: Thank you.

14 'John' (sworn)

15 LADY SMITH: A couple of things before you start your
16 evidence, 'John'. You'll see there's a folder on the
17 desk there in front of you. That has the hard copy of
18 your signed statement in it that you might be asked to
19 look at in a few minutes. We'll also bring your
20 statement up on that screen in front of you.

21 A. Yeah.

22 LADY SMITH: Which you might find useful as we look at
23 different parts of it this morning.

24 But other than that, 'John', can I just tell you
25 I do know what we're asking you to do here isn't easy.

1 Giving evidence in any format in any environment is
2 difficult, and it becomes particularly hard when you're
3 being asked about things in your own life that took
4 place a long time ago and can often inspire emotions
5 that can quite take you by surprise. I do understand
6 that.

7 A. Yes.

8 LADY SMITH: If you find at any time you have questions or
9 worries or concerns, do let me know.

10 A. (Witness nodded).

11 LADY SMITH: If you want a break, that's absolutely fine.
12 If it works for you, it works for me. Or anything else
13 that we could do to make matters more comfortable for
14 you, you must tell us.

15 A. Thank you.

16 LADY SMITH: All right? I'll hand over to Ms Innes now, if
17 that's all right with you, and she'll take it from
18 there, but I'm just going to ask [REDACTED] something.
19 Please don't think I'm being rude. While Ms Innes is
20 just doing the introductions with you, I'll do that.
21 Ms Innes.

22 MS INNES: Thank you, my Lady.

23 Questions from Ms Innes

24 MS INNES: 'John', we understand that you were born in 1948
25 in Edinburgh; is that right?

1 A. Yes, that's correct.

2 Q. You have a copy of your statement, I think, in the
3 folder in front of you. We have given it the reference
4 WIT-1-000000506.

5 If I could ask you to look at the final page of that
6 and at paragraph 95, you say:

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

11 You signed that I think electronically, on
12 10 November 2020; is that right?

13 A. Yes.

14 Q. Can I take you back to the start of your statement now,
15 please, and at paragraph 2 you tell us a little bit
16 about your parents and you say that you understand that
17 you're the youngest of your father's six children; is
18 that right?

19 A. Correct, yes.

20 Q. You say that after you were put into care, your mother
21 had another child?

22 A. That's correct.

23 Q. Okay. At paragraph 3, you tell us that when you were
24 about two, you understand that you went to the Princess
25 Margaret Rose Hospital because you contracted polio?

1 A. Correct, yes.

2 Q. And you think that you were in hospital for about two
3 years in fact at that time?

4 A. Yes. As far as I can believe, because -- yeah.

5 Q. I think later in your childhood, you had some further
6 operations on your arm, I think, that was affected by
7 polio?

8 A. That's right, yes.

9 Q. Can I move on from there, 'John', to page 2 and you say
10 at paragraph 5 that you can't really remember much about
11 your family life at all. You have some snatches of
12 memories, as it were, from when you were very young and
13 living with your mother, I think?

14 A. That's right, yeah. It's not -- it's very, very vague.
15 Probably I was about six or seven when I got put into
16 children's care.

17 Q. I think you first went, we see at the bottom of the
18 page, there's a heading Canaan Lodge?

19 A. Yeah.

20 Q. And I think you went there, you think, when you were
21 about 7?

22 A. That's correct, yes.

23 Q. Now if we can move on, I think you then went to Redhall
24 House?

25 A. That's right, yes.

1 Q. Again if we can move past that period and if we can go,
2 please, to page 12, this is where you start telling us
3 about your time in foster care.

4 A. Yes.

5 Q. What can you remember about leaving Redhall? Were you
6 told you were going into foster care or not?

7 A. As far as I can remember, we were just told that, you
8 know, you were going to be staying in a place I'd never
9 ever heard of in Blackburn, and, you know, never ever --
10 didn't even know where that was, and the car just picked
11 us up and we were driven -- my brother and I were driven
12 out there, and that was in [REDACTED] 1958 or 1959,
13 something like that.

14 Q. 1959, I think.

15 A. I think -- I vaguely remember -- I think we were told
16 beforehand we were picked out to go there, but that's
17 all I can -- I wouldn't swear on that, no.

18 Q. Okay. Can you remember if somebody from the social work
19 department went with you to Blackburn in the car or not?

20 A. No. I can't remember anybody else being there.
21 Probably -- there may well have been, but I can't --
22 I couldn't swear on that, again.

23 Q. At paragraph 44 you start telling us about the people
24 that you went to live with. I think it was a Mr and
25 Mrs [REDACTED] EHU-SPO ?

1 A. Yes.

2 Q. And you in fact stayed with them from then until you got
3 married in 1974?

4 A. That's right, yes.

5 Q. You say that the EHU-SPO, you think, were in their
6 late 50s, early 60 at the time?

7 A. When I was 15, so that would be five years after we
8 had -- Mr [REDACTED] had got knocked down in a car
9 accident and he was 65, in 1963, so we were there five
10 years before that, so they must have been in their 60s.

11 I think Mrs EHU was five or six years younger,
12 so they would be in their 50s, yes.

13 Q. And you mentioned that Mr [REDACTED] was knocked down in
14 the accident and did he die as a result of that
15 accident?

16 A. Yes, he did die. But as saying that, Mr [REDACTED] never
17 really had any say. It was Mrs EHU that was the
18 sort of matriarch of the family and she decided what was
19 going on, you know?

20 Q. So did you have much interaction with Mr [REDACTED] at
21 all?

22 A. Not much, a very, very quiet man, didn't speak very
23 much. He just liked to go for these walks into the
24 farms. There was a lot of rural areas at that time,
25 it's not like it is nowadays.

1 Q. Who else was living in the house when you got there, can
2 you remember?

3 A. There was a daughter, [REDACTED], and her son [REDACTED] and
4 then there was two other foster kids, inverted commas.
5 One -- I don't know why I can remember these names, but
6 [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] were their names and one of them
7 had just left, he had just moved out, and the other one
8 was still there and we had to share the same room, my
9 brother and I had to share the same bed and we had to
10 share the same room. There was two double beds in the
11 one room, and he was there until he got married as well.

12 Q. Okay. Roughly how long was he still there for before he
13 moved out?

14 A. I would probably say about a year, maybe -- a year, not
15 much longer than that.

16 Q. What sort of age was he at the time that you got there?

17 A. I think he was probably in his middle 20s, yeah.

18 Q. Was he working at the time?

19 A. He was working, yes.

20 Q. Then I think you mentioned that their daughter still
21 lived with them?

22 A. Their daughter [REDACTED] stayed, she stayed -- she was
23 there for, oh, I would think easily another seven, eight
24 years until she got married, and [REDACTED] was there all the
25 time. He never ever got married. He stayed with his

1 mother until she died.

2 Q. Okay. Were both of them working by the time you got
3 there?

4 A. Yes.

5 Q. Were they adults?

6 A. Yes.

7 Q. So you mentioned the bedrooms in the house. How many
8 bedrooms were there in the house?

9 A. Three.

10 Q. Okay.

11 A. The EHU-SPO, they slept in a sort of made-up bed in
12 the living room.

13 Q. Right.

14 A. They slept downstairs and, as I said, everybody else was
15 upstairs.

16 Q. So would their daughter have had a room, their son have
17 had a room?

18 A. She had a room to herself, yeah.

19 Q. And then you and your brother were sharing a bed and in
20 the other bed was the adult former foster child?

21 A. Yeah.

22 Q. In paragraph 45 you say that you moved a number of times
23 when you lived with the EHU-SPO --

24 A. Moved quite a lot. I think it was about 1963/4-ish that
25 we moved up to -- there was new houses built at

1 Blackburn to [REDACTED] and I don't think -- this just
2 came to me now, she took another lodger in, a guy that
3 was -- I'd never seen him before in my life but he was
4 quite a nice guy, but he was just a worker on the
5 building site, but when [REDACTED] left and got married,
6 this other -- she just took another lodger in, you know,
7 so that was about that period.

8 Q. Right. So the first house that she lived in I think --

9 A. That was [REDACTED].

10 Q. It was a post-war prefab?

11 A. Yes, post-war prefab, and the next one was -- I think it
12 was a three, four-bedroom house that she got, but as
13 I say, I still shared a bed with my brother.

14 Q. Okay.

15 A. But as I said -- am I allowed to say the names? Is it
16 okay to say the actual names?

17 LADY SMITH: If you say the names in here, that's absolutely
18 fine, 'John'. I do regularly remind people that some of
19 these names do have protection of an order that I've
20 made --

21 A. That's what I'm saying.

22 LADY SMITH: -- and people can't repeat them outside here,
23 but if it's easier for you to use them, just do.

24 A. This other guy, I can remember his name, but I'll just
25 say he -- he moved down and he was there until he got

1 married, which was two or three years. So he stayed in
2 the house as well.

3 MS INNES: Was he in a different room to you at that point?

4 A. Yes, yeah.

5 Q. So once the other foster child or former foster child
6 moved out, you and your brother continued sharing
7 a room?

8 A. Yeah.

9 Q. But did you ever have anybody else in the room with you?

10 A. I think [REDACTED] probably was in the room with us, because
11 as I say, this other guy and the daughter was still
12 there.

13 Q. Right.

14 A. So this other guy got a room. I think he got a room to
15 himself and [REDACTED] and I and my brother, [REDACTED], we shared
16 the one room.

17 Q. Okay, right. So you told us that you moved to this new
18 house and then you say at paragraph 45 that you moved
19 from there to another new house in [REDACTED] in
20 Blackburn?

21 A. Yes, [REDACTED], which was part of the same scheme, but
22 it was a downstairs. This was -- the one in [REDACTED]
23 was an upstairs maisonnette and this was a downstairs
24 maisonnette.

25 Q. And the same kind of sleeping arrangements?

1 A. Exactly the same type of house, yeah.

2 Q. Then you say that latterly she moved again to another
3 part of Blackburn?

4 A. But sorry, in between when we stayed in [REDACTED] and --
5 that's probably the guy that was the lodger, he had
6 moved out, but then she took two Mormons in as lodgers,
7 so they got the room that was spare, so she just filled
8 it up again with somebody else moving in. So that was
9 probably until about 1970.

10 Q. Okay.

11 A. And then she moved to another house in Blackburn, which
12 I don't know the reason why. It was -- she just moved.
13 By that time there was nobody else left apart from
14 [REDACTED] and it was a three-bedroomed house and that's
15 when the first time, when I was about 21, when I got
16 a room to myself.

17 Q. Okay, okay, thank you. If we can move over the page in
18 your statement, please, and you talk about the first day
19 at the EHU-SPO [REDACTED], what were your first impressions of
20 Mr and Mrs EHU-SPO [REDACTED] can you remember?

21 A. Never really drew any first impressions. The first
22 thing that my brother and I noticed coming from
23 a children's home was there was a big plate of food on
24 the table. You know, it was pie, chips and beans -- as
25 I say, for some reason I can always remember even though

1 it was all that time ago, there was this plate of food
2 that we probably hadn't seen for quite a long time, you
3 know, and that was the first thing that drew our
4 attention to the -- just an ordinary kitchen table, but
5 there was food and bread on the table and things like
6 that, you know, things that you weren't used to.

7 LADY SMITH: And you said there was pie, chips and beans?

8 A. Pie, chips and beans, yes.

9 LADY SMITH: For hungry boys?

10 A. Yes.

11 MS INNES: I think you go on to tell us that the food wasn't
12 anything posh but you were well fed when you were at the
13 EHU-SPO .

14 A. Yeah, it was miners' families and as I always remember
15 there were -- they made a big pot of soup and the pot of
16 soup had the tatties in it and it had the brisket beef
17 or the boiling beef and that was pulled out 20 minutes
18 before the soup was ready along with the potatoes and
19 your soup was your starter and the tatties and the beef
20 was your main meal, and that was the kind of fare that
21 you got fed, you know?

22 Q. Yes. If we just go up a little in your statement,
23 please, and at paragraph 48 you talk about the sort of
24 general routine, getting up in the morning, going off to
25 school, and you were normally in your beds from about 8.

1 A. Yeah.

2 Q. You said sometimes as a special treat you'd be allowed
3 to stay up late to watch the television, I think.

4 A. Yeah.

5 Q. You say:

6 "If we weren't squeaky clean when it came to our
7 behaviour, we got sent off to bed and we weren't allowed
8 to see these programmes."

9 A. That's correct, yes. It was sort of bath time and then
10 8 o'clock Wagon Train came on, which was a very popular
11 programme at the time, and if -- as I say, if you
12 were -- done all your chores and well-behaved, you got
13 to stay up till 9 o'clock or whatever it was to watch
14 these programmes.

15 Q. Okay. If we go on over the page, please, to page 14 and
16 paragraph 51, you say that you think that you had a bath
17 perhaps with your brother or -- I assume that in all of
18 these various houses there was a bathroom in the house
19 that you could use?

20 A. Yes, there was a bathroom, but I can't remember there
21 ever being showers as well as a bath.

22 Q. Yes.

23 A. But as I say, we had a bath at least once a week.

24 Q. And then you talk about washing clothes and you say that
25 you think that Mrs EHU encouraged cleanliness?

1 A. Oh, she did, she did have the washing machine because
2 there was quite a big family, so the stuff was out being
3 washed all the time. Just sometimes -- I don't know if
4 you have it in here, but if you didn't separate your
5 clothes, you used to get a clip in the ear for not
6 having the clothes ready to go in the washing machine at
7 the same time, you know.

8 Q. Then in the next paragraph, clothing, you say that
9 Mrs EHU bought your clothes and you think that she
10 got a grant from the council to do that?

11 A. She got a grant, they got a grant from the government or
12 the council or whatever it is, and I think whether she
13 bought all the clothes from there, but I always remember
14 she went to Slater's in Glasgow if it was -- you were
15 going to get a suit or whatever for that kind of thing,
16 yes.

17 Q. You say that you remember going through to Slater's in
18 Glasgow when you were about 16 and it was a drab brown
19 suit that was picked out?

20 A. Yeah, it was -- the 1960s was the 1960s. It was all
21 flower power and bright colours and she took us through
22 to this place and it was a drab brown suit, that's all
23 you could describe it as, and I just says that I didn't
24 really want to be seen out in that kind of style. So
25 she says, "Well, it's that or nothing", and so when we

1 got home, she says, "Well, if you're not wanting that,
2 you'll just pay your dig money and you buy your own
3 clothes", but before that, as I say, it's my very first
4 job, I just handed all my money over, the whole --
5 everything I got, and I got 10 shillings pocket money
6 back from my first job when I was 16.

7 Q. We'll come back to that a little bit more in a moment.

8 A. Oh sorry.

9 Q. Yeah. You then go on to talk about school and if we go
10 on to the top of page 15 and paragraph 54, you're saying
11 there that you felt like you were about a year behind
12 after you'd moved from Edinburgh to Bathgate?

13 A. I can remember I was only about six months into staying
14 and we had to sit our 11 Plus. In Edinburgh we weren't
15 going to be sitting our 11 Plus for about another year
16 after that, so you were thrown into the deep end. Exams
17 weren't very, very good, so hence the schooling wasn't
18 the school that I was -- or what they were trying to get
19 me to go to, you know?

20 But after a year at school, I was pulled into the
21 headmaster's and saying that you can go to Lindsay High,
22 which was the higher school, but you'll need to go back
23 to year one, which again I thought was another backward
24 step, so I just preferred to stay where I was.

25 Q. Okay. Then you talk about chores that you were given to

1 do and you say that you were given things to do in the
2 house when you came home from school, and you can't
3 remember exactly what the chores were, but after that
4 you were allowed from your free time?

5 A. Yeah, you were expected to do whatever, do you know, as
6 I say I can't remember exactly what they were, but you
7 were expected to clean, help round about the house and
8 maybe do -- tidy up the garden or whatever it was.

9 I can always remember when I was -- on Saturday
10 mornings I had to take the wheelbarrow across the other
11 side of Blackburn to her other son, who was married and
12 had kids, and collect a bag of tatties and wheel them
13 back across -- which is probably a good half a mile
14 there and a half a mile back, you know. So that was one
15 of the things that I can always remember having to do.

16 Q. Okay. You say that you looked forward to going because
17 you quite liked [REDACTED] and [REDACTED]?

18 A. [REDACTED] -- the other son, he was a football person and for
19 some reason or other being out there he was a Hearts
20 supporter, which I am a Hearts supporter as well. So we
21 did get on quite well. He was a lot older than me. He
22 was a lot kinder. He just seemed to speak to you as
23 a normal person would speak to you, you know?

24 But [REDACTED] was a nice man, a very, very nice man, but
25 very, very quiet. Didn't really say much at all.

1 Q. And when you say [REDACTED] was kinder, kinder than who?

2 A. Just in general terms, he would just take the time to

3 speak to you. As I say, [REDACTED] was -- but he just never

4 ever -- he just didn't speak to you very much because he

5 was just so quiet. Never ever got married in his life,

6 his lifestyle.

7 [REDACTED] was -- ah, she wasn't a nice lassie. She

8 used to come in and my brother and I would be maybe

9 watching the telly and she would just come in and switch

10 it over to another channel and just walk out the room.

11 Nothing. Not any reason for doing it. Because she

12 could. You know, it was her house, so she felt she had

13 the right just to do that kind of thing, you know.

14 Q. Did you feel that Mrs EHU [REDACTED] treated her own children

15 differently to the way that you and your brother were

16 treated?

17 A. Definitely towards her daughter. You know, I think in

18 these days, the old-fashioned, you want your daughter to

19 try and get married as quick as they can in the styles,

20 and I think she was trying to -- she definitely did have

21 a better influence towards her than she did to us.

22 Q. If we go on to the bottom of this page, you talk there

23 about leisure time and you talk about Mrs EHU [REDACTED]'s

24 son that you've just mentioned and the football.

25 At the bottom of page 15 and on to page 16, you talk

1 about your arm and you say that that didn't really
2 bother you when you were at Redhall, but you felt that
3 it did affect your life a lot more in foster care?
4 A. Yeah, I think the kids probably picked up on it, kind of
5 got a bit of protection when I was in Redhall because
6 the matron there kind of took me under her wing kind of
7 style and let me go up to her room to do exercises and
8 things like that, and I was -- first time ever I had
9 been taken to The Pleasance, where they must have had
10 a wee wing for orthopedic stuff, and I say that was
11 about -- was about eight year old, just before I moved
12 out to there, and the things definitely did change when
13 you were out in the big world, you know, the kids were
14 different, just entirely different picking things up,
15 you know.
16 LADY SMITH: 'John', which is your dominant hand? Are you
17 right-handed or left-handed?
18 A. No, I can't use this at all. It's just -- that's why
19 it's resting there because --
20 LADY SMITH: I can see that.
21 A. There's no -- if I let it slip, it would pull down, so
22 there's nothing -- there's no power on the arm at all.
23 LADY SMITH: What about writing?
24 A. No, this --
25 LADY SMITH: Have you learnt to use your left hand?

1 A. Another wee story was in the olden days, in the 1950s,
2 you had to use the inkwells.

3 LADY SMITH: Oh yes, I remember.

4 A. I couldn't write with a -- because it would spludge --
5 it was spludged all over the place. I think back then
6 I was probably one of the first kids that ever got to
7 use a biro. It was about 1958 and because -- the reason
8 because I was having to write with my left hand and it
9 was designed for right-handed people, you know.

10 LADY SMITH: Yes.

11 A. So I couldn't use it. The teachers could see how
12 I couldn't use it.

13 And another wee thing was scissors. A left-handed
14 person can't cut scissors with a right-handed pair of
15 scissors. So these were all the wee things that people
16 couldn't understand that you had to get on with, you
17 know.

18 LADY SMITH: Shoelaces?

19 A. The first time I ever learned to tie my laces was when
20 I was eight years old and that was going to The
21 Pleasance that I just said to you. They actually took
22 the time to show me how to tie my laces and I still tie
23 them the same way to this day. It's the only way that
24 I know how to tie my shoelaces.

25 LADY SMITH: Thank you.

1 MS INNES: What about Mrs EHU? Did she give you
2 support in relation to issues that you had with your arm
3 or not?

4 A. Not as such. They didn't come out, out in the street or
5 anything like that, no. The only thing that -- I was 12
6 years old and I got word that I was going into Princess
7 Margaret Rose to get these operations now. I don't know
8 if that was a social care -- nobody told me what the
9 reason -- why it was picked up. I don't know if that
10 was Mrs EHU pushing towards that or it was the
11 social care had got in touch and saying I was now of the
12 age where I could go for these operations to get -- that
13 was -- I was in hospital for about six months on and off
14 and that was the one and only time that I was ever in
15 hospital for that. But I don't know who implemented it,
16 if it was the social care side or if it was
17 Mrs EHU's side.

18 LADY SMITH: Did the operations help?

19 A. Yes. I can pick -- I can pick things up, I can do --
20 I couldn't do that before. I can pick buttons up or
21 pick money up and things like that. One of the
22 unfortunate things was I can't straighten my arm because
23 the operation went skewiff and this part of the arm fell
24 away to that part of the arm and they had to put a pin
25 in it so that stays like that, you know, so that was one

1 of the downsides.

2 But it doesn't bother me. I've had it all my life.

3 You get used to it, you know.

4 LADY SMITH: Thank you.

5 MS INNES: When you were in hospital when you were at the

6 EHU-SPO can you remember if Mrs EHU came to

7 visit you?

8 A. I honestly can't, you know. I can't. It was in

9 Fairmilehead in Edinburgh. I don't think they had

10 a car. And I honestly -- it wasn't six months all at

11 the one time. It was different periods. I had a couple

12 of operations and then there was a period and then we

13 went back for the third operation. But I can't remember

14 having any visits.

15 Q. What about your brother? Can you remember him visiting

16 you when you were in hospital?

17 A. No, no. He's only a year and a half older than me so he

18 wouldn't be able to get through from --

19 Q. Yes. Okay. At paragraph 59 you say:

20 "I wasn't encouraged to have friends coming back to

21 the house."

22 Can you tell us about that?

23 A. Again, I was -- one of the guys, one of the young kids

24 of the school said, "Do you want to come with us?"

25 Scotland and England were playing at the time. Said,

1 "Why don't you come to my house to watch it" so I did
2 and I went back, they said, "Where have you been?"
3 I said, "Oh, over at so-and-so's house watching
4 Scotland", and there was no inclination, there was no
5 them saying, "Oh, well, bring them back and you can come
6 and -- they can come with you to visit". There was
7 no -- any time I was never ever encouraged to bring
8 people back. No kids. I can't remember anybody ever
9 visiting with me, you know, at any of the houses we were
10 at, by the way.

11 Q. You say that you can remember kids inviting you to their
12 house, as you say.

13 A. Yeah.

14 Q. But you say it wasn't reciprocated so it didn't happen
15 very often?

16 A. It didn't happen very often. Just when the mothers and
17 that probably found out that you're not going back that
18 way, so it was kind of short-lived, you know.

19 Q. You say in this paragraph that you think Mrs EHU
20 was too old by the time that she fostered you?

21 A. I do. I think the time, as I say, when I was 15 and
22 Mr [REDACTED] died, he was 65 and she must have been
23 about 60. I don't know -- she definitely had two
24 children fostered and I don't know if she had other
25 children fostered before that, because I wouldn't think

1 she would just start -- I don't know if there was any
2 more in the house before [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] So maybe
3 I think 55 is a bit old to try and deal with kids that
4 are nine and ten year old, you know, have the same
5 feelings as them, the same wavelength as what they
6 wanted to do, to join in with their activities, you
7 know, things like that, which never ever happened
8 anyway, you know.

9 Q. As you've been saying, you were there in the 1960s.

10 A. Yeah.

11 Q. And was her sort of attitude different? Did you find it
12 a bit old-fashioned?

13 A. It -- it was. I -- again, I think it was in her third
14 or fourth move and I must have been 21 was the first
15 time I ever got to watch Top of the Pops in the house.
16 I always had to go to the local community centre, we
17 always went there on a Thursday night. But when you're
18 getting to 21 and 22, you think you're a wee bit old for
19 the local youth centre, so I actually asked one night
20 and it was the sort of thing, "All right", and I always
21 remember the Beatles were singing and she said, "Does
22 this go on forever?" you know. It was Hey Jude, you
23 know, the chorus, and I was feeling kind of sweaty that
24 they would hurry up and finish the song so she would
25 maybe let me watch it the following week, you know.

1 Q. So even though you were the age of 21, you would still
2 have to ask her permission to watch a television
3 programme?

4 A. Yes. I didn't feel -- I don't know what the correct
5 words are. I didn't feel I had the right to go and just
6 switch the telly on to watch anything that I wanted to
7 watch, you know.

8 Q. Okay. Then you talk about some other matters in the
9 rest of this page, but I'd like to move on to page 17
10 and to visits and contact with family.

11 At paragraph 63 you talk about your brother staying
12 with you at the EHU-SPO until he was about 19.

13 A. Yeah.

14 Q. But you say you didn't see any of your other siblings at
15 all in that time?

16 A. No. None at all, no.

17 Q. Did you have any concept of where they were?

18 A. No, I just kind of had an idea that they were all still
19 in Craigmillar area. That's the only -- I don't know
20 what age. My big sister's 13 years older than me, so
21 I was ... 10, I think it was, and I don't know why --
22 I don't know how it turned up that we were there, but we
23 were through in Craigmillar for a visit, I don't know
24 how it transpired, but this lady came in front of me and
25 she says, "Do you know who I am?" and I says, "No", and

1 it was my big sister. She was 23 and I didn't recognise
2 her because I'd never seen her, you know, being in the
3 hospital for two years and then away in the children's
4 homes. I'd never seen this woman in my life before and
5 she was 23 years old and married, you know. So that was
6 the kind of lifestyle that we had in the early days.

7 Q. You tell us there that when you and your brother were
8 14, 15, 16, you would go through to Edinburgh on
9 a Sunday and you would stay at your mum's on a Sunday
10 afternoon?

11 A. Yeah, we were allowed to just go through and get the bus
12 through and get -- and as I say, 7 o'clock -- it's going
13 backwards nowadays, isn't it, 7 o'clock was the last bus
14 so we had to make sure we were on that to get back to
15 Blackburn.

16 Q. Before you were 14, so in the early period of you being
17 at the EHU-SPO, were you seeing your mum at all at
18 that point?

19 A. No, never seen her until that period when we went
20 through to her. No, there was no visits through or
21 anything like that.

22 Q. You say at paragraph 64 that she never came to visit you
23 in West Lothian?

24 A. No, no. We never seen any of the family at all. We
25 never -- none of them ever came through to Blackburn.

1 Q. Can you remember getting any cards or contact from them
2 at Christmas or birthdays or anything?

3 A. No, nothing at all.

4 Q. You say at paragraph 64 that you can't remember anybody
5 from the social work department coming to see you at the
6 EHU-SPO ?

7 A. I honestly can't say that I ever -- I don't know if they
8 did come through and just speak to the EHU-SPO or --
9 but I can't remember anybody actually sitting us down
10 and saying, "How's things? Or what's happening?" or
11 whatever, you know. I can't remember any period at all
12 till, you know, when after I left school.

13 Q. Okay. Then you go on in the next section to talk about
14 your relationship with the foster family and you've
15 already told us about Mr [REDACTED] you deal with that
16 at paragraph 65.

17 At paragraph 66, you say that Mrs EHU was
18 a disciplinarian. You had to toe the line.

19 A. Yes. She was definitely -- I said to you she was the
20 matriarch the family. Whatever she said went kind of
21 style, so you had to -- I think that's one of the
22 reasons why my brother left, because it was just getting
23 a bit too strict for him, you know. 1960s' hairstyles
24 was different. He was told constantly to get his hair
25 cut and things like that, so he just -- he'd just had

1 enough and just went back to Edinburgh.

2 Q. You say in this paragraph:

3 "The house didn't have any love in it as far as me

4 and my brother were concerned".

5 A. No, I honestly can't say that I ever ever got a cuddle

6 or if I fell over and hurt yourself or whatever it was,

7 to get a wee encouragement that everything was going to

8 be all right. No, I can't remember anything like that

9 ever happening.

10 Q. You say at the end of this paragraph:

11 "Mrs EHU " wasn't bad bad but there was no love,

12 no cuddles, no 'How are you feeling today?'"

13 A. No, and I never -- I can say with my hand on my heart,

14 I never ever got hit or abused or anything like that.

15 But there was just nothing coming from the -- the wee

16 things that kids need just to boost them up a wee bit,

17 you know, there was nothing like that ever happened.

18 Q. You say:

19 "It was as if we were commodities for her."

20 A. I felt it was. Later -- not at that time because I was

21 too young to realise what was going on, but I think

22 reflecting back later on in life, I think it was just

23 for the money. You know, it was -- the way that she --

24 she rented out the house as soon as there was a room

25 spare, she had lodgers in all the time from different

1 walks of life and I just think she was ruled by that.

2 Q. If we go over the page to page 18 and paragraph 69,
3 I think you set out your view in relation to that and
4 you refer to the various lodgers that you mentioned
5 earlier in your evidence.

6 A. Yeah. There was. As I say, there was this guy in the
7 1960s when [REDACTED] moved out to get married, he was moved
8 in right away, and then there was the two [REDACTED] kids
9 that was moved in probably about 1969, 1970, and there
10 was a spare room but they were moved into that straight
11 away.

12 Q. You say at the end of the paragraph, I think as You've
13 already said in your evidence, that whenever she had
14 a spare room, it was never offered to you and your
15 brother?

16 A. No, we never actually got the chance to get this to
17 ourselves, no.

18 Q. At paragraph 70 you say at the beginning of that
19 paragraph:
20 "When I look back on my time in foster care, it was
21 a sad time for me."

22 A. Yeah. There were -- I -- it probably hurt me quite
23 a lot from when I was 20 to 25 that I had no social
24 skills and nothing that I could go out there and go to
25 places like dance clubs or places like that and interact

1 with other kids of the same age because I didn't --
2 I didn't know how to do it. From when I left school
3 when I was 16, there was nothing, there was no other --
4 I didn't have any mates or anything like that, as I say,
5 you could bring back to your house and lie in your
6 bedroom and listen to records or whatever it was. As
7 I say, I didn't have much social skill to talk to other
8 people.

9 The local community centre opened up in 1966,
10 I think it was, and it took me about two years to pluck
11 up the courage to go along and see what it was all
12 about, and as I say, it -- that move kind of saved my
13 life in itself, my health and safety life, because there
14 was loads of different kids there playing football,
15 playing all different things, and you got to interact
16 with them, and I think that was about the first time
17 that I'd ever done that, you know.

18 Q. Because you've already told us about not feeling that
19 you could invite anybody back to the house.

20 A. No.

21 Q. And you also say in this paragraph:

22 "I can't really remember a time when I would have
23 told Mrs EHU that something was wrong and asked
24 her for help."

25 A. No. I didn't think -- I didn't think she was that

1 receptive to being able to talk to in that sort of
2 manner. I don't think the response would have been --
3 again, I think she's probably -- the age bracket was
4 just too big for me to try and put my feelings over
5 towards her, you know.

6 Q. If we move over to the next page, please, at the bottom
7 of this page 19 at paragraph 74, you talk about your
8 brother leaving when he was 19.

9 A. Yeah.

10 Q. And you say that you felt he was more confident and
11 perhaps more confident to leave at that point.

12 A. Yeah. Again, me having this arm, I had a job which
13 was -- I couldn't do manual jobs, I had to have a job in
14 the office. My education wasn't absolutely brilliant up
15 to that point, you know. I probably learnt more after
16 I left school than I did at school. So I was more
17 frightened to move away from the environment of having
18 a safe home than me going into the outside world and --
19 what my brother done, and he moved back to Edinburgh,
20 you know. He had chances to get easier jobs if he
21 wanted to go down that line of work.

22 Q. If we go on to the next page, page 20, you talk there
23 about what you've mentioned already in your evidence
24 about getting a job. You got a job with a local builder
25 and you say that Mrs EHU came to the job

1 interview --

2 A. Yes.

3 Q. -- with you and you say:

4 "She wanted to make sure that I got the job."

5 A. Yes. I can't remember many kids at 16 with their mother

6 taking them to the interview for a job. So she kind of

7 intimated to the contracts manager that she would really

8 like for me to get this job so -- I probably wasn't as

9 well-qualified as -- but I did get it and, as I say, £3

10 and 15 shillings a week, it was my first wage, but that

11 was all handed over. That whole thing was just handed

12 over. She wanted the money side of it and gave me

13 pocket money back.

14 Q. You say she gave you 10 shillings back?

15 A. Yes, yeah, 10 shillings a week pocket money.

16 Q. And you don't know whether at that point she was still

17 getting money from the Local Authority?

18 A. I don't know. I don't know what their -- I don't know

19 what the outcome was, but I can remember going back to

20 the suit kind of situation, that was after I started

21 working, that we were taken through to Glasgow to get

22 this brown suit, which I didn't really want to get, and

23 that's when she says that, "Right, you start paying me

24 dig money and you buy your own clothes", so you know, so

25 that was that.

1 Q. Okay. I think you tell us later in your statement that
2 because you were giving money to her for digs plus you
3 were having to buy your own clothes, you didn't really
4 have money to go out?

5 A. No, I didn't. That's why I was saying that 16 to 20
6 period I was basically in the house all the time. As
7 I say, that's when my social skills was absolutely --
8 Saturday nights and Sunday nights was just sat in front
9 of the telly watching the telly, you know.

10 Q. You tell us that at paragraph 77 on this page where you
11 say that after your brother left, this period you
12 describe as the darkest period in your life?

13 A. Yeah, I was really -- really on a downer. I think
14 nowadays they would call it your health and safety, but
15 I kind of reflected back on that, that there was nothing
16 in my life. It was just going to work, coming home, and
17 that was it. And there was nothing -- as I say, until
18 this community centre opened up, it gave me a different
19 outlet in life altogether. It let me see there was
20 other things out there that I could enjoy myself with
21 and whatever else, you know.

22 Q. At paragraph 78 you give us an example. You remember
23 about your 21st birthday.

24 A. Yes. Unforgettable. Just nothing. There was no cards,
25 no presents, no parties, not -- nothing at all to

1 celebrate somebody's 21st. I was just reflecting that
2 with my daughter, that my granddaughter's 21st was not
3 that long ago and the comparison was absolutely --
4 I just says to her: you've just got to think yourself
5 so, so, so lucky that you've got to enjoy this because
6 I says: I remember being in Edinburgh getting a lift
7 through with one of the -- with Mrs EHU's
8 grandkids, dropped me off at Edinburgh to go and see my
9 brother and he wasn't in and I was walking about
10 Edinburgh, 21, just nowhere to go. So that was my
11 memory of that.

12 Q. Over the next page you tell us about the local community
13 centre that you discovered. You also talk at
14 paragraph 81 about the job that you had, that you were
15 terrified to leave the job that you initially got --

16 A. Yeah.

17 Q. -- when you were 16 and it wasn't until I think you were
18 made redundant that you moved to another job?

19 A. Again I wasn't -- I don't think I was qualified in my
20 own head enough to do the job that I got. Again, you
21 weren't encouraged to go and look for other kind of work
22 that was thereabouts or whatever. It wasn't until I was
23 made redundant and just before my 40th birthday that
24 I actually seen this other job which I applied for and
25 got, and it -- again, it was a different environment

1 altogether. It was a different type of work. Still in
2 the building trade, still in an office, but it was just
3 different and it was far more -- I enjoyed the last 25
4 years in my working life than I did the first 20, you
5 know.

6 Q. If we can move on, please, to page 23 and paragraph 88
7 where you talk about the impact of your time in care and
8 you say at paragraph 88 that one of the biggest impacts
9 in care was communication. I think you're talking there
10 about you didn't know how to get out there and meet
11 people and get on. I think that's the sorts of things
12 that you say that you missed out on during your
13 childhood and then into your early adulthood.

14 A. Definitely. As I say, the community centre gave me the
15 social skills to go and get kids -- I probably was a wee
16 bit -- because I was -- with my arm and I did have kind
17 of a boy-ish look, so I had a very, very young look. So
18 I was probably a bit older than the other kids that was
19 in the community centre but there was no reflection on
20 that and from there you met guys that you could get on
21 with, same sort of skill length, the same interests, and
22 that goes on the pub, you know, so you get old enough to
23 go to the pub and then you meet other people and just
24 things develop.

25 And then that's where I met -- I met [REDACTED]'s mum,

1 [REDACTED] when we went to the local dances classes, dancing
2 hall. So it did give you that development to go and
3 talk to other people, yes.

4 Q. If we go on to the next page, please, page 24, at
5 paragraph 89 you say that when you left care you didn't
6 know where to go for support, you didn't have anyone to
7 ask you questions and you're talking there I think about
8 support with your arm.

9 That you didn't know where to go once you'd left.

10 A. No, nobody contacted me at all. I remember -- I went to
11 Princess Margaret Rose when I was 16 for a check-up and
12 the guy just said to me, "Well, you'll need to lose
13 weight, it's affecting your back", and I think I was
14 only about 10 stone 7 at the time or something, and that
15 was the last -- to this day, that was the last time
16 I had ever heard from the hospital. Nobody's ever
17 contacted me about my arm or about polio or whatever, so
18 it was -- there was no -- there was no people connected
19 to yourself about it at all.

20 Q. Paragraph 90 and I think at 91, at the beginning of
21 paragraph 90 you say:

22 "It's as if I fell through a big crack in the
23 world."

24 Then at paragraph 91 you say:

25 "It was as if I got lost in foster care."

1 A. Well, again, not knowing about whatever it was at 16
2 year old or 17 year old, it wasn't until I was
3 reflecting back on my life later on that I think the
4 foster care community thought their job was done when
5 they put you out to a family. I can't remember any
6 follow-ups at all, even after I left school, to try and
7 help me to get a job or whatever it was. Nothing --
8 nothing -- no, there wasn't any communication or any
9 connection from the social side of it at all after
10 I went to the EHU-SPO in 1959.

11 Q. If we go on to page 25 and you talk there about the
12 lessons that you think that we can learn from your time
13 in care, and you refer again to slipping through the
14 cracks and there was no follow-up, and you refer to your
15 niece being a foster parent and what you see her doing
16 is different to your own experience; is that right?

17 A. Yeah, I can -- the kids talk to my niece in an entirely
18 free way as if they're speaking to their mum and dad.
19 They can argue with them, they can have talks about
20 whatever subject they want to talk about, just in the
21 two or three times that we've been down visiting them,
22 and there was none of that when I was in foster care.
23 There was no interaction. I can't really remember
24 sitting down and having a really meaningful talk with
25 Mrs EHU or even for that matter, you know.

1 But as I say, I think the foster social side of it
2 needs to look at the age gap before they send kid out to
3 these families that they're sending them out to, because
4 I think if you're sending seven, eight-year-old kids to
5 50-year-old families, it's -- I think that's far too
6 much, yeah, of an age bracket there that needs to be
7 filled, you know.

8 Q. You say in this paragraph that you think that there must
9 be check-ups for foster parents in this day and age.

10 A. Yes, as I say for me, from when I left in 1959, I did
11 not get anybody coming at all -- again, they may have
12 been out there, they may have only spoken to the
13 EHU-SPO, but I can't remember any of them speaking to
14 my brother and I, asking us how were we getting on and
15 was there anything they could do for us or whatever.
16 But no, there was nothing like that. I think that would
17 be a good idea too, just to have more communication with
18 the foster kids that are going out, yeah. Just to see
19 how they are getting on, you know, just to see if
20 they're happy or whatever it was, you know.

21 Q. Yes. Then finally at paragraph 94 you say that you had
22 many sad years after leaving care and it took you a long
23 time to get over it, as I think you've explained in your
24 evidence, and your hope is that other children won't
25 experience what you and your brother experienced?

1 A. Yeah, as I said, that social side of it wasn't there for
2 me. I just didn't have anything to reflect back on. As
3 I say, for the community centre to open up was the
4 biggest thing in my life. I just think that the social
5 side of the thing again needs to look after the kids.
6 They're not just dropped off when they're in foster
7 care. They need to keep an eye on them, keep tabs on
8 them, and have once-a-year meetings with them or
9 something like that, just to make sure everything is
10 okay.

11 MS INNES: Okay. Thank you very much, 'John', I don't have
12 any more questions for you, and I'm not aware of any
13 applications, my Lady.

14 LADY SMITH: Thank you. Are there any outstanding
15 applications for questions of 'John'?

16 'John', that is all the questions we have for you.
17 Thank you so much for engaging with us. You've provided
18 a really helpful written statement and you've made it
19 come alive today by coming to talk the way you have
20 done. You've certainly improved my understanding. Some
21 of the points you make such as about the age gap --

22 A. Yeah.

23 LADY SMITH: -- and the risk of a child ending up feeling as
24 if, as you say, they've fallen through the cracks and
25 are lost in foster care are very significant and

1 certainly will cause me to reflect.

2 So I'm very grateful to you for that and I'm able to
3 let you go and I hope the rest of your day is more
4 restful than I suspect the first part of it's been.

5 A. Thank you very much.

6 (The witness withdrew)

7 LADY SMITH: Let me just remind people that are here that
8 names have been used in the course of that evidence, the
9 EHU-SPO', names of other children in their household
10 as well including foster children and the EHU-SPO',
11 own children and they're all protected by my general
12 restriction order and can't be repeated outside this
13 room.

14 Now, where do we go now, Ms Innes?

15 MS INNES: My Lady, Ms Rattray is ready to do some read-ins
16 or a read-in, perhaps, before the morning break. If
17 I might be excused to speak to 'John' before he leaves.

18 LADY SMITH: Certainly. Thank you very much.

19 Ms Rattray, whenever you're ready.

20 'Ann' (read)

21 MS RATTRAY: Yes, my Lady. The first read-in for today is
22 from an applicant who wishes to remain anonymous and has
23 chosen the pseudonym 'Ann'. The statement is at
24 WIT.001.001.7764. 'Ann' was boarded out by Argyll
25 County Council, a predecessor of Argyll and Bute

1 Council, to a placement in [REDACTED] from [REDACTED] 1964
2 where she spent the rest of her childhood before being
3 discharged from care on reaching the age of 18 in 1974.

4 "My name is 'Ann'. I was born in 1956. My contact
5 details are known to the Inquiry.

6 I was 18 months old when I first went into care.
7 I went into Barnardo's in Glasgow. I have no memories
8 of being in there. I don't know why I was there. I was
9 in and out of care before I can even remember. I was
10 then in a home in Dunoon called An Mar. It was a group
11 foster home. My notes tell me that. There were a few
12 of us there. I don't remember a terrible lot before the
13 age of six.

14 I have a sister. She was born when I was six.
15 I remember her always being there so I think my memories
16 start from then.

17 My mother lived in Dunoon in a dilapidated old
18 house. It's still there. It belonged to an elderly
19 gentleman. My father appeared to be some kind of
20 housekeeper for him.

21 I don't know whether he felt sorry for her. It was
22 an absolute pit of a place but it was the place I wanted
23 to be because my mother was there. My dad was around.
24 I think he was a good bit younger than my mother.

25 I have a half-brother and a half-sister. They had

1 a different father and lived with him in Dunoon.

2 I never saw them. My mother also had another baby who
3 was immediately adopted. She came in between me and my
4 sister."

5 Moving to paragraph 11 at the foot of the page:

6 "I had a social worker. Her name was Cathy McPhail.
7 She was involved from the start. I can't remember her
8 at the time. I just get the feeling that she was
9 a bully. I think my mother needed help. I don't think
10 she needed to be bullied.

11 I know that my mother had three sisters and one
12 brother. The sisters lived in Canada and her brother
13 was in New Zealand. They seemed to be sorted. I do
14 remember my uncle once sending tickets for my mother to
15 go over there. It never happened. She seemed to be the
16 black sheep of the family.

17 I don't remember being in the school in Dunoon.
18 I only have a couple of memories of it, one of lining up
19 and the other is bursting warts on my knees in the
20 playground. I was infested with head lice. That's the
21 only memory I have of that time.

22 There was somebody else who looked after me. They
23 were employed by the council or something like that.
24 I can't quite remember.

25 I can remember being extremely anxious. I know it

1 was a different time but I remember feeling anxious all
2 the time."

3 From paragraph 16 to 41, 'Ann' speaks of her
4 experiences in An Mar Group Home Dunoon and An Cala
5 Children's Home in Lochgilphead. Moving now to
6 paragraph 42 on page 7:

7 "Nothing in particular sticks out about that time at
8 An Cala for me. I don't even remember if I wet the bed
9 there. I was older by then. They didn't have many
10 dealings with my mother. I don't remember Cathy McPhail
11 around that time and I absolutely hated that woman.
12 I don't remember any of it. I just can't remember for
13 the life of me. I don't remember school until I went to
14 [REDACTED]. I remember leaving An Cala. We weren't there
15 for very long before we were fostered out. It couldn't
16 have been more than a couple of months. I wasn't told
17 anything.

18 The foster parents, who were called FNV-FNW
19 FNV-FNW, came to An Cala to visit us. I met them in
20 the room. I didn't really want anything to do with
21 them. I didn't know what was going on. I was told
22 nothing as a child. My sister was fostered along with
23 me. I can't remember who took us to live with FNV-FNW
24 FNV-FNW I think it was either Cathy McPhail or
25 Jessie McKechnie.

1 I remember getting all these new clothes. It was
2 maybe a couple of skirts, a couple of tops, two new
3 pairs of shoes, a pair of shoes and a pair of sandals.

4 The FNV-FNW lived in a forestry house. It was
5 a wooden house with a big Rayburn in the kitchen. It
6 was far from being anything fancy but it was clean. We
7 were comfortable. It felt quite good when I moved in.
8 I remember the first wee while after we moved in with
9 them. They made us feel welcome, but that didn't last
10 very long. It lasted a bit longer for my sister.

11 My sister was only two. She knew nothing. She had
12 no experience of that. I shared my bedroom with her.
13 They had no other children. There were three bedrooms.
14 FNV was older than he was. She was probably
15 too old. She didn't work, I don't know if she ever had.
16 He worked in the road squad.

17 I believe that I was happy at first. I think they
18 made us feel welcome. I don't remember ever getting any
19 love or affection from them. I don't remember any love
20 or affection from anyone in my formative years. There
21 was never any of that. I got a sense that they were
22 doing a job. I don't remember getting any toys.
23 I think that was pushing it a wee bit too far.

24 I don't know the timescale before things started
25 going crazy. I know that my mother

1 [REDACTED] in the December. I suffered more for that [REDACTED]
2 [REDACTED] than anybody else, including my mother."

3 Over the page to paragraph 50:

4 "It was around this time that things started to
5 change in the foster home. I don't know whether that
6 was a coincidence or not. It was as if they couldn't
7 afford me being the same as my mother. Therefore they
8 had to knock it out of me. I didn't know about what my
9 mother had done until some time later. I often wonder
10 if my foster mother had become ill or if that demon
11 Cathy McPhail was instigating it. Something changed.
12 It was quite a dreadful time in that place.

13 I'm not sure if it had something to do with the
14 heinous crime my mother committed or if my foster mum
15 went mad because she surely went mad. There was
16 definitely something that happened.

17 It was an absolute nightmare. I honestly don't know
18 why. I didn't know what had happened with my mother.
19 Nobody told me anything. I didn't know anything.
20 I wasn't in touch with her. Things started to go
21 downhill. I don't believe that my foster mother smoked
22 when I first went there. She started smoking and
23 drinking. The place fell apart. It was never picked up
24 by the social workers.

25 I was led to believe that my mother was in hospital.

1 That's what I was told until one night I had to write
2 a letter to my mother. I couldn't write it or I didn't
3 want to write it. I must have said something that upset
4 my foster mother and she sent me flying off the chair.
5 It sticks in my mind like it was yesterday. It was the
6 second time that my heart froze and didn't defrost. She
7 knocked me off the chair and screamed that I was stupid.
8 I must have been asking when my mother was coming for us
9 and she said, "Your mother is not in hospital, she's in
10 jail". She said that my mother wasn't coming for me.

11 FNV [REDACTED] told me that there were [REDACTED]
12 [REDACTED] in the top drawer of her dressing table. There
13 was a picture of my mother [REDACTED].
14 I found out then that my mother had committed the crime
15 and that she went to jail. I think she was in jail for
16 five years. I constantly went up to that drawer.

17 After that, things went from bad to worse. She was
18 quite, quite mad. I think she had some sort of
19 breakdown and she may have been encouraged by
20 Cathy McPhail. I don't know if I have made that bit up.

21 There were all sorts of problems. One of my
22 mother's sisters came over from America and was keen to
23 adopt us. For some reason, Cathy McPhail and the
24 [REDACTED] crowd wanted to put a stop to it. It's
25 complicated. I don't have any recollection of my aunt.

1 We were stopped from having contact. I don't know why.
2 They used to send us parcels. They didn't like my
3 mother before but now she was in prison. There were
4 rows going on. It was all nasty and messy. We were in
5 the middle.

6 I went to primary school. It was a wee primary just
7 up the road. I walked to school. It was very near.
8 I was held back twice there. I believe I was a bright
9 wee girl, then I deteriorated. The teachers changed
10 too. It started off with Ms McLean at the beginning.
11 I was a good reader. I read in the church. I was given
12 the lead role in the wee plays we were doing because
13 I could read and learn the lines.

14 The school knew I was fostered. I have all of my
15 notes from the school. I went from being bright to
16 nothing. I have a letter in my notes that I had
17 written. I have never seen writing like it for
18 a 10-year-old. My grades were going down and down.
19 I wasn't given any help with schoolwork from anyone.

20 There is a series of notes between Jessie McKechnie,
21 the social worker, and my foster mother. I would have
22 been about 12 at the time. I was refusing to do my
23 washing. I can't quite recall.

24 I think the school ought to have known what was
25 happening, especially the primary school. I also think

1 the social work should have picked it up. The house
2 became dirty and it smelled badly.

3 There was a woman in the village who was aware of
4 what was going on. She was newly married. She knew
5 what was going on. I think she is still on the go now.
6 She's older now. I would sometimes go home from the
7 primary school and I wouldn't be able to get in the
8 house. I don't know why I couldn't get in. They were
9 probably drunk. I remember this woman inviting me to
10 her house on at least two occasions and feeding me.
11 I remember one time she gave me fishcakes. I just feel
12 like she was watching.

13 I don't know if I became depressed. I was never
14 going to be accepted as one of the cool gang. I wasn't
15 very bad either. I went to high school when I was 13.

16 I left school when I was 15. I had had two years of
17 education at high school. I had no education or teeth.
18 I didn't get any qualifications and I had false teeth.
19 They had been neglected. There was no toothpaste in
20 that house. The top row was removed first. The bottom
21 ones came out a bit later. I had a toothbrush but there
22 was never anything to brush with. I would brush them
23 anyway.

24 There was food in the house. Food-wise it probably
25 wasn't unlike other houses. I remember the frying pan

1 would sit on the worktop. It had days and days of
2 different fat in it. You would heat it up and dip bread
3 in it. It would turn my stomach now, but I loved it.
4 You had to eat what was put in front of you. I remember
5 that I hated potato fritters. FNV didn't like them
6 either but she made herself chips. I had to eat the
7 potato fritters. I think that was one of the times
8 I got the fork thrown in my face. I can't quite recall
9 any punishments for not eating the food. I think I was
10 expected to eat it.

11 I had chores to do. I had to light the Rayburn from
12 a young age. Nobody else in my class had to light the
13 Rayburn before they went to school. I could never light
14 it. It was time-consuming. I had to do it. I was
15 constantly late for school. I was punished in school
16 and in the house.

17 They were always requesting money from social work.
18 They didn't buy us new things. I can't think where we
19 got our clothes. I mean there were jumble sales in
20 those days. I don't remember getting anything new after
21 the initial time. I just vividly remember getting the
22 new shoes and the sandals. I wasn't clean or tidy.

23 I was allowed out, but not a great deal. The other
24 girls in the village would get the school bus too. They
25 were never allowed in the house. I was sometimes

1 allowed to go to their homes.

2 These social workers, Cathy McPhail and
3 Jessie McKechnie, were on the scene. Jessie McKechnie
4 was a gentler creature. Jessie McKechnie came to the
5 house. I'm not sure how often she visited. I think she
6 might have come in January, then in March and then
7 in August. I don't think there was any rhyme or reason.
8 There is information in my notes about her visits. The
9 notes say we were doing fine.

10 Jessie saw us in the house. I can't remember seeing
11 her very often but there is evidence that she visited.
12 She would speak to me but I don't think she ever took me
13 away to speak to me. She couldn't have gone into any of
14 the rooms. I think FNV would be there.

15 FNW would have been away working.

16 She didn't ever ask me how I was being treated. It
17 was always along the lines of, "Have you been a naughty
18 girl this month?" or, "You'll do better for mum". We
19 called FNV mum. I was never asked if I was
20 happy. It was not like it is today, so therefore the
21 FNW-FNW always knew that social workers were coming.
22 Things were hidden and covered up.

23 Cathy McPhail wasn't a nice person. I remember
24 going to her office. I was in there a few times.
25 I think the reason for going there was to organise

1 meetings with my mother. She had a big influence on the
2 visits with my mother. She told me how to act. She
3 said things like, "Don't go too close to her". I was
4 told what to say.

5 My sister and me visited my mother once in a hotel
6 in Lochgilphead. My mother came to us with a prison
7 warden. I was 10. I went once and I wouldn't go back.
8 I refused to go. I remember that. My mother came for
9 visits after that. I wouldn't go and see her again.
10 I was devastated now when I think about it.

11 I don't remember any other official visitors. There
12 aren't any documented in my notes. I think
13 Cathy McPhail came once or twice. I don't particularly
14 remember her in the house. She did visit once or twice.

15 I am not sure when I started calling FNV [REDACTED] mum. It
16 is difficult to pinpoint when it happened. I would have
17 done anything or said anything to please her. First of
18 all, my surname became my middle name and the foster
19 carer's surname became my surname. Then I wasn't
20 allowed the middle name, so it was just [REDACTED] It was
21 done very early on. I remember my sister being called
22 [REDACTED] early on. I remember her name changing more than
23 my own. I don't know if this upset my real mother.

24 There was correspondence going back and forward
25 between social work and my mother. She had no control

1 and she couldn't get to me. I wouldn't write to her and
2 I wouldn't see her. She was in jail so she was losing
3 control.

4 My foster brother came into the house when he was 10
5 days old.

6 I remember one Christmas. I am assuming that was
7 before things deteriorated. I got a bike. It was
8 a second-hand bike but it was a bike. I think there
9 were other toys. I don't remember any Christmases after
10 that.

11 I don't remember any birthdays. I knew when it was,
12 but my sister didn't. We celebrated her birthday on the
13 wrong day for years. It had been changed.

14 We would go to Glasgow for holidays. FNV-FNW
15 FNV-FNW were from Glasgow. He was from Govan and she
16 was from Coatbridge.

17 We went to FNV sister's house somewhere in
18 Glasgow. I think FNV behaved the same way when we
19 visited these relatives. She was always drinking.
20 I remember getting bounced on the head with her hand
21 once when I was sitting close to her. She would always
22 do that to me.

23 I think I stayed with the social worker
24 Jessie McKechnie twice. So she showed kindness later
25 on. I remember that the bedroom in her house was clean

1 and tidy. I stayed with her so I could meet some people
2 to go to the picture house. Then it was stopped.
3 I think I was about 13. I think she had a son.

4 He was Catholic and she was Protestant. We were
5 only fostered to that house because we were Protestant.
6 They wouldn't have anybody else. I had to go to Sunday
7 school and Bible class. They didn't go to church.

8 FWV was the strong one in the house. There was a bit
9 of conflict in the house about religion.

10 There was a huge change in FNV. She became
11 violent. I think it started six months after we moved
12 in with them. It all changed. She threw a fork at me
13 and it stuck in the middle of my forehead. I took
14 hammerings off her. She beat me.

15 I remember on one occasion FNV beat me in front
16 of FNV niece. I can't remember what age we were.
17 I think she would have been ages with me. I don't think
18 her mother had ever lifted her hand to her. She wanted
19 to go home because she was terrified. She is still on
20 the go now. I don't keep in touch with her.

21 When FNV beat me, she would grind me down on the
22 coach and she would throw things at me. She didn't use
23 weapons to beat me. I didn't suffer any injuries.

24 It was the emotional abuse that was the worst. It
25 didn't matter what I tried to do, it was wrong. It was

1 constantly thrown in my face that my mother was a bad
2 person. There wasn't a doubt in their minds that I was
3 going to be the same. It was relentless. It was the
4 nastiness of FNV She was plain nasty. It was the
5 venom that came from her mouth. She enjoyed seeing me
6 squirm. It was constant. That bothered me more than
7 anything in that house. The beltings were there, but
8 they weren't constant. She was constantly putting me
9 down.

10 FNV was a sexual predator. He was a weak
11 man. I don't know if he ever touched my sister. He
12 liked to dip his penis in my hair. That was his thing.
13 He never touched me but that was what we did. I learned
14 that if I moved he wouldn't pursue it. It would happen
15 again. If I was in the coal house he would come in
16 behind me or if I was in bed. I think it started fairly
17 early on. It continued for a time and then it stopped.
18 I don't remember FNV being around. I don't think she
19 knew about it. I certainly never said anything.

20 That was the extent of the abuse from him. He never
21 beat me. He stood back and allowed her to do it. He
22 was present most of the times she beat me.

23 I didn't have anyone to confide in.

24 There was a lot of drinking going on at this time.
25 Neighbours would come into the house.

1 I don't think that there were any other specific
2 incidents.

3 I did self-harm for a while and I did try to commit
4 suicide. I was in [REDACTED]. I was in my early teens.
5 I tried to commit suicide once. It isn't in my records.
6 I was obviously struggling. I was in a bad enough state
7 to even think of it. I never thought about committing
8 suicide again, no matter how anxious I got. Nobody
9 found out about it. I never did it again. I got quite
10 a buzz out of doing it.

11 I left when I was 15. I think there was a worry
12 that I wasn't going to get a job. The social work were
13 still involved. I knew my mother was dead. She had
14 killed herself. It isn't anywhere to be seen in my
15 notes.

16 I went to Portsonachan. I got the bus there myself.
17 I went to work as a mother's help and looked after three
18 children. I stayed with the family. I was still under
19 the care of the Local Authority. I don't know how I got
20 the job. There was a teacher in the primary school at
21 one point. She was into making tweed. They were
22 friends with the people I went to work with in
23 Portsonachan. I don't know how I got in touch with the
24 people but she might have had something to do with it.

25 There was no opposition from the FNV-FNW There was

1 no assistance from social work to facilitate the move.
2 It is well documented in my notes that I didn't thank
3 them for a hairdryer that I got for my 18th birthday.

4 On my days off, I would visit the FNV-FNW. I did
5 that for a while. I very rarely went back then.

6 I think I left the house before my sister started to
7 receive any abuse. I didn't see any abuse towards her
8 until after I had left.

9 One time I went back to see her. The everlasting
10 frying pan had been heated up and a fish slice had been
11 picked up and flicked in her face. I remember the wee
12 burn marks all over her face. She begged me to take her
13 away.

14 I told the social worker Jessie McKechnie about the
15 abuse that my sister was experiencing. I was just
16 closed down and told I was mistaken. There is no
17 mention of it in my notes. I know that I did it. That
18 was the only thing that I ever mentioned.

19 I think that Cathy and Jessie were still involved
20 with me when I was 18. They didn't give me any
21 assistance. We had a whole new bunch of social workers.

22 I went to work in Argyll and Bute Hospital.
23 I worked as a domestic helper. They wanted everybody to
24 do nursing. There was a big recruitment drive at the
25 time. I think I was a year into my studies when I had

1 my first child and I never went back. I was 19.

2 I think the FNV-FNW had gone. They had moved to
3 Milngavie or Bearsden. I never saw them again. I think
4 they are both dead now.

5 Eventually my sister came to stay with me. She was
6 a tormented wee lassie. I think she was desperate. She
7 had been told about our mother. I think she had left
8 school.

9 I had just married my son's father. My son's
10 grandfather had been in care too. He had been in
11 Barnardo's. He was brought up rough but he changed and
12 learned. They were both good men.

13 My father brother came to stay too. He didn't come
14 until after FNV had died. He was still young.
15 My son's father helped look after my sister and foster
16 brother. We didn't have a clue. I didn't know how to
17 give a cuddle. I would never have done that. I can do
18 it now.

19 My foster brother was being pulled by the foster
20 father so he went back there after he finished school.
21 He had just done his exams and had two job offers. He
22 went to Glasgow. There were no signs of schizophrenia
23 then.

24 The next I heard of my foster brother he was 19. He
25 was terrifying. He had been in Glasgow. I don't know

1 what had happened to him. He was taken into the care of
2 the hospital. He's schizophrenic. I still care for him
3 now.

4 My sister went off and married. She was just
5 a disaster of a girl. It was hardly surprising. She
6 became an alcoholic. I just never saw her again.
7 I don't see her now. I don't know if she is alive or
8 dead. I don't know. We talked a bit about our life in
9 the **FNV-FNW** I never spoke to anybody.

10 There were three children in that house and all
11 three of us were disturbed in some way. I think I came
12 out of it better because I had known my mother. I don't
13 know.

14 I think my son's father was the first person I told
15 about my experience. I think he had had an idea. He
16 knew the **FNV-FNW**. I never told anyone the extent of it.
17 It has been two years since it started to come out.

18 Then I felt I had to tell my youngest child. He's
19 27 now. I suffered for my mother's crime, the guilt
20 that I was made to feel. It was locked away. I'm sure
21 people knew about it. It was a secret until I told my
22 children. I had to tell them. It nearly ended me.

23 My time in care has had an effect on every important
24 aspect of my life. I was in care from a very, very
25 young age up until the age of 18. The impact of years

1 and years of emotional torment has had a long-lasting
2 effect on my life. It really wears you down. It
3 massively affected my mental health, education and
4 forming relationships.

5 I have only one or two friends. I don't go out so
6 I don't meet anyone. I never had trust issues with men
7 or anything like that. I think in the early days
8 I struggled. I was cold and indifferent. That just
9 doesn't work with a baby. I continued that way after my
10 son. My daughter came along and she was treated in much
11 the same fashion. I remember my son wanted to play
12 a board game when he was a wee boy and I would chase him
13 away. I would have none of it. All he wanted to do was
14 to cuddle in with me and play a game. I didn't twig
15 that it was wrong then.

16 I had no life skills. I wasn't taught how to do
17 anything. I was just screamed at. It was devoid of
18 fundamental care. I had to have people like me.
19 I would have bent over backwards. Unfortunately when my
20 children came along everyone had to like them too so
21 they weren't allowed to put a foot wrong. I was quite
22 harsh. I was as hard as nails.

23 I am almost certain that I was 28 when I had my
24 first panic attack. I was in the squash court and
25 I thought I was dying. They came regularly after that.

1 I got them under control but I never got rid of the
2 anxiety. I know my anxiety has come from the coldness
3 and the emotional abuse in my childhood. The big thing
4 for me was my mother. It was a shocker and I couldn't
5 talk about it.

6 I have seen psychologists and hypnotherapists.
7 I saw the first psychologist not long after the first
8 panic attack. I saw the next one after that. I'd seen
9 both psychologists by the time I was 34. I could never
10 really speak about my time in care with them.

11 I changed completely by the time my younger son came
12 along. I had reinvented myself by then. I was 34.
13 I just seemed to change. I was working as a home help
14 and I was a good one. My daughter was eight and my
15 older son was ten. I don't know if it was working with
16 the elderly and being able to empathise with them.
17 I just seemed to change.

18 When he came along, I did everything that was
19 expected of me. I gave him cuddles and all the rest of
20 it. I knew what to do but I just didn't feel it. At
21 least he had a bit more of me than the other two."

22 My Lady, 'Ann' then tells us from paragraph 121
23 about other impacts, such as essential tremors, and
24 sharing her experiences with her children and seeing
25 psychologists and getting other additional support.

1 Moving on to paragraph 126 on page 21:

2 "I wasn't given a chance with my education. Nobody
3 cared basically. I didn't go back to it. I had been
4 doing nursing and would probably have done well but
5 I got pregnant. I always said I would go back to it
6 when the older two grew up but then my younger son
7 appeared.

8 I have always got out of opportunities when they
9 came up. I'm good at doing that. I've ended up with
10 nothing. I've got a good reputation at work. I have
11 the lowest position. I should be in a senior role but
12 I've avoided opportunities at work. I think that is due
13 to a lack of confidence and low self-esteem. I have had
14 it all my life in varying degrees. I'm not like that so
15 much now. Although I can't seem to get rid of the
16 anxiety.

17 I still can't have any conflict. I would leave my
18 work or my village if I was faced with any conflict.
19 I still can't cope with it. I am better than I was but
20 it came at a price."

21 Moving now to paragraph 130 on page 22:

22 "There are certain bits that have haunted me all my
23 life. I remember getting knocked off the chair by
24 FNV, being told I was stupid when I discovered
25 that my mother was in jail. I still remember how

1 I felt. I was desperate to see my mother and desperate
2 to please.

3 I am haunted by pushing my older son away when he
4 wanted to play a game of Risk. I have to go into
5 another room when I see it advertised on the telly. It
6 can be over the top with some things."

7 And to paragraph 133:

8 "I have my records from Argyll and Bute Council.
9 I obtained them easily. The FNV-FNW are dead now.
10 I have the full records. I received them and they
11 weren't blacked out. They date from 18 months to the
12 hairdryer incident when I was 18. They are all there.
13 I would be prepared to let the Inquiry see my records.

14 There is a note from when I was about 14 or 15. It
15 said that I wasn't very bright and nothing to look at.
16 All of the notes run like that. There are other notes
17 that say "I met 'Ann' today. She is tall now and
18 slightly better looking". Cathy McPhail's language was
19 shocking in these notes. I can't think of any examples
20 but she wasn't very nice about my mother. There is also
21 mention that undesirables hung around the house. She
22 observed it all the time but didn't do anything about
23 it.

24 To my mind, I hope that things have changed
25 drastically since I was in care. I pray that they have

1 changed. There is something far wrong with this country
2 if they haven't. As for the information I've given, if
3 it's available for people to see, it may prevent it
4 happening in future. I know it was a time that I was in
5 and it was circumstances. I came up against not
6 particularly nice people. It definitely was a different
7 time.

8 I have never reported any of the abuse to the
9 police. I would never have dared. I was terrified that
10 I wouldn't be able to do it. There was absolutely no
11 support from anyone. My mother's crime had nothing to
12 do with me. I was only a child, but I know that it
13 affected how I was treated by the adults who were meant
14 to be looking after me. As a result, I had no one to
15 confide in. If I had had someone to speak to, things
16 might have been different. I should have been treated
17 differently and offered some sort of help or even just
18 a cuddle.

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

23 And the statement was signed by 'Ann' on 5 April
24 2018.

25 LADY SMITH: Thank you very much. We'll take the morning

1 break now and could I just remind people there was
2 mention of a name there that's protected by my general
3 restriction order, that's the FNV-FNW the foster carers
4 referred to in that statement.

5 I'll rise now and sit again in about quarter of
6 an hour. Thank you.

7 (11.37 am)

8 (A short break)

9 (11.55 am)

10 LADY SMITH: I think we're ready for the next witness.

11 Ms Rattray.

12 MS RATTRAY: In fact the next oral witness won't be in until
13 2 o'clock so we have room for further read-ins.

14 LADY SMITH: Very well.

15 'Buoyant' (read)

16 MS RATTRAY: The next read-in is a statement of an applicant
17 who wishes to remain anonymous and has chosen the
18 pseudonym 'Buoyant'. His statement is at
19 WIT.001.002.2394.

20 'Buoyant' was admitted to the care of Edinburgh
21 Corporation as a baby. He was placed in Abelour
22 Orphanage where he stayed until he was boarded out by
23 Edinburgh Corporation to a foster placement in Loanhead
24 and that placement was from [REDACTED] 1964 until he was
25 discharged from care at the age of 18. However, even

1 after he was formally discharged from care he did
2 receive some form of support from Edinburgh Corporation
3 when he was attending university.

4 Part of 'Buoyant's' statement was read in in the
5 case study into Quarriers, Abelour and Barnardo's on
6 30 December 2018 and accordingly I will read only those
7 parts of his statement which relate to foster care.

8 LADY SMITH: Thank you.

9 MS RATTRAY: "My name is 'Buoyant'. I was born in 1953. My
10 contact details are known to the Inquiry"

11 Moving now to paragraph 129 on page 32:

12 "Ms Talbot took me and my suitcase to Loanhead.
13 I arrived at Loanhead and was met by two rather elderly
14 individuals, Mr and Mrs AJS/AJT. They may have been
15 younger in body then they looked. The foster mother was
16 fairly stout. She had arthritis and she found it hard
17 to move around. When I was in my fifth and sixth year
18 there she ended up sitting by the window hardly moving
19 all day looking out of the window.

20 The house was a council house in a terrace split
21 into upper and lower apartments. Virtually everybody on
22 the street was living off the state. It was that sort
23 of neighbour. There were other relatives living nearby.
24 Mrs AJT's daughter lived with her husband and two
25 children who were younger than me. They were regular

1 visitors. They had an indication as to what was
2 happening within the foster home.

3 Mr and Mrs AJS/AJT had a son who lived quite
4 a distance away with his wife. He was in the army. He
5 came to visit periodically for a couple of days. They
6 also had a son who was younger than the other son. He
7 lived about three doors up from our house.

8 There was also an adopted black boy. He was a month
9 or two older than me. He was big and very strong and
10 sporty, he was very sociable outside the house. He was
11 absolutely adored by Mr and Mrs AJS/AJT.

12 In addition to me, Mrs AJT had a number of
13 temporary foster placements. There was a flow of
14 children coming in and out of the home throughout my
15 time there. Sometimes they were there for a couple of
16 weeks and then gone. They were boys and girls of
17 different ages. They were never older than me, but not
18 much younger than me. I remained in the foster home
19 until I was almost 19. Mr and Mrs AJS/AJT never
20 suggested I change my surname.

21 When I arrived, Ms Talbot introduced me to Mr and
22 Mrs AJS/AJT. I hadn't seen them before. I hadn't
23 been to this place before. Ms Talbot was trying to
24 explain who these strangers were. There had been no
25 preparation at all. We hadn't talked about it on the

1 journey. I was too gobsmacked. I was in a car, which
2 was new to me and very strange. I was being driven
3 somewhere. I wasn't the sort of child to ask questions.
4 I just did as I was told.

5 I was told at some point or I found out that Abelour
6 Orphanage was going to be closing and that this was
7 where I was going to be staying. Nobody explained why
8 Abelour was closing or whether I was going to be able to
9 see my friends or auntie again. That only came later on
10 and through my own efforts.

11 Ms Talbot was barely there for 15 minutes and then
12 she was off. This was all very managerial. The first
13 thing the foster parents said was that I could call them
14 mum and dad. That was very strange to me. All I'd
15 known was auntie and Ms Heap at Abelour Orphanage.
16 I listened. I was just trying to digest what was going
17 on. They eventually told me where I'd be sleeping.

18 The first thing I did was open up my suitcase to
19 show them my piggy bank. I was very proud of my
20 suitcase, my clothes and my piggy bank. They weren't
21 too impressed with the piggy bank or the clothes, which
22 were fairly minimal. Very early on, it became clear to
23 me that this wasn't what I was used to.

24 The other foster boy and I may have shared a room
25 initially. It's a little bit confusing because I ended

1 up having to share a room with my foster father. I had
2 my own little bed and he had a double bed. The foster
3 mother never shared the same room as the foster father.
4 He was dying on his feet with silicosis. He had been
5 a miner in [REDACTED] and it was very frequent for the
6 miners to pick up this lung disease. He ended up having
7 to become a surface miner because his condition was so
8 bad. He was still a surface miner when I arrived at the
9 age of 11. When that could no longer happen, he ended
10 up bed-bound. I think he just gave up.

11 He had a spittoon. He would spit from morning until
12 night, including during the night. He was constantly
13 awake. To this day I can't stand the sound of spitting.
14 It makes me physically sick. I had to empty the
15 spittoon routinely. Sometimes he spilled it on the
16 ground.

17 Using the bath was a major issue. There must have
18 been times when I smelled at school. I liked the bath,
19 but every time I used the bath there was consternation.
20 I wasn't in the bath every day then. It was once a week
21 or once every two weeks. However, it was too costly,
22 even though my foster father received a coal allowance.

23 I don't know how many times you needed to have
24 a bath a week. I liked to bath. I was so pleased when
25 I started playing rugby at school because I could use

1 the showers. I remember saying as a teen that when
2 I wrote my first book I would write about how we need to
3 look after ourselves and bath. I honestly didn't know
4 how many times you needed to wash yourself. Nobody ever
5 told me.

6 I can't remember whether the foster parents
7 introduced me to the school. It became clear that
8 I would need to catch up with the rest of the children.
9 The Abelour Orphanage school was slightly different to
10 this school in Loanhead. They had to check what I knew
11 about reading and writing. I was very good at reading
12 and spelling but you needed more than that, like maths.
13 There was a period of catch-up. I was coming up to the
14 11 Plus, which was the following year.

15 The children at the school had never seen a black
16 boy before. I think the other foster boy either went to
17 a different school or was in a different class. They
18 were fascinated by my hair and kept on touching it.
19 They weren't rude or negative, they were just
20 interested. There was positive engagement with peers
21 early on and very positive engagement with my teachers
22 over the next year. I was happy at school because I had
23 made myself happy at school and my teachers were
24 receptive.

25 I had a wonderful teacher at primary school. We had

1 the same teacher for all our subjects. My teacher was
2 Mrs Marchbanks. She was an absolute angel. She
3 realised I was out of my depth in that I'd just arrived.
4 She didn't know about my background at the foster home
5 or Abelour. I didn't talk about any of that. She just
6 saw this black boy arrive in her class and nobody knew
7 anything about him. She needed to prepare me for the
8 11 Plus, like all her other charges. I have a huge
9 amount of respect and love for her as a teacher. The
10 headmaster was also wonderful. He was very personable
11 and very gentle. The kids loved him.

12 A few months after I arrived, I was seriously ill
13 with pneumonia. I don't know why or how I caught it.
14 I was in hospital for several weeks. I think I was in
15 the Edinburgh Royal Infirmary. I was due to sit the
16 11 Plus. I think the teachers may have come to see me
17 and realised I wasn't going to get out before the
18 11 Plus. They decided to make a case for me to get
19 a waiver for the 11 Plus, based on the catch-up work and
20 the previous period of being in the classroom.

21 I managed to get the waiver and was given a passing
22 grade for the 11 Plus without having sat it. I ended up
23 at Lasswade High School. I'd never been to Lasswade
24 before. In the meantime, I was still trying to make
25 entry into my foster family home.

1 When I was at secondary school I was making friends.
2 I was loving it and I had a good relationship with the
3 teachers. I also had to make sure that I was able to do
4 the work, sit the exams and get reasonable grades. That
5 demanded a lot of time. Failure was not a practical
6 possibility for me. There was too much at stake. I had
7 to put in extra work and use the library. I enjoyed it
8 too, but there was an essential motivation.

9 I needed to put the work in and get decent grades in
10 order to move to the next level. I was thinking
11 experientially. The end point was to get the necessary
12 grades to get to university and to get the hell out of
13 the foster home. I was not prepared to work in a mine,
14 like the other foster boy did when he left school. He
15 had no qualifications and could barely read or write.
16 The only thing he could do was go down the pit.

17 I was experientially of an age that I could
18 understand that the AJS/AJT viewed me as a threat.
19 I wasn't happy with it, but I had to live with it and
20 I had to do manage it somehow. I managed it through
21 education. I got support and encouragement not from the
22 AJS/AJT and not from the social workers, but from
23 the teachers who wanted me to do well.

24 There was a time when I was in the corridors of
25 Lasswade High School. I'd found a table and I was doing

1 some work. The headmaster, Mr Webster, came up to me
2 and asked why I was working during the break.
3 I explained to him that I was trying to master something
4 and he tried to encourage me to lighten up, not knowing
5 my background and my circumstances. I couldn't afford
6 to lighten up. If I didn't hit the steps, I would be
7 down the mine. That wasn't going to happen. I had to
8 reach my goal. There was no element of failure. I had
9 to achieve certain things. It wasn't obsessive. It was
10 clear-cut and simply necessary. I had always written
11 a diary. I wrote down my plans.

12 The foster placement was grim. It was very
13 unhealthy. I had to endure it. I was extremely unhappy
14 for most of the time in the foster home, but not in the
15 school. School balanced it out. I was successful in
16 school in spite of the foster home. I made sure I was
17 successful with the support, the love and the nurture of
18 my teachers and of my peers. That's what got me
19 through.

20 I have very fond memories of school, so much so that
21 I flew over for a class reunion in February of this
22 year. I was so surprised by the numbers that turned up.
23 It was a wonderful occasion. It was genuine warmth,
24 even after that gap of 40 plus years. We did gel. It
25 was a very good year group.

1 After school, I spent a lot of time going to the
2 library or studying at the kitchen table. I had minimal
3 contact with the other foster boy. He found me to be
4 a complete bore so there was no interaction with him.
5 Because I was picking up a strong message, it wasn't
6 really worth trying to attempt to interact with him. My
7 interaction with the foster parents was dutiful
8 interaction on my part. When I was at home, I tidied up
9 and did the garden and whatever I could do to avoid
10 creating any unnecessary friction. I played it down if
11 I was really upset.

12 Even at the age of 12 or 13, I would work on my
13 studies until 8 or 9 o'clock at night. At the weekends
14 it was slightly different. I was a great walker.
15 I always loved nature and walking. That came from
16 Abelour. The Pentland Hills were just a few miles from
17 Loanhead. They were an absolute magnet for me when
18 I discovered them. I often used to go there on my own
19 trekking and doing bits and bobs. Sometimes I was away
20 all day. I would leave early in the morning and come
21 back at night before it got dark. I had friends, but
22 they weren't too interested in walking. This was my
23 private, solitary time where I would think and work
24 things out.

25 My experiential age came with spending time thinking

1 and reflecting. I had to choose the context for that
2 opportunity to arise, therefore I needed space, clarity
3 and a lack of clutter. I got this walking and swimming.

4 Part of my life was throwing myself into studies and
5 school activities. I had success on both fronts. As
6 well as getting the grades to get into Edinburgh
7 University, I also enjoyed athletics and rugby.
8 I played rugby all the way through high school. I was
9 very good. I played fullback. I was a great catcher
10 and a great runner because I was very athletic. I was
11 social and I would keep the team together. We enjoyed
12 being together.

13 My rugby was largely down to Peasall, who was the PE
14 teacher. He was well known in the area as a very good
15 rugby coach. He preferred rugby to football, so I have
16 to put it down to his success and motivation to create
17 a very good rugby team in the school. We were so good.
18 We were champions. We weren't just an ordinary rugby
19 team. We were a very good team that won significant
20 numbers of competitions. We routinely played other
21 schools, private schools and state schools, on
22 a Saturday. I continued to play rugby into my 40s.

23 My time at the foster home wasn't all doom and gloom
24 because I made it fun. My history master was nicknamed
25 Thunder Guts because he had a great roar. He was

1 a rugby person as well. Nobody really got in the way of
2 Thunder Guts. He also used the strap and nobody wanted
3 that. We were playing rugby one day, Thunder Guts was
4 with us. It was an away game. He had given us a reason
5 why he couldn't come back with us because he had some
6 unfinished business to do. We all went to the Laird and
7 Dog pub in Lasswade. When we arrived, Thunder Guts was
8 there. He quickly moved out when we arrived.

9 At Abelour I was used to going to church on
10 a Sunday. It was mandatory. The AJS/AJT weren't
11 churchgoers. I decided to go to church myself. I've no
12 idea how I found the church. I used to go to Sunday
13 school. You're not the sole author of your life
14 journey. People, places, circumstances and luck are all
15 part and parcel of it. I remember an elderly gentleman,
16 well into his 80s, who took the Sunday school. He was
17 absolutely wonderful. Being at Sunday school brought
18 back to me some of the feeling that I had at Abelour.

19 My family were quite shameless about the fact that
20 they had no contact with me. There was no expression of
21 regret later on in life. When I was in the foster home,
22 my elder sister wanted to see me. She was living with
23 one of the aunts and she wasn't too far away. I was
24 about 12 or 13. She was about a year older than me.
25 Somehow a visit did take place between my sister and

1 myself when I was 12 or 13.

2 I looked forward to the visit and enjoyed it. I had
3 somebody I could call family. We went out somewhere.
4 My sister seemed to enjoy the visit. My aunt complained
5 to the social work department. According to my records,
6 my aunt complained because people would think that my
7 sister had a black boyfriend. As a result, she didn't
8 want any more contact. I had minimal contact with my
9 social worker, but it's noted in my records that I was
10 very upset about it and was asking when I would be able
11 to see my sister.

12 I heard about my eldest sister through my elder
13 sister. I didn't know about her before my sister's
14 visit.

15 In the period before I left the foster home there
16 was very little contact with a social worker. I didn't
17 even know who my social worker was. The only time
18 I ever saw chocolate biscuits was when visitors came.
19 It was quite a large family and relatives used to visit.
20 There was one relative in particular who used to visit
21 from England. The [REDACTED] used to make a fuss of
22 him and there would be chocolate biscuits and cakes.
23 I never saw such treats unless somebody special was
24 visiting.

25 One such special visitor was the social worker. One

1 discussion sticks out in my mind. I knew somebody
2 special was visiting because I saw the biscuits.
3 I wasn't told who was coming. I remember on this
4 occasion the social worker was sitting in the living
5 room. She was having a chat with me in front of the
6 foster mother. The foster father was never really
7 involved. He was in his bed. She was asking me how
8 things were going. I never discussed school with the
9 social worker. I wasn't going to say it was hell in
10 front of the foster mother. There may have been one or
11 two complaints from the foster mother. It was all very
12 sort of standard stuff, "Thank you, it's good to see
13 you're doing well", that was it. It was very brief.

14 It did have an impact on me. I was beginning to
15 think it would be nice to work with people. I said to
16 myself that I'd do a damn sight better job than this
17 social worker. It gave me a very strong feeling that
18 this person was supposed to be looking after me,
19 nurturing me, and she had no idea what was happening.

20 I remember another visit from a different social
21 worker. It was after my aunt had complained to the
22 social work department about my sister's visit. The
23 social worker talked to me about it. When she came to
24 visit, I asked when I was going to see my sister. I had
25 enjoyed the visit. I was told words to the effect that

1 I wasn't. There was no explanation as to why. It was
2 all very matter of fact. It's noted in my social work
3 records that I was upset or distressed, so I must have
4 showed my emotion at that point.

5 There was no difference in the way my case was
6 handled in the course of my time in foster care. My
7 records don't change either. It was all very minimal.
8 The feeling that came across to me is that it appeared
9 to the social workers that things were okay. I wasn't
10 causing any problems. I wasn't fighting and I was doing
11 reasonably well at school. My school records were
12 passed directly by the school straight to the social
13 workers, so the social workers knew that I was doing
14 okay. Although the foster parents weren't happy with me
15 and I was there under duress, they couldn't find any
16 reason to fault me and complain to the social work.
17 Basically, it was a success as far as they were
18 concerned.

19 The social work department was happy to let the
20 arrangement continue. I was causing no grief in the
21 foster home. The foster parents complained about me
22 using too much electricity, so I used candles for years.
23 They complained I used too much hot water for the bath
24 even though my foster father got a coal allowance and it
25 was free. Those were the two things that really stirred

1 them up. There was nothing else they could point the
2 finger at.

3 I found it very difficult to call my foster parents
4 mum and dad. I think I did eventually call them mum and
5 dad, but there was no feeling or affection. Basically,
6 what came across very early on was that I was a paying
7 guest. There was very little change, despite my efforts
8 to try and be part of the family. The term paying guest
9 was never used, but it became crystal clear that I was
10 there on sufferance. They needed me and the other
11 foster children to pay bills and whatever.

12 There was no affection. There was no effort to try
13 and look after me in a nurturing, caring, loving way.
14 I can't remember ever being kissed by my foster mother
15 or indeed my foster father. There was no affection
16 whatsoever. It was very, very cold.

17 It became apparent during my first year that what
18 they wanted was a sort of playmate for their adopted
19 son. The trouble was that his interests were
20 qualitatively different to mine. He was into football
21 and I wasn't. He was interested in running around with
22 his mates and I wasn't. He wasn't interested in
23 anything like reading or writing. Even at that age,
24 I was into reading and went to the library. Very early
25 on after arriving, I was introduced to the library and

1 I loved it. That was encouraged by the teachers at the
2 primary school.

3 The AJS/AJT didn't expect me to do all the
4 housework, but that's what I did. At Abelour we had
5 certain chores. We had to do them to a certain
6 standard. It was ingrained in me that my surroundings
7 had to be tidy and clean and I had a responsibility to
8 make sure that was the case. I carried that into the
9 foster home. I wasn't told to do the dishes or
10 whatever, but that was what I did automatically.

11 The foster mother was fat. She had chronic
12 arthritis so she found it difficult to move around.
13 Part of my wishing to be involved with the family meant
14 that I would try and find her a stool for her feet.
15 I would also spend increasing amounts of time cleaning
16 up and tidying the house, sweeping and so forth. I was
17 the one who did the garden. There was no chance of the
18 other boy doing those things because he was too busy
19 having a good time with his friends and playing
20 football. He wasn't expected to do anything.

21 I also did these things because I really wanted them
22 to see that I was appreciative of what they were doing
23 and that I was trying to be helpful. I was also saying,
24 very clearly, that it would be nice to be treated
25 differently. I wanted them to treat me with a bit of

1 warmth and a bit of love, but that didn't happen.
2 Auntie at Abelour would give the children of Spey House
3 hugs and kisses. She would console us if we were upset.
4 I had that to compare Mr and Mrs AJS/AJT to.
5 I wasn't treated in the same way and I didn't enjoy it.

6 It was quite obvious that the foster parents didn't
7 want me, but they needed me because they needed the
8 income from the placing agency. Mr and Mrs AJS/AJT
9 did display warmth and affection to the other boy.
10 There was a difference between the way they treated him
11 and the way they treated me. Even the foster parents'
12 own daughter noticed that there was a difference there.

13 I never asked why my foster parents were unable to
14 form a relationship with me in the way they had with the
15 other boy. I didn't realise he was adopted until close
16 to the time when I came to leave. I think the daughter
17 may have told me at one point. I didn't realise his
18 status was any different to mine. I never discovered
19 what the other boy's circumstances were before he was
20 adopted. When it came to the stage when I realised
21 I wasn't going to have a relationship with him or the
22 AJS/AJT I just didn't have the energy or the
23 inclination to find out any more. I just wanted to get
24 through it and get out. I saw education as my escape
25 route.

1 Because of my life experience and what had happened
2 from three months until the age of 11, because of
3 leaving Abelour Orphanage and having the foster home
4 placement begin, I was an old man at the age of 11.
5 Chronologically I was 11, but experientially I was
6 an adult. I understood that I wasn't receiving what I'd
7 had at Abelour. I knew Abelour was closing so I knew
8 I could never go back. There was no use complaining or
9 talking to the social worker because I couldn't go back.
10 In terms of placements, it was better the devil you
11 knew. I didn't want to create a ruckus and then get
12 moved somewhere even worse. I wasn't prepared to take
13 the risk because I was damaged enough.

14 Eventually, and it took several years in the foster
15 home, I began to work towards getting out. I made
16 a decision to make the best of what I had. School
17 became increasingly more important than trying to invest
18 time and energy into trying to make the family respond
19 in a loving and nurturing way towards me. Mr and
20 Mrs [REDACTED] never struck me, but they made life very
21 difficult for me.

22 I was trying to study. There was somebody dying in
23 my bedroom, spitting all the time. I had a foster
24 mother who was not wildly disposed towards me. Her
25 daughter sensed that things were not quite working but

1 there was nothing she could do. I remember talking to
2 her about this at one stage and she said words to the
3 effect that there was nothing she could do because
4 I wasn't living in her house. She didn't want to
5 interfere. The foster mother was a matriarch. She ran
6 the household because the foster father was out of it
7 most of the time.

8 The foster parents indicated their displeasure that
9 my path might be different from the other foster boy's.
10 I got a complaint from the foster mother that I was
11 using too much electricity. I studied at the kitchen
12 table. I was trying to do the best I could. I was
13 doing reasonably well but I worked really hard. She
14 came in one day and shut the lights out. I started to
15 use candles. She couldn't complain about that because
16 I was buying them. I remember my school books were
17 spattered with candle wax.

18 I was directly threatening to the AJS/AJT
19 because I was challenging their way of life. They
20 hadn't been to university and were living in fairly poor
21 circumstances. They were saying to me, and it came out
22 in a number of comments during exchanges, "You think
23 you're better than us because you're studying". My
24 interests were seen as directly threatening and somehow
25 critical of them. My presence was increasingly seen as

1 an indictment of what they had achieved and who they
2 were.

3 No matter what I did, and I can see myself trying
4 very hard to allay these suspicions at times, they found
5 me threatening. I never ever boasted. I didn't tell my
6 parents how well I was doing at school. They never
7 asked anyway. I knew that whatever I said, they'd find
8 it threatening in some way. They would think I was
9 trying to put them down. That never happened. They
10 came to that themselves and made it clear in their
11 day-to-day interaction with me.

12 Other than the boy who died at Linn Falls when I was
13 at Abelour, my first experience of death was when I was
14 at Loanhead primary school. One of my peers was playing
15 in a building site. He found a bulldozer on the site.
16 He went in and started the engine. He took off and it
17 crashed. He was very seriously injured and he later
18 died.

19 My foster father died when I was in my last year at
20 school. I was just about to go to university. He'd
21 given up several years before. We barely spoke during
22 my entire time in the foster home. That was just the
23 way he was. My foster father was lying in state in
24 an open coffin in the living room. I had never touched
25 a dead person. He was clammy and grey and looked very

1 different to when he was alive.

2 We went to the graveyard and a handful of
3 individuals turned up. It was a very important moment
4 in my life. I was coming up for 18 and I was saying to
5 myself, "Is this what you get when you die?" I honestly
6 expected things to shut and crowds to come out and say
7 goodbye. I was taught a very valuable lesson by my
8 foster father's death and his funeral. I still pay
9 Mr and Mrs AJS/AJT my respects and visit the
10 graveyard at Loanhead.

11 There were a couple of occasions when I did decide
12 to run off. That was never a possibility at Abelour.
13 It never crossed my mind there. Mr and Mrs AJS/AJT's
14 son used to visit periodically. There was no real
15 relationship between him and me. It was very infrequent
16 contact. He must have been informed by the foster
17 mother that I wasn't easy to look after. I was in the
18 kitchen and he came in and tried to be the dutiful son.
19 He had limited social skills. He was fairly typical of
20 that period, a very army sergeant major type. He was
21 I was upsetting his mother. He was going on and on and
22 on. I had a pan in my hand. There was nothing in it.
23 I threw it down and decided to leave the house.

24 The AJS/AJT were very startled. They'd never
25 seen me angry. I'd already worked out the consequences

1 of getting angry and not to go there, but on that
2 occasion I just blew it. I just felt I'd had enough.
3 I took off. I left the house just with the clothes
4 I was wearing and disappeared. I disappeared on my way
5 to the Pentland Hills. I knew the AJS/AJT would be
6 trying to come after me. I kept on walking.

7 Several hours later, I realised they'd followed me.
8 I thought I recognised the son's profile. He hadn't
9 seen me yet, so I hid under a hedge. It was him.
10 Eventually, I made myself clear in his sight and I was
11 basically dragged back to the foster home. They wanted
12 an explanation. With myself, I was extremely clear.
13 I felt I was in the right, so I didn't need to explain
14 myself. What was done was done. It wasn't going to
15 have any impact or change the way they related to me.
16 I decided I wasn't going to bother. Eventually, I ended
17 up in bed and tried to get some sleep. In the morning,
18 I was back at school.

19 There was no discussion with them about why I'd run
20 away. We had no relationship at all. I was there under
21 duress on their part. I was a source of income. In
22 their minds, there'd be no need for any discussion.
23 I think the daughter understood what had caused the
24 upset and was surprised it hadn't happened before.

25 I can't recall ever being struck in the foster home.

1 I do remember being in the room that I shared with the
2 foster father. On this occasion, the foster father
3 would have been sleeping. I remember being in bed one
4 day when I was 14 or 15. I've always been a light
5 sleeper. I felt a hand on my privates. I think it
6 happened late at night. I suddenly got up. I wondered
7 what it was. My foster mother was beside the bed with
8 her hand under the covers. I didn't complain. I think
9 I asked what was wrong with the bed or whether she was
10 tidying up the bed clothes. It wasn't accidental
11 contact. Her hand was underneath my pyjamas, directly
12 on my penis.

13 There was clearly an element of sexuality there.
14 That's the only occasion I can recall that happening.
15 At the time, I was just surprised. I didn't see it as
16 sexual. It was only after years and years of social
17 work and hearing various stories that I realised it
18 wasn't right. I never spoke to the foster mother about
19 it. I never told a social worker. I looked back and
20 saw it in a different light.

21 In my final year at school, I was accepted for
22 university and for halls of residence. I was so pleased
23 I got the grades necessary for entry to a new chapter in
24 my life. I was in Pollock halls of residence. I stayed
25 in halls of residence all year round throughout my time

1 at university. I never stayed in Loanhead overnight
2 again.

3 Between the ages of 18 and 21, there was always
4 something which was called subvention. Legally I may
5 have hit the age where Edinburgh Corporation was no
6 longer involved. I didn't have a social worker from the
7 age of 18 or any visits. From my extensive archive it's
8 interesting to discover one or two notes that were sent
9 to me at various points. It was a partial allowance
10 from the Edinburgh Corporation to help keep my body and
11 soul together. I was at the University of Edinburgh at
12 the time. They held a continuing financial
13 responsibility for me. They gave me a regular sum,
14 either every quarter or every six weeks. They sent it
15 to me to assist in my well-being. It was like
16 a continuing care allowance. I wasn't in care, but it
17 was part of their responsibility until such time as
18 I had finished what I was doing."

19 My Lady, from paragraphs 193 to 223, 'Buoyant' tells
20 us about his further studies and career. Moving now to
21 paragraph 224 on page 54:

22 "Nobody asked me how I felt about moving to the
23 foster home. Auntie at Abelour didn't know. She wasn't
24 even there when I left. Abelour wouldn't ask the
25 question. They were receiving a fee. They had been

1 told by the placing agency. They had no authority to
2 question the decision. I was really quite surprised to
3 see the note in my records about Abelour's concern.
4 Ultimately, the decision was made. If somebody had sat
5 down with me and asked what I wanted, there's no doubt
6 that I would have said I wanted to stay at Abelour.
7 I would have said that had the question been asked."

8 And now to paragraph 238 on page 57:

9 "Even after I left foster care, I decided to
10 continue to visit the family. My foster mother had
11 chronic arthritis. She could move about, but only just.
12 The street she lived on is a long road. When I used to
13 go and visit, I'd see her in the window as I walked up
14 the road. She'd sit and watch everything going on. She
15 knew everything that was going on in the neighbourhood.
16 They weren't long visits. We'd have a conversation and
17 then I'd go back to university.

18 One day, I went off to visit my foster mother. On
19 this occasion, I was stopped by a neighbour. She asked
20 how I was doing and what I was doing. I told her I was
21 there to see my mum. She looked a bit startled. She
22 said, "Did nobody tell you? She's dead. She's been
23 dead for some time".

24 This gives you an indication of the relationship
25 between myself and the family. They didn't need to tell

1 a foster child that had been there for more than eight
2 years that his carer, his mother, had died. They knew
3 where I was because I'd left them all my details. They
4 could have phoned or the daughter's husband could have
5 driven to the halls of residence. Basically, I didn't
6 have to know because I really wasn't part of the set-up.

7 After I found out my foster mother was dead,
8 I didn't have much more contact with the foster family.
9 I think I may have visited the daughter once. The other
10 boy worked in the mine at [REDACTED] for a while.
11 Then he went off to Kenya in his 20s and worked in the
12 mines there. He got out and got married and had several
13 children. I met up with them when I was in London. It
14 was the mid 1980s, because I'd had my first child. He
15 had managed to get in contact with me. I met his wife
16 for the first time and the two or three children he had
17 at the time. That was the last contact we had."

18 From paragraphs 242 to 255, 'Buoyant' describes his
19 attempts to trace his birth family. He experienced
20 rejection by his birth mother and maternal extended
21 family. He traced his father to the USA. He'd been in
22 the American Air Force. His father had died but
23 'Buoyant' was welcomed with warmth by his paternal
24 family and met siblings he had not known existed.

25 Moving to paragraph 256 on page 62:

1 "My life has really been one of rejection,
2 abandonment and trying to manage that in terms of moving
3 forward with my own life, essentially under my own
4 direction. And then I discovered in my 30s, 40s and 50s
5 further evidence of that rejection from my birth family,
6 having already had it from my foster family. Throughout
7 my chronological childhood, Abelour Orphanage was the
8 only place where I ever felt wanted, loved and cared
9 for. It never happened elsewhere until I got married
10 and created my own family. I now have three wonderful
11 children, all doing very well, and six grandchildren.
12 We love each other and spend a lot of time together."

13 Moving to paragraph 264 on page 64:

14 "The damage to me as a child revolved around the
15 sudden removal from my family and my home at Abelour.
16 It was also the cessation of childhood. My childhood
17 stopped at the age of 11 when I went into foster care.
18 The assumption of adult responsibilities didn't take
19 place in Abelour. Things naturally flowed there and
20 I did things as a child. There was nothing I needed to
21 think about and manage the consequences. At the foster
22 home I had to be adult very early on in terms of being
23 managerial and thinking about the consequences. I was
24 into the business of calculating what was in my best
25 interests. I began to see that at the end of the day,

1 young as I was chronologically, it was down to me to
2 make the best of the mess.

3 Not being told that my foster mother had died
4 reflected the entire period of my life in foster care.
5 I tried to be part of the family, I wanted to be part of
6 the family and did my very best, using what knowledge
7 I'd gained from Abelour and the practical skills, trying
8 to be helpful. I tried every which way to be part of
9 the family, but it was quite clear I wasn't wanted.
10 I created alternatives, in school and church, and
11 I moved on."

12 And now to paragraph 269 and page 65:

13 "After several years in the foster home I decided
14 that I wanted to get out on my own terms and that was
15 through education. Everybody on my street was either on
16 benefits or working in the mine. That became fairly
17 clear to me over the first couple of years in Loanhead.
18 I did not want to go anywhere near the mine. I had my
19 foster father's spittoon, the spitting and somebody
20 dying in bed over a lengthy period of time to remind me.
21 And so I said to myself that it wasn't for me.
22 Therefore, school became even more of a priority. It
23 was an exit for me. It was an opportunity for me to try
24 and get the grades that I needed to ease my way out of
25 the foster home.

1 My own experience of social work service as somebody
2 in care was simply appalling. That did have an impact
3 on me. It prompted me in the direction of social work
4 as a career. I felt that I could do a much better job,
5 drawing upon my experiences."

6 And now to paragraph 287 on page 70:

7 "In my view, the contrast between Edinburgh
8 Corporation and Abelour was stark in terms of records.
9 Edinburgh Corporation kept providing obstacle after
10 obstacle for a period of 20 years. Edinburgh
11 Corporation demonstrated a lack of interest and a lack
12 of responsiveness. It was almost as if I was a task too
13 much for them and they had much more important matters
14 to deal with. I'm not the sort of person that would be
15 treated in that way. I wasn't going to lie under a log
16 and remain there. I was going to get my records.

17 It was 20 years after my initial request that
18 I received my care records from Edinburgh Corporation.
19 First of all, they said they'd lost them. They then
20 said they had been destroyed by a flood in the basement,
21 along with hordes of other children's records. I never
22 believed that and I took it up with various parties.
23 Needless to say, they were not destroyed.

24 I think they might have had them all the time, but
25 they were only released after I applied a great deal of

1 pressure. They were there and they were eventually
2 found with external assistance. I have microfiche
3 copies of my records. I received them in the mid to
4 late 1990s. You would get no feel for who I was at
5 a child from reading my social work records."

6 And now to paragraph 313 on page 77:

7 "The second comment I'd like to make in terms of
8 culpability relates to Edinburgh Corporation, the agency
9 acting in loco parentis. I see it as culpable and
10 liable for the foster placement. I succeed in the
11 foster placement in spite of my parental agency, which
12 was duty-bound to keep an eye on me and make sure that
13 I was okay. They did not. That was palpable in terms
14 of what occurred. I do believe that, successful as I am
15 and old as I am at 65, I am due a level of
16 acknowledgement for the harm that they have inflicted on
17 me during that period. I see it as neglect, I see it as
18 incompetence and I actually see it as a lack of care.

19 Moving on from there in terms of the care system,
20 what flows from all of that was of course the
21 destruction of my childhood. I was never young. I was
22 always old from the age of 11. The parental agency,
23 Edinburgh Corporation, is responsible for that loss.
24 I am due acknowledgement of that gross neglect."

25 And now to paragraph 328 on page 81."

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

5 And the statement was signed by 'Buoyant' on
6 18 November 2018.

7 LADY SMITH: Thank you very much.

8 MS RATTRAY: Ms Innes is going to read in another statement.

9 LADY SMITH: Thank you very much. While you change places,
10 there was a name mentioned there of the foster parents,
11 who were the [REDACTED] AJS/AJT [REDACTED]. They're covered by my general
12 restriction order and the name can't be repeated outside
13 this room.

14 'John' (read)

15 MS INNES: My Lady, the statement I'm going to read in is
16 from a witness who wishes to remain anonymous and use
17 the pseudonym 'John'. His statement is at
18 WIT.001.001.0030.

19 LADY SMITH: Thank you.

20 MS INNES: 'John' was boarded out by Ayr County Council to
21 a placement in [REDACTED] from [REDACTED] 1963 to
22 [REDACTED] 1972. The responsible authority is
23 accordingly South Ayrshire Council.

24 "My full name is 'John'. My contact details are
25 known to the Inquiry. I live at home with my wife. We

1 have no children. I was born in 1956.

2 I have a brother who was born in 1951 and a sister
3 who was born in 1952. I also have a half- sister who
4 was born in 1954 and a cousin who was born in 1960.

5 When I was first taken into care I was very young.
6 I think I was taken into care at the same time as the
7 members of my family that I have mentioned. We weren't
8 in the same place though. I've not really got any
9 recollection, but they didn't follow my footsteps. My
10 brother and sister, as far as I know, went into
11 a different home and were there all of their childhood.
12 I don't know which homes they went to.

13 I know that my mother married in 1951. My birth
14 certificate shows "father unknown". However, I was
15 given my mother's husband's surname. My wife and
16 I traced and met my mother's husband in the last few
17 years. He later told me that he wasn't my father. I
18 phoned him at Christmas one year to wish him a merry
19 Christmas and he told me 'I'm not your father' just like
20 that. Why would anyone do that to another person? It
21 was very cruel. I have had no further contact.

22 At some point, my mother went to live with another
23 man. My brother, sister and I went to live with her as
24 far as I know. My mother and this man had a daughter
25 together, my half-sister. She ended up in care but

1 I don't know where. She had learning difficulties.

2 I know that she claims that she was abused as well, but
3 we are not in contact.

4 At some stage when I was young, this man collapsed
5 and died and the children all moved to near Girvan to be
6 with my maternal grandmother. We were told this by
7 a neighbour when we were looking into my background.
8 A neighbour remembers me being in a pram around that
9 time and also recalls that she knew that the man who was
10 living with my mother was not my father. But I really
11 don't know or recall anything about the early part of my
12 life.

13 I found out looking through paperwork that I went to
14 Burnside Home in Irvine. I thought that I went there
15 when I was four but the records show that I was placed
16 there in 1962 which would make me nearly six. I was
17 able to get only half a page of records from the council
18 in Ayr. I was told that the rest got lost in a fire.
19 A social worker had to go through them with me before
20 I could have them.

21 I don't know where I was from birth until I went
22 into care. The only thing that I know about my
23 admission to Burnside is the first place that I have
24 been told. Apparently a neighbour found four of us
25 sitting on a step outside my grandmother's home and my

1 grandmother wouldn't let us in. I think my mother had
2 left us with my grandmother and moved on. A neighbour
3 phoned Ayr County Council and we were taken into care.
4 That's what I've been told anyway but I've no
5 recollection.

6 I was taken into foster care by the FJA/FJB
7 family on [REDACTED] 1963. My surname was changed to
8 [REDACTED], but when I was 15, I changed it back
9 because I knew what my name was. I had a copy of my
10 birth certificate and I used to carry it about with me.

11 I had found the copy of my birth certificate at the
12 FJA/FJB home and that was the first time that I knew
13 that my name was different. The FJA/FJB had
14 changed my name without any legal process and I was very
15 angry. It still depresses me today to read a document
16 that says [REDACTED] on it. This is very significant
17 for me. They had no right to change my name and it
18 upsets me a lot.

19 I was baptised into the Catholic church whilst in
20 foster care with the FJA/FJB family in 1964. Having
21 been baptised allowed me to train as an altar boy.
22 I don't actually know the faith of my natural parents.
23 The FJA/FJB family lived in [REDACTED]. This was
24 a four-bedroom semi-detached house. My foster parents
25 were called FJA/FJB

1 The FJA/FJB had three children of their own,
2 two boys and a girl. They were a bit older than me.
3 The girl was still at school and the boys were working.
4 There was also another foster child in the
5 FJA/FJB home. He was a couple of years younger than
6 me. I heard later that he had died of a drug overdose.
7 I think he was in his 20s when he died.
8 From the very beginning I said to my foster parents
9 'I want my own mum and dad'. I had no contact with my
10 birth family during the time I was in foster care.
11 I never saw my mother again. I don't maintain contact
12 with my brother and sister, but I have seen them. They
13 wanted to get on with their lives. My brother once told
14 me that my family had tried to get my sister and him
15 back, but not me. I am not sure how much of that is
16 correct though.
17 The schools I attended during my time in foster care
18 were a Catholic primary school and secondary school in
19 Ardrossan.
20 When I was living with FJA and FJB I suffered
21 physical abuse by both of them at different times. This
22 started after I had been with them for about a year.
23 They also locked me in cupboards in darkness for periods
24 of up to an hour. Another thing they did was to order
25 me to go to my room and strip naked. I had to wait for

1 FJA or FJB to come and tell me when I could put my
2 clothes back on.

3 At bath time, FJA used to hold my head under water.
4 This was as a punishment for things like not going to
5 school or not washing my hands on time. I saw this as
6 a type of punishment you might give to the Kray twins as
7 opposed to what should have just been a slap on the
8 wrist.

9 Sunday night was bath night and I used to stay out
10 playing football to try to avoid a bath because I knew
11 that it would include FJA and FJB holding my head under
12 water in the bath. I used to stay out playing until it
13 was dark. I was okay with the dark then. Now I can't
14 even sleep in a bedroom without the lights on. The bath
15 thing happened on Sundays but it also happened on any
16 other night when I was getting a bath. I remember
17 fighting like hell to get back up, fighting for oxygen.
18 It's a wonder FJA didn't do anything nasty to me,
19 although that was nasty enough. My foster parents did
20 this for a variety of reasons. Maybe I'd rubbed them up
21 the wrong way or I hadn't washed the pots or something.
22 I know now that I had a fear of water.

23 FJA also used to belt me with a trouser belt. This
24 happened often. If she couldn't get the right swing on
25 it, she used to call for FJB and he would give me it.

1 I had a bricked up window in my bedroom so that
2 I couldn't see out. I don't know why they didn't punish
3 me by just taking my ball off me. At school you would
4 get six of the belt, but when I was belted at home it
5 was a lot more than that. I think I was that type of
6 kid that got in the way and I seemed to be in the way
7 all the time. That's the way I saw it. At school I was
8 belted on the hands. At home I was belted on the back
9 or on the bottom. When I was belted, they sometimes hit
10 me with the belt buckle.

11 When I was belted on the back or on the bottom, it
12 left marks and sometimes kids at school getting changed
13 for PE classes would point the marks out to me. I would
14 just say 'don't worry about it', I was too busy, I just
15 wanted to play football and move on to the next subject.
16 This was at primary school and high school. I never got
17 any treatment or saw a doctor when I was in foster care.
18 I never told anyone about these things. I was too
19 ashamed because in those days I thought I would be the
20 one to get the punishment again.

21 I had an art teacher at secondary school who I was
22 very close to. I'm not very good at art but she used to
23 get me splashing some paint on and getting the
24 frustration out. She was the closest I've ever been to
25 telling anyone the full story until I met my wife and

1 spoke to psychiatrists. The only thing that stopped me
2 from telling my art teacher about what was happening to
3 me was the thought that the FJA/FJB would blame me.

4 The times when I was locked in a cupboard would have
5 been because of whenever FJB was in a bad mood or he was
6 on the drink or he was gambling and he'd lost all the
7 money. This happened regularly throughout the whole
8 period I was in foster care. One of the reasons I got
9 it was because I was pinching money out of FJB pocket.
10 I'm not proud of that, but I shouldn't have been locked
11 in a cupboard in darkness for it. I would be left in
12 the cupboard for a good hour. FJB was a heavy drinker.

13 When I was stripped naked and made to lie waiting
14 for FJB or FJA to get me dressed again, I would wait
15 for a good hour like that. I didn't have a watch or
16 anything. I could sometimes tell it had been a long
17 time because there was a little gap in the brickwork and
18 you could see it getting dark, or sometimes I went in it
19 was light and it was dark when I came out. There was no
20 electric light in my room to switch on. It was dark and
21 frightening. I've no idea why I had a room with the
22 window bricked up. In the summer you could get a little
23 bit of light coming through the gaps in the brickwork.

24 FJA and FJB were both heavy drinkers. On more than
25 one occasion I had to help FJA to carry FJB upstairs

1 and put him to bed. This would have happened when FJB

2 was very drunk.

3 The other foster boy or the other children living in
4 the FJA/FJB house were never treated the way I was.

5 I was treated differently to the other foster boy
6 and the other children at birthdays and Christmas by the
7 FJA/FJB. I've had birthdays and Christmases with
8 my wife and it makes me regret now that I didn't have
9 them when I was a child. I'd see other kids getting
10 stuff but I might get a ball and that would be it.

11 The FJA/FJB own children and the other foster
12 boy got more than me. My birthday was never celebrated.
13 I get cards and presents now from my wife. My cousins
14 and their families give me cards now and give me
15 presents at Christmas, which is quite good.

16 Throughout all my years in foster care I kept saying
17 that I wanted my real parents. That's quite hurtful to
18 the FJA/FJB. I had those feelings in Burnside as
19 well.

20 Whilst living at the FJA/FJB home, the other
21 foster boy and I were sent to church at a different time
22 to the FJA/FJB children. I still don't know why
23 this was. I would have thought that the whole family
24 would have gone together. It was in the church where
25 things happened.

1 I used to go down on a Sunday with the other foster
2 boy. Father [MXF] would say it's altar boy practice
3 this week. The other foster boy would sometimes come
4 and sometimes he would just wait out. You had to be
5 a minimum of seven years of age to become an altar boy
6 and you had to have been baptised. I think that
7 I started training to be an altar boy before I was
8 seven.

9 Father [MXF] had a few lads there. I don't know
10 why I got singled out. He would send a couple of lads
11 up to the altar. I was in the last row of seats before
12 the altar. There was like a little wall but it's
13 a wooden thing in front and Father [MXF] would just
14 say 'kneel down' so I knelt down. He would take my
15 penis out and have a good play about with that. He
16 would do what he wanted to do. To this day, I don't
17 know if he did anything to the other lads. There were
18 other lads present when he was doing this but he was
19 quite deceitful about it.

20 Father [MXF] did these things to me inside the
21 church. He would hold my penis, masturbate it and suck
22 it. He also masturbated me and himself. I don't know
23 how these other kids never saw it. This started before
24 I became an altar boy. Father [MXF] used to come to
25 the [FJA/FJB] house on a regular basis. He would have

1 me sat on his knee. He would say 'What a good altar boy
2 he's going to make' and all this. He didn't do anything
3 to me at the FJA/FJB home. Nothing was going to
4 happen with parents there and kids watching telly.

5 I have no idea if Father MXF did anything to the
6 other boys. Although the other foster boy was often
7 with me, I never saw him in the same situations I was
8 in. Father MXF did these things to me twice a week
9 for about half an hour each time. I went back to the
10 church in 2004 with my wife and there is a couch in the
11 vestry. I don't know if it is still the same couch but
12 it is in the same position. That's where he used to
13 have his sexual intercourse with me, touching my penis
14 and moving on to intercourse with me. It was planned
15 and took place on a couch in the vestry room. He used
16 the couch like a bed.

17 Father MXF never said anything to me about what
18 he did to me. He just moved his hands about. That was
19 his words. He would just clean up and act as if nothing
20 had happened. Then you'd see him the next week and he'd
21 be standing on the altar. When Tuesday or Wednesday
22 came around, he'd be there to practice the altar boy
23 service.

24 No one else was present in the vestry when he had
25 intercourse with me. Incidentally, he used to give me

1 little bits of money, sweet treats and crisps. He was
2 always good for that. In order to get me into the
3 vestry, he would just say 'Come through here a moment'.
4 After a while I probably knew what was going to happen.
5 He must have known at the time he could do anything and
6 get away with it. I think this went on for over four
7 years until I was about 11. I stopped going to church.
8 I started skipping it. I'd had enough. I thought this
9 shouldn't be happening, but what can you do about it?
10 I'd go out and play football.

11 I want to express how appalled I am to think that
12 these terrible acts were done to me by a priest. He
13 actually committed these acts inside a church at the
14 altar, by the bench, in the vestry, and he did this
15 every week.

16 There is something niggling in my mind that I had to
17 go to the doctor one time and it was through the sexual
18 intercourse. I was bleeding at school. They either saw
19 the blood on the seat or it had been dripping on the
20 floor or something. The school said it was their duty
21 to take me to the doctor. I was in secondary school at
22 the time, only just, I think. If there is a medical
23 record, it might be under the name FJA/FJB but I'm
24 struggling to remember anything more than that. It is
25 a vague recollection.

1 I never told anyone about the things that
2 Father [MXF] did to me at the time because I thought
3 that I would have been in the wrong. I couldn't
4 understand it all. I never considered telling the
5 [FJA/FJB]. I would really have got the belt then.
6 Father [MXF] came to the house for his dinner. He was
7 one of these people in the community. He was a Catholic
8 priest. That's how I remember him so well, in [REDACTED].
9 When I see [REDACTED] even now in church I walk out.
10 Father [MXF] was very friendly with the
11 [FJA/FJB]. They were bringing up five kids in the
12 1960s. That's a lot.
13 I have paperwork that states that Father [MXF]
14 died in 1976.
15 I ran away from the [FJA/FJB]' home many times.
16 I just didn't have any faith in them. This was
17 definitely because of what Father [MXF] was doing to
18 me and also because of what the [FJA/FJB] were doing
19 to me. No one ever asked me why I was running away.
20 When I ran away I would just sleep rough. Mr Barry, the
21 social worker, used to come and see me at the
22 [FJA/FJB] house every week but I never saw him on my
23 own.
24 Mr Barry only ever spoke to me in the presence of
25 the [FJA/FJB]. Even if I had seen him on my own,

1 I wouldn't have told. I didn't trust him. I didn't
2 trust anybody. I never told him anything about what had
3 gone on. He never asked me if I had troubles or
4 anything. If he had, I'd have said no. I have seen
5 some of the reports about me when I was in the care of
6 the FJA/FJB and I see names of social workers that
7 I have never even seen. The only one I ever met or
8 spoke to was Mr Barry. As a child, I was never given
9 any say in what happened to me or where I was going.
10 I was just told what was happening.

11 As I said, I nearly told my art teacher. I wish
12 I had. If I'd had the gumption, I would have told. If
13 I had, the cat would have been out the bag and it would
14 have helped and I would have had a better life. I was
15 ready for telling someone. I'd only just gone to
16 secondary school and I'd never had art before at the
17 primary and I thought 'this is all right'.

18 In the summer after I reached 15 years of age,
19 I left school and I moved out of the FJA/FJB home.
20 I remember it faithfully. I finished school on the
21 Friday and started my job on the Monday. I got a job in
22 a bakery. When I left the FJA/FJB and started
23 work, the abuse had gone to the back of my mind.

24 I spent a lot of time in my life in and out of
25 secure accommodation. If I wasn't in prison, I'd be in

1 a mental hospital, and if I wasn't in a mental hospital
2 I'd be in prison. This carried on as a cycle until
3 I met my wife about 20 years ago. I was in a mental
4 hospital at the time. I did have jobs on and off for
5 a few months at a time. The longest I stayed in a job
6 was 18 months.

7 The first person I ever told about the things that
8 had happened to me was in a psychiatric hospital in
9 Manchester. This was to a psychiatric nurse when we
10 were doing group therapy one day. The subject we were
11 talking about was abuse and it got an angry reaction
12 from me. I stormed out. She came round to my room and
13 she said, "Something's happened to you, hasn't it?".

14 I was between 30 and 40 years old when I told her
15 about this and it was the first time I had spoken to
16 anybody about it.

17 I found it hard to cope with life and I believe that
18 this was due to what happened to me in foster care and
19 with Father **MXF**. I was getting in trouble with the
20 police, I ended up in secure accommodation, I was
21 drinking too much. This was from my teens onwards.
22 I ended up going to a young offenders institution and
23 an adult prison. I'm not proud of it. I also had
24 treatment for mental health issues.

25 What was done to me by Father **MXF** has caused me

1 to have great problems in trusting anyone in authority
2 throughout my life. This includes medical people.
3 I keep thinking that nobody is going to believe me.
4 I think that people will think that I'm the one to
5 blame.

6 One of the effects on me of my abuse is that I find
7 it difficult to be around homosexual men. Also, if
8 I have a medical examination, I have to be examined by
9 lady doctors. I'm uncomfortable otherwise.

10 I used to drink to forget the past. At that time
11 I was an alcoholic. I got a treatment for it when I was
12 quite young but I never mentioned anything that had
13 happened to me in my childhood. I never would have
14 mentioned it. If I had, it would have made my life
15 a lot better. I know that now. People did explore why
16 I was drinking so much but they just said, 'He's from
17 a broken home'.

18 Over the years I have had a range of doctors,
19 psychiatrists and psychologists. I was eventually
20 diagnosed as having complex PTSD. This resulted in
21 having therapy and sessions. It has been so difficult
22 getting access to the right sort of care. If I needed
23 help from this type of specialist now, I would have to
24 go back through the health service again and visit my
25 own doctor. That could take about six weeks. I do have

1 a social worker and I get help from the Avalon Group.
2 I find the support that In Care Abuse Survivors (INCAS)
3 gives to survivors invaluable.

4 I am on a lot of medication. I take anti-depressant
5 medication, I am diabetic and I am on anti-psychotic
6 medication as well. I have attempted to take my own
7 life a number of times and I have suffered from
8 flashbacks.

9 I have no happy memories of my time in foster care,
10 it was disastrous. I have a lot of hangups these days
11 and there are three people I blame: FJB, FJA and
12 Father MXF, and they've all gone to their graves.

13 I have to ask myself why were FJB and FJA not good
14 to me? They were good to their own children and the
15 other foster children. They didn't buy me clothes.
16 They got a grant from the social services to buy us
17 clothes and I still had shorts on in the middle
18 of December. The other three kids and the foster boy
19 would be wearing Wrangler jeans.

20 My wife and I got married in a registry office. Our
21 local priest where I now live was not happy about it and
22 he came to talk to us about it. I explained to him what
23 had happened to me when I was young. Our priest then
24 talked to whoever was in charge of child protection
25 within the Catholic church and he then liaised with

1 Scotland. We had a meeting with our own bishop here,
2 who is called Bishop John. He was extremely supportive.
3 We had some assistance from the Bishop of Ayr.

4 I went back to [REDACTED] church a few years ago;
5 I think it was around 2004. I wanted to confront
6 Father [MXF] about what had happened to me all those
7 years ago. I wanted to face my demons. Father [MXF]
8 was dead but we spoke to the housekeeper at the priest
9 house. The housekeeper had been there for a long time
10 so she must have been there around the time that
11 Father [MXF] abused me. She said that she knew
12 [FJB] and used to work with him in a borstal
13 called [REDACTED]. I didn't even know that [FJB]
14 had worked there. Also, the housekeeper said that she
15 didn't know that [FJB] had fostered children. I don't
16 remember her name.

17 Bishop Taylor, the Bishop of Ayr, listened to me
18 when I went up to Scotland. I told him what had
19 happened to me. He said that he didn't have any
20 evidence, but he believed me. He paid our accommodation
21 bill when we stayed in Ayr. I don't think he ever knew
22 Father [MXF].

23 I was going to church until 18 months ago.
24 I stopped because I thought that the church was making
25 me forgive Father [MXF]. I wasn't doing that.

1 If I was able to give any young person in a similar
2 position to me advice, it would be to tell someone.
3 I still don't think that I would have told anyone
4 anything. That is because I felt guilty. I never
5 reported these matters to the police.

6 The lack of records about my life upsets me and
7 I feel I should know more about who I am. When people
8 go to a doctor, they are sometimes asked about their
9 family medical history. I don't know anything like
10 that.

11 I wish I had been able to have children of my own
12 but the effects of the abuse made it very difficult for
13 me to trust anyone to have a long-term relationship.
14 I'll never understand why I had to be separated from my
15 siblings. I don't know why I was put into a Catholic
16 home and my siblings were in place in non-Catholic
17 homes.

18 I have not attended the National Confidential Forum.

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

23 The statement was signed by 'John' on 2 September
24 2016.

25 LADY SMITH: Thank you very much, Ms Innes.

1 Once again, the name of the foster carers, the
2 FJA/FJB, is covered by my general restriction
3 order. It's not to be mentioned outside this room.
4 I take it that's time for the lunch break now, yes?
5 MS INNES: Yes, my Lady. We have a witness coming for
6 2 o'clock.
7 LADY SMITH: 2 o'clock, very well. I'll rise now until
8 then. Thank you.
9 (1.02 pm)
10 (The luncheon adjournment)
11 (2.00 pm)
12 LADY SMITH: Good afternoon. Now, can we turn to the next
13 witness, Ms Innes?
14 MS INNES: We can, my Lady. 'John' is the next witness. He
15 was in the care of Ayr County Council. He was in
16 a foster care placement from possibly 1963 until [REDACTED]
17 1965. It's thought that when he was placed in care he
18 was in the Stevenston area, which is in what is now
19 North Ayrshire. He was placed in foster care in New
20 Cumnock, which would now be in East Ayrshire.
21 Section 21 notices were served on all three Ayrshire
22 councils and minimal records were recovered from North
23 Ayrshire Council, so it's thought that they are
24 responsible for 'John''s care.
25 LADY SMITH: Thank you very much.

1 'John' (sworn)

2 LADY SMITH: Don't push that microphone too far away,

3 'John', because I do need you to use it.

4 A. Thank you.

5 LADY SMITH: However loud your own voice is we actually need

6 your voice to be going through the sound system.

7 A. Okay.

8 LADY SMITH: Can you hear me?

9 A. Yes.

10 LADY SMITH: Good. Now, there's a red folder there. That

11 has your statement in it, the one you signed. Glasses,

12 yes?

13 A. (Witness nodded). Right.

14 LADY SMITH: Good. You'll also see that we'll bring your

15 statement up on screen and we'll go to different parts

16 of it as we want you to look at it, if that's okay.

17 But a couple of other things, 'John'. You're here,

18 of course, to talk about events in your childhood and

19 the little since, and I do understand that's not easy.

20 A. Yeah.

21 LADY SMITH: It really is difficult, particularly given the

22 subject matter, to be asked to come into a public place

23 and talk about your life and talk about matters that may

24 give rise to emotions that take you quite by surprise.

25 I do understand that and I want to do anything I can to

1 help you give the best evidence you can in these
2 challenging circumstances.

3 A. Right.

4 LADY SMITH: So let me know if you have any concerns or
5 worries at all, or any questions. You're allowed to ask
6 questions. Don't keep them to yourself. If you want
7 a break at any time, that's absolutely fine. If it
8 works for you, it will work for me. So do bear that in
9 mind. Is that all right?

10 A. Yes, thank you.

11 LADY SMITH: If you're ready, I'll hand over to Ms Innes and
12 she'll take it from there.

13 Ms Innes?

14 MS INNES: Thank you, my Lady.

15 Questions from Ms Innes

16 MS INNES: Now, 'John', we understand that you were born in
17 1952; is that right?

18 A. Yes.

19 Q. There's a copy of your statement in the folder in front
20 of you and on the screen and we give it the reference
21 WIT-1-000000876. If I could ask you, please, to look at
22 the final page of your statement, that's page 17.

23 A. Yes.

24 Q. We see there at paragraph 87 it says:

25 "I have no objection to my witness statement being

1 published as part of the evidence to the Inquiry.
2 I believe the facts stated in this witness statement are
3 true."
4 A. Yes.
5 Q. And you signed that on 14 December 2021. Is that right?
6 A. Yes.
7 Q. Okay. If we can just go back to the start of your
8 statement now, please, and you tell us that you were
9 born in Kilwinning in Ayrshire.
10 A. Yes.
11 Q. There came a time, I think, when you went into the care
12 of your grandmother?
13 A. Yes.
14 Q. Initially. And you say that you can remember that part
15 of your life quite clearly.
16 A. Yes.
17 Q. And your grandmother died on [REDACTED] 1960.
18 A. Yes.
19 Q. Okay.
20 A. Very important that, because I witnessed that. And
21 I think it's important to say that it may not have been
22 my first injuncture(?) with Social Services, but we
23 think about [REDACTED] [REDACTED] is -- [REDACTED]
24 really, hardly, but tear away in the middle of the night
25 and dropped off at Largs Children's Home and never any

1 explanation or seen anybody again for years after that.
2 So that was a sort of -- I don't know how you -- it
3 was ... it was a start of a long run of bad luck, say.
4 Easy way.

5 LADY SMITH: And you'd have been seven years old at that
6 time, I think it was before your eighth birthday, wasn't
7 it?

8 A. I would be seven and a half and I was sitting on the
9 stairs and my Uncle [REDACTED] was talking to her and she
10 just gradually got quieter and died.

11 LADY SMITH: That was your grandmother?

12 A. Yes. She was my main carer at the time. She was the
13 person who was caring for myself.

14 LADY SMITH: I can see that cannot have been at all easy for
15 you.

16 A. No.

17 LADY SMITH: And from what you say, nobody explained to you
18 what was going to happen next.

19 A. Never. You just -- you were sort of -- the memory of
20 going away in a car in the dark on [REDACTED] seems very --
21 a strange memory, but that's the memory I have. You
22 know, because it doesn't really get dark [REDACTED] really
23 dark, if you know what I mean.

24 LADY SMITH: Unless it was in that couple of hours or so
25 during the night when the light has gone.

1 A. It was during the night or the first -- well, she died
2 in the morning of the [REDACTED] and we -- I think from the
3 records it tells you we go to -- I appeared at Clark
4 House Largs on the [REDACTED] is the first register there for
5 a short period and then away from there and then back
6 there for another short period. So where I was in the
7 meantime, I don't know. I don't know.

8 LADY SMITH: Ms Innes.

9 MS INNES: Thank you, my Lady.

10 After that happened, as you say, 'John', if we just
11 go over the page to the top of page 2, you say that from
12 that time you find yourself in a state of confusion --

13 A. Yes.

14 Q. -- as to where you were living or what was happening to
15 you.

16 A. Yes.

17 Q. You know that you lived in some children's homes. On
18 a number of occasions you mention that.

19 A. Yes.

20 Q. You also remember being fostered with some relatives.

21 A. Yes.

22 Q. Again in the Ayrshire area.

23 A. Yes.

24 Q. And you say essentially that you were going back and
25 forth and you were changing schools.

1 A. If I was there long enough to go to school at any place.

2 Q. Okay. There came a time that you were put into foster

3 care with people who weren't relatives --

4 A. Yes.

5 Q. -- in New Cumnock.

6 A. Yes.

7 Q. If we can look onto that, please, on page 3,

8 paragraph 10. Who were the people that you were put

9 into foster care with?

10 A. Could you say that again, please?

11 Q. Who were the people that you went into foster care with?

12 A. It was EIB and [REDACTED]. They were

13 a same-sex couple, retired couple, and their only form

14 of income was six boys that they fostered and got paid

15 for. And they made sure you knew they got paid for it.

16 Q. You tell us that at paragraph 11 that we can see on the

17 screen. You say at the end of that paragraph:

18 "She got paid for fostering us and told us many

19 a time that that was the only reason we were there."

20 A. Oh, the only reason we were there was so that they

21 could -- you know, she had a new car every two years and

22 went about like a man and she was known locally, which

23 is quite incredible. I obviously didn't know at the

24 time what it meant, but she was known locally as EIB

25 EIB and I thought that meant she didn't [REDACTED]

1 [REDACTED] I know that sounds silly, but at that time,
2 that's how I seen that. I didn't know what a same-sex
3 couple was. For me -- for me, I didn't know what's
4 acceptable and what wasn't acceptable, but this is what
5 started my search when I realised that that was not
6 acceptable and that was actually against the law that
7 they were doing that. Why should Ayr -- why should Ayr
8 council get away with doing -- with this sort of --
9 a problem child, there, she'll look after you, she'll
10 batter the living daylights out of you every day and
11 keep you right.

12 Q. We'll come to a bit more detail --

13 A. Sorry.

14 Q. -- about how she behaved in a moment.

15 If we can just go back to what you said about there
16 being six boys in the house.

17 A. Yes.

18 Q. Were the boys the same age as you?

19 A. No.

20 Q. Were they older or younger?

21 A. No, there was -- there was me and my younger brother,
22 who's 18 months younger than me, and everybody else was
23 older. The older boy and I think the third -- the one
24 just older than me were obviously the pets. You know,
25 they could do no wrong. The rest, you'd just get

1 thumped and that was about it. There was just a very,
2 very strange set-up. We all slept in the same bedroom.
3 She had a show bedroom for the social security -- for
4 the social work --
5 LADY SMITH: For the social worker?
6 A. The social worker, yes. Sorry.
7 LADY SMITH: It's okay.
8 A. You know, that really was mental, you know.
9 A perfect example, I'm maybe going off track
10 a little bit, a perfect example was we went to school
11 there. I won a prize at school that -- I wasn't allowed
12 to keep that. That was destroyed in front of me. It
13 was only an art prize. I think at the time it was
14 a book bond(?) sort of thing. It was quite a big thing.
15 But because I got it and none of the rest of them got
16 anything, it was destroyed.
17 Q. Who was it destroyed by?
18 A. EIB
19 Q. You mentioned there about the bedrooms and you tell us
20 about that in your statement, that there were three
21 bedrooms in the house.
22 A. Yes.
23 Q. One was downstairs.
24 A. Mm-hmm.
25 Q. You say EIB and slept on the couch downstairs?

1 A. They slept on a bed settee downstairs.

2 Q. In the living room?

3 A. In the living room, yes. There was a back bedroom down
4 the stairs was not used. And one of the bedrooms up the
5 stairs was -- it was like a storage place and they kept
6 files and they told you them. You opened them up like
7 that and it was the tags that they got for keeping kids.
8 Whether it was payslips or what it was they were given.
9 Because oh, look at this, that's the only reason you're
10 here. You got that all the time. That wasn't just sort
11 of every now and then. That was a regular sort of
12 preach to you: you know, you're not here for loving or
13 care. You're here to get used and abused to suit them.

14 Q. At the top of the next page you tell us that you and the
15 other boys all slept in the same bed --

16 A. Yes.

17 Q. -- although you tended --

18 A. Some of us slept on a mattress on the floor and there
19 was one double bed. So there was actually two double
20 mattresses in the room.

21 Q. You tell us there that the oldest boy was about 14.

22 A. Yes.

23 Q. You were 11, he was 14

24 A. I was on the floor with my brother.

25 Q. And then there were -- you mentioned your brother was

1 obviously younger than you.

2 A. (Witness nodded).

3 Q. Okay. You then go on to talk about the routine at the

4 house. You say that you'd be got up in the morning by

5 her shouting and screaming at you?

6 A. Yeah.

7 Q. Then you mention that you got dinner at school?

8 A. Sometimes. Well, from what -- you come home -- you

9 didn't get meals at school, you'd come home and get

10 whatever they gave you, a couple of pieces -- just

11 whatever was there. They were very fond of wild

12 animals. They had a friend who brought them rabbits and

13 hares and stuff. They would cook that. They even had

14 us sitting plucking wood pigeons. There wasn't much

15 meat on that, but that's what we were made to do.

16 Q. You say that in the next paragraph. You say you got

17 plenty food, but some of it was strange.

18 A. Yeah. I'd say a pigeon was strange, you know.

19 Q. Then you also say:

20 "There were no cups in the house and we drank tea

21 out of jam jars."

22 A. Jam jars. There was no cups. Jam jars. Everything,

23 your tea, everything was in a jam jar.

24 Q. If we move on to the bottom of the page and paragraph 17

25 and you talk about where you would go outside, you talk

1 about playing at the river or at a nearby farm.

2 A. Yeah, the River Afton.

3 Q. You say:

4 "If we had been misbehaving, we stayed in the house

5 staring at the TV or just staring at each other. If you

6 moved or talked, you got sent to bed."

7 A. Oh aye. Without a doubt. I remember once there was

8 ice, an apple crude of ice, and a couple of the boys

9 pulled me out and I got them to pull my Wellingtons off

10 cos my Wellingtons were full of water. I got a doing

11 for asking them to pull my Wellingtons off. You know,

12 people who just were not tightly -- you know, I got

13 a doing because I asked somebody to pull my Wellingtons

14 off which were full of icy water from the banks of the

15 River Afton, the famous River Afton.

16 Q. When you say you got a doing, what did that involve?

17 A. Well, it would be a couple of slaps. A couple of times

18 that I can remember quite clearly, I was bent over

19 a stool, bare backside and skelped with a leather belt.

20 As a matter of fact, for some reason I can only remember

21 it two or three times, but it probably happened more

22 than that.

23 Q. Was that with a belt --

24 A. A leather belt.

25 Q. A school belt or belt from clothes?

1 A. No, a leather belt. A trouser belt.

2 Q. Were you hit with the buckle end, can you remember?

3 A. No, no, leather end.

4 Q. Who did that?

5 A. EIB [REDACTED].

6 Q. You mentioned [REDACTED] What was she like?

7 A. [REDACTED] was obviously the less dominant one. She did as

8 she was told. She never even disciplined you. I

9 remember it all down to -- you know, [REDACTED] was a --

10 she was a mild-mannered woman. She was very put upon is

11 another way of putting it. She was very put upon. If

12 you did something that annoyed her, she told EIB [REDACTED] and

13 EIB [REDACTED] did the action, if that makes sense, you know.

14 Q. So to what extent was [REDACTED] involved in looking after

15 you, preparing meals or anything like that?

16 A. Very, very little. She just -- you have very few

17 memories of her because she was very quiet. You know,

18 she sort of -- a very passive role would be the way

19 I would put it. Very -- you know, passive. Very did as

20 she was told, you know.

21 Q. Okay. If we go on to the next page of your statement,

22 please, at paragraph 22 you talk about some jobs that

23 you did about the house. You'd have to do the dishes or

24 Hoover and each take turns at doing things, like in

25 a normal house.

1 A. Yes. Oh, you were made to do your duties. You were
2 made to do the duties. They had a dog, I can't remember
3 what kind of dog it was, but you could walk the dog and
4 clean up after the dog and you could scrub the kitchen
5 floor. Do the dishes. You did sort of normal things
6 like a normal -- I would say that was kind of normal,
7 you know.

8 Q. Okay. Then you go on to talk about birthdays and
9 Christmas and you say birthdays were never celebrated?

10 A. Never celebrated. Ever. Never.

11 Q. Not for you or any of the other boys?

12 A. Not for everybody. It was just never acknowledged that
13 you were a year older. Maybe that was because it
14 affected the money they got, I don't know. But it was
15 just never acknowledged.

16 Q. Okay.

17 A. Christmas was an apple, an orange and a pair of socks.
18 Maybe a pair of pants if you were lucky. That's just
19 the way it was. And believe it or not, I thought that
20 was normal at that time. I thought that was normal,
21 but ...

22 Q. Over the page on page 6 at paragraph 24 you say that you
23 don't recall owning anything that you would call your
24 own?

25 A. Nothing I would call my own. Nothing.

1 Q. "It was as if we were just there to be fed and go to
2 school."

3 A. Fed, watered and go to school.

4 Q. At paragraph 26 you talk about remembering a social
5 worker coming to the house.

6 A. Yeah. I can remember the -- since this has all been
7 brought together, I can remember a social worker coming
8 and I can remember sitting in the staircase getting
9 grilled about something. I don't know. I just -- I can
10 remember -- I can even remember her name and whether
11 it's the right name or not I don't know. It was McVie
12 or McVay or something like that. He was the sort of
13 social worker I always dealt with. The same guy. There
14 was never a lady social worker. It was always a guy
15 that did the business.

16 Q. So you have this memory of being, you say, grilled by
17 the social worker but you don't know what it was about?

18 A. I don't know what it was about. There was a grilling
19 and it was after that I probably ended up in court.

20 Q. Okay.

21 A. So ...

22 Q. You say social workers never asked how you were getting
23 on?

24 A. No.

25 Q. And you felt that they were never interested in you?

1 A. Never interested, not interested.

2 Q. You go on at the end of this paragraph to say:

3 "I know I couldn't have said anything to a social

4 worker because EIB would have been present ..."

5 A. Yeah, we were questioned separately.

6 Q. Right.

7 A. Well, I don't think anybody else was, but I was

8 questioned separately about an incident I don't even

9 remember, but you still had that fear. Even though

10 you're in the hall, in the next room, you had that fear

11 that if you said anything, you would suffer later.

12 I just think that was a natural thing -- you know. The

13 consequences of saying something bad would -- they would

14 catch up with you later.

15 Q. Yes, okay. At paragraph 27 you say that when you were

16 in foster care, you had no contact with your family

17 whatsoever.

18 A. None whatsoever.

19 Q. So no cards, no visits, nothing?

20 A. Nothing. Not even in the children's homes before that

21 or anywhere you were, there was just no -- from my gran

22 died to I would be 15 before I found out where

23 I belonged to.

24 Q. At paragraph 28 you say you ran away constantly.

25 A. Yeah.

1 Q. Do you know why you were running away or can you explain
2 that?

3 A. Well, obviously I didn't want to be there, you know.
4 I even remember being picked up by a policeman on the
5 road and taken back. You just -- they knew where --
6 locally, everybody knew where you were, so you were in
7 New Cumnock, if you managed to get as far as Cumnock,
8 somebody would pick you up and take you back there. So
9 there was no sort of like -- must have been the way we
10 dressed or the way we looked or whatever it was, but it
11 was -- they always knew where to take you back to and
12 there was never any questions asked. You were slapped
13 about a bit for it and that was it. No policeman ever
14 said, "Look, why are you doing this?" There was never
15 any of that. Because it would have been interesting if
16 that had happened, but it didn't.

17 Q. Can you remember some of the other boys in the house
18 running away as well or was it just yourself?

19 A. No, it was just me. Maybe -- just myself, because
20 memories are difficult for that period for me. There
21 probably was, I don't know, but -- whether I was just
22 a wild child. I don't know.

23 Q. You say that you remember telling the police that you
24 weren't going back to EIB's.

25 A. Yeah.

1 Q. And told them what she was like.

2 A. Yeah.

3 Q. What was their response to that?

4 A. Negative. Nothing. They were not interested. Weren't

5 in the least bit interested.

6 Q. Then over the top of the next page you tell us there

7 about the way that she used to behave towards you and

8 you've told us about being belted with the belt.

9 A. Yeah.

10 Q. And you say at paragraph 30 that she also used to slap

11 you regularly. So paragraph 30 on page 7.

12 A. 30. Yeah, yeah.

13 Q. She also used to slap you on the face on a regular

14 basis.

15 A. Yeah.

16 Q. And you say that could simply be for getting in her way?

17 A. Yeah. A punch in the ribs as well. I can remember

18 that.

19 Q. Right.

20 A. This is where things get confusing, because I remember

21 going to court. I don't know what court it was.

22 I think I reckon I managed to look up somewhere it was

23 theft, about age 11 or something. I can go into great

24 detail about what the theft was, but I don't think that

25 really matters.

1 But from there, it was straight from there back into
2 children's homes and then to Dr Guthrie's in Edinburgh.
3 Which I think people need to think -- consider the fact
4 that this was 1964, 1965. From South Ayrshire to --
5 well, South Edinburgh, Liberton(?), is a long way.
6 There were no motorways, you know what I mean. It was
7 as if I was being removed and went there to
8 Dr Guthrie's, Secondary Institutions - to be published later
9 Secondary Institutions - to be published later
10 Secondary Institutions - to be published later
11
12
13
14
15 Secondary Institutions - to be published later So that was
16 the end of my fostering career but --
17 Q. So you told us and you tell us in your statement -- it's
18 blanked out on the screen, Secondary Institutions - to be published later
19 Secondary Institutions - to be published later
20
21 A.
22
23 Q.
24 A.
25

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11 Q.

12 A.

13 Q. You tell us at paragraph 32 that you, reflecting back on
14 your time in New Cumnock, and I think what you've said
15 already is you don't understand why the council decided
16 to place you there.

17 A. Yes. I think we did some record research some --
18 a couple of organisations have tried to find records.
19 Records was -- you've got stuff there -- we tried --
20 I've been trying to get these records since 1996, and
21 more seriously, that is seriously a long time I've been
22 at it. And the records between -- the records
23 concerning EIB and in New
24 Cumnock vanished at the same time as I vanished to
25 Edinburgh, and I honestly believe something bad happened

1 there. I don't know what happened, what bad happened,
2 but why did they have to get rid of me to Edinburgh
3 and -- when it -- you know, what it all boils down to is
4 when I was 14 and heading towards working age at 15,
5 Dr Guthrie's didn't know what to do with me. They
6 didn't know where I came from, who I was, where I was.

7 I remembered one address in Saltcoats which we
8 managed to research and find an aunt or we were
9 knackered, there was nothing. So they could tell me
10 a couple of years and no know and the records from --
11 I don't know, from Ayr County Council never followed.
12 You know, just completely: he's out of sight, out of
13 mind. Which should never have happened.

14 The reason my brother's not mentioned is because at
15 one point when we were back in Burnside my mother
16 appeared. I didn't see her, but she'd taken my younger
17 brother to Southampton and I was left, sort of abandoned
18 again. You know, that's just the way things were. You
19 just had to accept that ... that she wanted him but
20 didn't want me. That had to be accepted. That was life
21 as it was ...

22 Q. Okay, you've mentioned your records and your search for
23 your records.

24 A. Yeah.

25 Q. I'd like to take you to some material that we've

1 recovered from North Ayrshire Council about your
2 correspond with them trying to get records.

3 A. That's right, yeah.

4 Q. If you just bear with me a moment and we'll get the
5 documents up on the screen.

6 The first one is at NAC-000000352 and page 9.

7 A. These letters were -- you know, we've got to give praise
8 for his due. Sandy Munro, Geilsland School, when he got
9 me he didn't know what to do with me either, you know,
10 at 15 -- he didn't know what to do with me either. But
11 he did a lot of work and he did help and we decided to
12 find out records and find out things. So he done the
13 letters and he done all the kind of fancy bits. I'm not
14 educated enough to -- I can hardly read and write, let's
15 be honest with you, because of different education,
16 different -- I didn't learn to read until I left school.
17 Matter of fact, I didn't learn to read until I started
18 driving lorries for a living and I had to learn. But
19 Sandy Munro helped me with all that work and doing the
20 paperwork and checking the records for me, trying to
21 find that to help me. That was a personal favour to me
22 as a friend, because the reason that -- this is going to
23 sound strange, but I was in Geilsland School, obviously
24 I'd been recalled back to Dr Guthrie's and then they
25 send you to -- too old for there, so you go there.

1 People were passing who recognised me as part of
2 their family and spoke to Sandy Munro and that's how
3 I got back in touch with my family. By accident. Not
4 by deliberate any -- it was accidental that we get back
5 in touch with who my real family was and who everybody
6 was. And I think that's very important, that it all had
7 to be done accidentally.

8 Q. I think Mr Munro was somebody you met at
9 Geilsland School?

10 A. Yes.

11 Q. And then he helped you later in life to try and track
12 your records?

13 A. Yes. He actually helped my whole family. He was a good
14 guy.

15 Q. What I'd like to do is look at some of the letters that
16 you got from the council.

17 A. Yeah.

18 Q. You mentioned that you did this in 1996, but we actually
19 have a letter from Strathclyde in 1992.

20 A. That probably could be where it started.

21 Q. This letter that we see on screen here is from somebody
22 who's an area manager and it refers to your request for
23 access to your personal files.

24 A. Yeah.

25 Q. And it says in the second paragraph:

1 "I must point out that the department is not
2 required to provide access to information recorded
3 before 1 April 1989, and I understand the information
4 which you are interested in would be recorded about
5 25/30 years ago when you were received into care in the
6 Irvine area.

7 "There is discretion, however, to make information
8 available if that is felt appropriate ..."

9 And then it's suggested that this is passed on to
10 a social work manager.

11 A. Now, there was some -- I had a lawyer involved at the
12 time with Sandy, we were trying to figure out why what
13 happened happened. There was records -- the records
14 were rubbish. You know what I mean. What we got is
15 like what we would get later on. Just total and utter
16 bunkum. Just somebody looking at something and saying:
17 I can't be bothered with that, too much today. That's
18 just what it was. Not laziness. Maybe people had too
19 much to do. That's ...

20 Q. We'll come to a little bit more about that. If we just
21 look at this letter just now, I think we can see that
22 what you were first told is that they didn't have to
23 give you -- they're saying --

24 A. That's right.

25 Q. -- we don't have to give you any information.

1 A. Yes.

2 Q. That seems to be the first response you got from
3 Strathclyde.

4 A. (Witness nodded).

5 Q. Then if we move on to page 10, the next page here, this
6 is 1993. There's reference here to a conversation that
7 was had with you about your request to find information
8 and it says here:

9 "I have checked and unfortunately cannot find any
10 trace of an old file on you for the period when you were
11 received into care by Ayr County Council ..."

12 And it says:

13 "We checked with local offices and also with the
14 archivist with Glasgow, without any success."

15 So at that point back in 1993, we're told that they
16 had absolutely nothing.

17 A. Yeah. This is -- I didn't believe that they had
18 nothing, put it that way, because I know the work
19 situation, I know people have a lot to do, and for
20 somebody to come across and ask them for an old file, it
21 might just be -- computers were maybe no -- you know, in
22 these days you can do that and get it in a computer.
23 But then, if it's a manual file, it might be hard work
24 to find. I think that would probably be the reason.
25 Not that I'm making excuses for them.

1 Q. If we move on to a letter that you sent, and this might
2 have been with Sandy Munro's help, if we go on to
3 NEC-000000353 on page 3, this is a letter that was sent
4 on 20 March 1996 and then that was to the Director of
5 Social Work in North Ayrshire?

6 A. Do you like the compliment I made them before we
7 started? So you're trying to make a compliment and
8 you're trying to get into their good books and trying to
9 say look, please look at this, be nice. They still
10 won't be nice.

11 Q. You say here:

12 "I hope that I will not cause you unnecessary bother
13 in your new post by asking your help in a matter which
14 is increasingly causing me concern."

15 And then you explain a bit about your history that
16 you've told us about.

17 A. Yes.

18 Q. And you go on to talk about the homes that you were in
19 that you've also told us about, and you talk about your
20 various memories.

21 If we go on to page 4, in the middle of the
22 page there's an underlined sentence in which you say:

23 "My request for your help to assist me make sense
24 out of the period [REDACTED] 1960 to [REDACTED] 1965."

25 So that's from the date that your grandmother died

1 up until you went in to Dr Guthrie's.

2 A. Yes. That whole period has vanished. I honestly
3 believe something very, very naughty happened in New
4 Cumnock and -- I've been to New Cumnock, I've spoken to
5 people, I've been friendly with people from New Cumnock,
6 and whenever you mention [REDACTED] they just don't
7 want to know. They just will not talk about it.
8 I don't know why. It's like a blank page. For some
9 reason or other, everybody's blanking it. Nobody wants
10 to know what happened to EIB [REDACTED] or [REDACTED] --
11 they're both dead now, obviously, but -- you know.

12 Q. And you expressed your distress at being unable to
13 recall that period.

14 A. Yes.

15 Q. And you asked if he could find all of the available
16 information for you for that period. And you say:
17 "Since I believe a full knowledge of what went on
18 will assist me in playing a full part in the life of my
19 own young family."

20 And that was a thing that you wanted to make sense
21 of your own past at that point because you had your own
22 young family?

23 A. Yeah.

24 Q. Okay. If we go back in this document to page 2, this is
25 another letter to somebody else dated 28 May 1996 and

1 you're referring here to -- they must have sent you
2 a letter on 2 May and you thank them for their
3 efforts --
4 A. Yes.
5 Q. -- in trying to find information.
6 A. You're trying to be -- you know, you're trying to be
7 nice about it. You're trying to -- you know, you can't
8 force people to do something, they won't do it, so I was
9 thinking at the time, well, if we try and be nice about
10 it and try and say, oh, you're doing a great job, you
11 know, can we try and find this please. It didn't work.
12 It doesn't work. It should. It should work, but it
13 doesn't.
14 Q. You say here in the second paragraph:
15 "You will naturally appreciate that it comes as
16 rather a shock to me to find that there are no records
17 to be found of my existence during the period 1960-64
18 when I was in care."
19 So it looks as at this point in 1996 you've been
20 told again: we can't find anything.
21 A. Same again, all the time.
22 Q. Okay. If we can go back to NEC-000000352 and page 11,
23 this is a letter from North Ayrshire to you in June
24 1996.
25 A. Yes.

1 Q. At this point in the second paragraph we see that they
2 say:
3 "Although we have no information on your extensive
4 time in Local Authority care, a file has now been
5 located which covers the period from your discharge from
6 Dr Guthrie's boys' school in 1967 through until 1968.
7 As far as I am aware the limited information does not
8 address the time period that you're concerned about.
9 Nonetheless, it's possible to give you access to this
10 file ..."
11 So by June 1996, it looks that this is what the
12 council had been able to find.
13 A. Yeah. I think one point here is it's like a fobbing off
14 all the time. But I think what does tell, if we go back
15 just slightly, when you get the records it was so bad
16 that Dr Guthrie's was actually contacting the social
17 work department in Hamilton and I have never had any
18 connection with Hamilton. But why were Dr Guthrie's
19 contacting Hamilton to try and find out who I was? You
20 know, which is quite incredible when I've never ever had
21 any contact with there. And then they managed to get in
22 contact with Saltcoats through believe it or not
23 I remembered [REDACTED] you know, I remembered that
24 address.
25 Q. If we go to page 6 of this document, we have another

1 letter from 1996 from North Ayrshire Council to you, and
2 there seems to have been a telephone conversation and
3 they seem to have located some information, although
4 I think again about the time of Dr Guthrie's. In the
5 paragraph towards the end of the screen there that we
6 see:

7 "The papers that you have now received ..."

8 A. Yes, just end of story kind of thing.

9 Q. " ... clearly indicate significant contact by the
10 Children's Department before you went to Dr Guthrie's
11 school. As I have already mentioned I can locate no
12 trace of records relating to that period. While very
13 clearly systems operate nowadays concerning the
14 archiving or destruction of material, 30 years back
15 things were much more hit and miss and I am in fact
16 quite surprised to have located the file whose contents
17 are enclosed with this letter."

18 So again they hadn't been able to find anything for
19 the foster care period; but --

20 A. Important, "hit or miss". I mean, I do understand that
21 finding manual records -- I'm not stupid. I do
22 understand that finding manual records going back
23 through the years is not easy, and somebody's got to pay
24 the wages for looking for that. I mean, I'm not stupid,
25 I know. But why -- the number of times I wrote to them

1 and the number of times them posting something to me was
2 expressed there and for them to just go, oh well, forget
3 it. It's just not ...

4 Q. If we go on to the next letter that we have from the
5 council, it's at page 5. It's dated 28 April 1997.
6 Then they say that they've carried out an extensive
7 search trying to trace information and they say:

8 "Unfortunately we have been unable to retrieve any
9 information relating to you, including information on
10 your stay in the various children's homes or foster
11 homes."

12 And then it says:

13 "Can I bring it to your attention that under the
14 Access to Personal Files Act passed in 1987, which came
15 into effect in 1989 ..."

16 A. So what they're actually saying is that they gave me the
17 records. No.

18 Q. Well, I think they're saying there that there was an Act
19 that came into force in 1989 --

20 A. Oh, right, I know what you're talking about. Sorry,
21 sorry.

22 Q. And they said that that only entitles people to have
23 access after 1989.

24 A. What they were saying was that they can only see them so
25 long, then they can be destroyed. That's what they're

1 saying to me. They're telling me: okay, these records
2 are out of date, they can be destroyed.

3 Q. Or at least that you're not --

4 A. Entitled to them.

5 Q. -- legally entitled to see them.

6 A. Exactly, exactly. Which is not true, I don't think.

7 LADY SMITH: 'John', I think in fairness to them -- and
8 they keep telling you this -- that the law only requires
9 them to give you access to records from --

10 A. Yeah, yeah. I'm very dogged -- if I get something in my
11 head, I keep at it.

12 LADY SMITH: -- from a particular date, and that was April
13 1989. But they did go on and say being aware of your
14 keenness to have information about your early life, they
15 would continue to try and trace any records.

16 A. Yeah.

17 LADY SMITH: So I think that they were also saying, "We'll
18 keep trying, and if we come across anything from before
19 1989, we'll let you know".

20 A. If we've got it, you're not getting it. I think that
21 was their attitude. If we've got it, you're not getting
22 it. Because I still believe -- my whole premise and
23 whole thing is that something happened between -- in New
24 Cumnock and that's why I was sent to Edinburgh. It all
25 goes back -- I'm trying to get that particular dates and

1 they're not -- they'll give me nothing. Ever.
2 Anything.
3 LADY SMITH: I don't think, 'John', they're actually saying
4 to you, "If we have records relating to the period
5 you're interested in, you're not getting them".
6 A. No, they didn't say that.
7 LADY SMITH: I don't read them as saying that or even
8 thinking that.
9 A. But the underhand -- they would say that and not mean
10 that because I've dealt with the council and I've dealt
11 with social work departments and it's ... they have
12 a sort of -- I always felt I was shut away. Oh, forget
13 him.
14 LADY SMITH: What actually, I think, didn't help was them
15 telling you repeatedly in the letters, "The law only
16 requires us to go back to 1989 for your records",
17 because they do seem at the same time to have been
18 saying, "But we're trying to see if we have anything
19 else and you'll get it if we have".
20 A. I don't believe there was enough effort made,
21 personally. But I could be wrong.
22 LADY SMITH: That's another matter, but I don't think
23 they're saying that: we're not even looking, and if we
24 do look and find, you're not getting it.
25 A. Well, I'm sorry I take that attitude, but that's the --

1 maybe just the forthright way I have of speaking is
2 saying, well, you're not getting it, that's it. You
3 know. But I've had that my whole life: if you want
4 something, you don't get it. You have to earn it. And
5 how do you earn records that's there that they can't
6 give you or won't. I say the records are there still,
7 I still maintain to this day somebody knows what
8 happened. I maintain that. And yet for some reason
9 I've not to get it. It could be a legal thing or what,
10 I don't know. Because remember, I ended up in court,
11 Ayr Juvenile Court. And then disappeared to Edinburgh.
12 You know, put away, to the side.

13 MS INNES: Okay. If we go on to the next -- so that was in
14 1997 and you still carried on trying to get
15 information --

16 A. Yes, I still tried.

17 Q. At page 3 of this document we have a letter from
18 25 August from North Ayrshire Council and at this point
19 they tell you that they've been trying to find some
20 further information and they say in the second
21 paragraph on this page:

22 "The archivist has confirmed that foster care
23 records were retained in the archives for five years."

24 So as a result they say:

25 " ... there appears to be no existing record of the

1 foster care placement to which you refer."

2 So I think the suggestion there is that the records
3 may have been destroyed because they didn't need to keep
4 them.

5 Then they say that they've tried to speak to East
6 and South Ayrshire and they weren't able to find
7 anything. Then they say:

8 "It has also been confirmed that several years ago
9 there was a major fire in the Saltcoats office. A large
10 number of files were destroyed and it could have been
11 that information relating to yourself was one of them."

12 A. Must have been Guy Fawkes.

13 Q. I think this is the first time we've seen reference to
14 a fire?

15 A. I don't believe that for one minute, because the records
16 that they said were destroyed in a fire have eventually
17 turned up.

18 Q. Over the page they talk about looking at some of the
19 homes that you went to and they say at that point that
20 they're satisfied that they've made every effort to
21 trace the information and they refer to the fact that it
22 was the Ayr County Council, then it was the Regional
23 Council, then it was North Ayrshire. They say further
24 down the page:

25 "Storage and retention of records has been much

1 improved over the years and staff now rigorously
2 maintain life histories of all children and young
3 persons in care. It would appear that such procedures
4 did not apply when you were in care in Ayr County
5 Council."

6 So they seem to be suggesting there that perhaps
7 things have changed, but importantly for you, you
8 weren't able to access any information about that
9 time in your life.

10 A. No, I do have the records. Clark House, I do have
11 the -- there, I do have the -- what would you call it?
12 Admission and ...

13 Q. Discharge?

14 A. Discharge, twice in a year at Clark House. I do have
15 that, yeah.

16 Q. I think ultimately that's the extent of the material
17 that you were able to find, a little bit about
18 Dr Guthrie's and then discharge and admission times for
19 homes, but nothing more about your life in care; is that
20 right?

21 A. Yeah, well, for me the bad memories are New Cumnock and
22 it haunts me to this day. I might be 70 this year, but
23 it still haunts me what happened there and why nothing
24 was ever done about it, why nothing was ever said, and
25 any time you speak to anybody from Ayr -- I think some

1 of the problem is caused by the fact that regions
2 change. I think, from talking with relatives, when we
3 first went into care Stevenston was covered by Glasgow
4 Corporation. Then it became Ayr County Council. Then
5 it's split again after that time, North Ayrshire, East
6 Ayrshire, South Ayrshire. I think that probably muddled
7 the water where records are concerned. So you have to
8 sort of allow for that, you know. But the water gets
9 muddled that way.

10 Q. Okay, if we leave the correspondence that you had with
11 the council now and just go back to looking at your
12 statement, please, and to page 17, where you talk about
13 some lessons to be learned. I suppose from what we've
14 looked at, one of the things that you would see as being
15 important for children in care is making sure that that
16 records are retained and accessible.

17 A. Yes.

18 Q. Would that be right?

19 A. Records should be retained, but I think if you look at
20 some of the records that were maintained about me are
21 actually quite shocking.

22 Q. Yes.

23 A. You know. That kind of record -- I suppose it should be
24 kept until the person is old enough to see their records
25 and that person should be given the right to have their

1 records destroyed themselves. Nobody else. So if
2 somebody gets to 21, they say, right, this is a bad
3 history, this is a bad, this is good, this is
4 everything. What do you want to do with it? Destroy it
5 or keep it? You know, that should be an individual
6 thing for a person to -- because going through the
7 records is a healing process.

8 Q. Mm-hmm.

9 A. For me.

10 Q. But from what you've said, and you said the way in which
11 you were described in the records was an issue so
12 I suppose you might say the people that write things
13 that are recorded need to remember that the child might
14 ultimately read that.

15 A. Yes. And I think when you -- you know, when they write
16 down that I needed taming, I still need a bit more
17 taming, you know, mentally defective, spelling, can't
18 spell, things like -- these things, I think people then
19 thought the records would never be read and I think
20 that's why what was written is very, very important
21 because it's the truth that was written. It wasn't even
22 making it up, oh, something might read that later on.
23 They've written that thinking nobody's going to read
24 what I've said, you know. Where if they knew somebody
25 was going to read it later on, I don't think they would

1 have written the things that they've written. Whether
2 I'm right in saying that or not I don't know. I'm just
3 saying what I feel.

4 Q. I think another thing you say is important, and you
5 mention going back to the start of your time in care, is
6 that children are given an explanation as to what's
7 happening and they're given information --

8 A. Told nothing, never seen anybody. You know. I think
9 one of the telling things was -- I know it's not about
10 fostering, it's supposed to be about that, but when
11 I was at Dr Guthrie's, most of the boys got home most
12 weekends. Easter holidays, things like that, they could
13 be down to maybe 25, 30 boys. For two Christmas and new
14 years in a row I was the only person left there and
15 I had to go home with a member of staff and I stayed
16 with a member of staff during the holiday period because
17 everybody else was home. Now, that hurts.

18 Q. So I think maintaining the family links --

19 A. Yeah.

20 Q. -- would be important as well?

21 A. Because why were their records -- why was North --
22 I keep saying North Ayrshire, sorry. Ayr County Council
23 not passing records on? Why did the juvenile court at
24 Ayr not pass that information? Where did that
25 information go? It's still not appeared. It's

1 still ... you know. It's still missing.

2 Q. Okay. And you also say at paragraph 85 that your

3 feeling is that children didn't matter when you were in

4 care.

5 A. Can you speak up a wee bit?

6 Q. You say at paragraph 85 that children didn't matter when

7 you were in care, that was your feeling?

8 A. Well, when you're in care -- this doesn't sound right,

9 but it's true. When I was in care, the definition was

10 made between orphans and other children. I came under

11 the heading "other children". And that was dad,

12 parents, okay, dad's in the clink doing five years,

13 mother's a mental defective who runs away with somebody

14 who's worse than my dad was. You know. And then

15 there's your genuine orphans. You know what I mean?

16 There is a distinction made. Especially the likes of

17 Burnside, Geilsland(?) , there was a distinction made

18 between -- I think the expresses they used is genuine

19 orphans and kids that are there for CP, care and

20 protection. You know, there's a definite difference,

21 and it means -- I would not give Dr Barnardo's charity

22 anything because I still have a hatred for Dr Barnardo's

23 because I wasn't an orphan. That sounds terrible, but

24 that's the truth.

25 Q. Okay.

1 A. I mean, I still have an inbuilt thing about
2 Dr Barnardo's as a horrible institution that I would
3 like to have belonged to but I couldn't belong to it.
4 You know what I mean?
5 Example before now, maybe -- can I go off track
6 a little bit, please?
7 LADY SMITH: What about? What is it you want to talk about?
8 A. When I was small, I would say four, five, we stayed in
9 a prefab at [REDACTED] in Stevenston. I can
10 remember the police coming there and an old brown van
11 with their overalls on digging up the garden looking for
12 dynamite. It sounds crazy but that's what they were
13 doing. I can remember them getting us out the house
14 because the detonators were in the loft. That's the
15 kind of -- you know. That sounds crazy and it sounds
16 you're making that up. But that is fact. You know what
17 I mean?
18 My dad used to sell dynamite and detonators. That
19 was his major crime. Because remember the dynamite
20 factory was in Stevenston, Ardeer Factory. We buried it
21 in the garden and we had the detonators for it in the
22 loft. That's the crazy upbringing I had. That's how
23 nuts it was. You know what I mean?
24 When my mother run away with her new boyfriend, my
25 dad was coming up the road from doing a five-year jail

1 sentence for attempted murder or something, she left the
2 gas on in the house and me locked in the house. And the
3 next door neighbour, a woman called [REDACTED], broke
4 in and got us out. That is the crazy life before
5 I ended up with my gran.

6 With my gran, it was steady, careful, looked after.
7 And then she dies and everything goes to hell. That's
8 the way I see it. For the -- you know. It sounds crazy
9 that they were burying dynamite in the garden and
10 detonators in the loft. But we weren't the only family
11 that was living like that in Stevenston at the time.

12 I mean, this is the late 1950s. Absolutely nuts.

13 MS INNES: Okay, thank you very much, 'John', for your
14 evidence. I don't have any more questions for you.

15 A. Thank you.

16 MS INNES: And there's no applications, my Lady.

17 LADY SMITH: Thank you. Can I check if any outstanding
18 applications for questions?

19 'John', that does complete all the questions we have
20 for you.

21 A. Thank you.

22 LADY SMITH: Thank you so much, both for your written
23 statement and for coming here today and making the
24 message you want me to get about what really matters to
25 you so clear.

1 A. It does matter.

2 LADY SMITH: It's very helpful, thank you.

3 A. It does matter because I've had my say.

4 LADY SMITH: I'm glad, and it's been helpful to me to hear

5 it. I can now let you go and hopefully you can relax

6 for the rest of the day.

7 A. Thank you.

8 LADY SMITH: Thank you very much.

9 (The witness withdrew)

10 LADY SMITH: Now, we have two names there that are covered

11 by my general restriction order, EIB and

12 They are for this room only and not

13 outside here.

14 Afternoon break, Ms Innes?

15 MS INNES: Yes, my Lady, and after that we have more

16 read-ins.

17 LADY SMITH: Thank you.

18 (3.02 pm)

19 (A short break)

20 LADY SMITH: Ms Rattray.

21 'Agnes' (read)

22 MS RATTRAY: Thank you, my Lady. We'll finish today with

23 one, perhaps two, if time allows, read-ins.

24 The first is a statement from an applicant who

25 wishes to remain anonymous and has chosen the pseudonym

1 'Agnes'. Her statement is at WIT.001.002.8083.

2 LADY SMITH: Thank you.

3 MS RATTRAY: 'Agnes' was boarded out by Scottish Borders

4 Council to two placements. The first placement was from

5 [REDACTED] 1954, but we don't have any end date in the

6 records. The second was from [REDACTED] 1964 where 'Agnes'

7 spent the rest of her childhood.

8 LADY SMITH: Thank you.

9 MS RATTRAY: "My name is 'Agnes'. My contact details are

10 known to the Inquiry. I was born in 1952.

11 I was born in Hawick. I have five brothers and

12 sisters. My eldest sister is three years older than me,

13 my eldest brother is two years older than me, then it's

14 me, my younger brother and my younger sister.

15 As a child I didn't know anything about my parents.

16 I didn't know why I went into care. I was always led to

17 believe that my older brother and I weren't wanted.

18 That's what we were told by matron at Wilton House.

19 I don't know what age I was when I went into care.

20 My records say I went into care at Wilton House

21 in [REDACTED] 1952, when I was around six months old.

22 I left Wilton House for good when I was 12 years old in

23 1964. Then I went into foster care in [REDACTED]

24 I stayed in foster care until I was 18 years old.

25 I don't remember what age I was when some of the events

1 I talk about happened."

2 From paragraphs 4 to 70, 'Agnes' speaks of her
3 experiences in Wilton House in Hawick. Moving to
4 page 71 on page 15.

5 "I left Wilton House for the first time when I was
6 9 years old to go to foster care in Airdrie.

7 I was in foster care in Airdrie with my older
8 brother from 1961 until 1964, when the foster father
9 died. The man's wife couldn't cope after he died and my
10 brother and I were sent back to Wilton House.

11 My brother and I went to Chapelhall Primary School
12 in Airdrie. That was fine, until they were teaching you
13 how to knit. I couldn't do it. The teacher kept poking
14 me, saying I was a silly girl, every time I dropped
15 a stitch. It felt like I was getting the same thing at
16 Chapelhall when I got at Wilton Primary School.

17 I only found out about my younger brother and sister
18 whilst I was in Airdrie. My brother and I were in the
19 playground at school. A boy and girl were standing in
20 the playground. My brother said they were our brother
21 and sister. He and I went back to the place where we
22 were staying. I thought about my brother and sister.
23 My older brother started to explain some of it to me.

24 We went back to school the next day. My younger
25 siblings were gone. I found out somehow that one of

1 them had said to whoever they were fostered with that
2 they had seen their brother and sister. They were sent
3 somewhere else. They were told they weren't going to be
4 seeing us again. For whatever reason, the authorities
5 didn't want us to be together. That was the last time
6 I saw them for many years. My brother and I were
7 together and our younger siblings were together."

8 'Agnese' and her brother then returned to Wilton
9 House where 'Agnese' met her eldest sister for the first
10 time.

11 Moving now to paragraph 79 on page 17:

12 "When I left Wilton House for the second time, the
13 same thing happened with my younger sister as had
14 happened with my older sister when I went to Airdrie.
15 As I left the home, my younger sister went into the
16 home. Most families were separated. Wilton House was
17 getting knocked down and another home built. I think
18 that's why they got me out of the road.

19 To me, going to foster care in [REDACTED] was rushed.
20 Matron said I was going to a home. She said I was to do
21 what I was told, do things for the foster parents, and
22 I was to behave. Matron said that if they asked me to
23 clean up, I should do it without any argument. I was
24 just to get it done.

25 I went into foster care in [REDACTED] in 1964 when

1 I was 12 years old. I left in 1970 when I was 18 years
2 old.

3 There was an advert in the paper, the Sunday
4 Pictorial. This was how the foster mother found me for
5 fostering. I called my foster mother FYC to start
6 with. Later I called her different names. They weren't
7 nice names. I didn't call FSW dad. My foster parents
8 called me by my first name.

9 After my foster parents had seen the advert in the
10 paper, I had a letter from them telling me about the
11 island. I hadn't seen my foster parents before I went
12 to [REDACTED] When I asked my foster mother why they had
13 got me, the story she told me was that they lived in
14 a one-bedroom house. The only way they could get
15 another house was if there was a child in the house.
16 That was how they got a new house.

17 My foster father was a painter. My foster mother
18 worked in the hospital, helping in the kitchen. She
19 wasn't a nurse. There were too many people in [REDACTED]
20 who knew my foster parents. If people saw something
21 that they thought should be reported, they would tell
22 the foster parents. When I went home, my foster parents
23 would say that they'd been told something about me and
24 ask what I'd been up to.

25 The welfare officer ran me to the train station.

1 I was put on a train with two strangers. She asked the
2 two strangers to keep their eye on me until we got to
3 [REDACTED]. I had a tiny bag with whatever I had. It
4 wasn't very much. The strangers got off the ferry
5 before me. The foster mother was waiting at the pier at
6 [REDACTED].

7 The first weekend I was there, I was up at 7 am.
8 I made the two of them their breakfast and took it to
9 them. I asked if I was to do that again the next day.
10 The answer was no, I didn't make a good enough job of it
11 the first time.

12 I had my own room but nothing was private. You knew
13 the foster mother had been in the wardrobe and in the
14 drawers looking. She always checked the bed. If I had
15 an accident due to having my period, that was horrible.
16 The foster mother left the sheets on purpose. The cover
17 would be back and the sheet would be lying there. I had
18 to wash the sheets.

19 I was always up early. I made my bed. I got stuff
20 out for breakfast. When it was school time, I got
21 myself dressed for school.

22 I was never up late. I was always in bed by 8 pm,
23 even at ages 15 and 16. I asked to stay up later in the
24 summer holidays but my foster parents would say no.

25 You ate whatever the foster mother made and put down

1 to you. There was no choice. She would go away and
2 shout through, asking if you'd eaten it all up. Most of
3 the time, I tried to eat it all. If I didn't eat it
4 all, I found a way of getting rid of it, without my
5 foster mother knowing. I had school dinners, which gave
6 me a bit of a break.

7 There was a bath. You weren't allowed to lock the
8 bathroom door. Sometimes my foster mother would come
9 in. I didn't like her coming in. One time I told my
10 foster mother that I didn't want her coming in. My
11 foster mother said it was her house and she would come
12 into the bathroom whenever she wanted to. Quite a few
13 times, I'd wait until my foster parents were out and
14 have a bath then.

15 I cleaned the dishes and peeled potatoes. I put the
16 dishes away and made sure the kitchen was tidy. I hung
17 up washing. I did the bedroom. I tidied up when my
18 foster parents were at work and hoped they'd be pleased.
19 They never said, "Well done, you did a good job".

20 When I was 14, my foster mother took ill. She was
21 taken away in the ambulance in the night. My foster
22 father got me into trouble because I wasn't wakened and
23 ready to go with her. He said I didn't think much of
24 her. People said the better one of the two was him. My
25 foster father could be nasty at times.

1 My foster mother was in hospital for a while. I had
2 to go and visit her. It was just my foster father and
3 I in the house. That was when I stayed out quite a bit.
4 I went anywhere. I could sit for hours. I wasn't used
5 to being with a man on my own. Sometimes, the way he
6 acted, I made a point of not being in with him alone.
7 I didn't like being alone with my foster father.

8 I wasn't allowed friends home to the house. A girl
9 stayed across the road from us who went to school at the
10 same time as me. I was told not to be seen with her.
11 The girl got into trouble one time at school. I had
12 been with her but hadn't done anything. The girl got
13 hit by her dad and I got sent to bed early. If I was
14 with anybody, I would leave them before I got to the
15 house so my foster parents wouldn't see me.

16 My foster parents would go out. I was told not to
17 touch the television and to stay in bed. One time it
18 got the better of me. I switched the television on.
19 I heard their car. I switched the television off, ran
20 upstairs and got into bed. The next thing, the cover
21 was pulled off me. My foster parents said I'd been
22 watching television. I denied it. They said I had
23 been, because the television was still warm.

24 My foster parents had a sheepdog called Laddie. The
25 dog was the best thing I could have had. The dog was

1 beautiful. He would always sit beside me. He was
2 company for me. My foster mother didn't like the
3 thought of me being near the dog. The dog had to be put
4 down. That was a horrible day. It was heartbreaking.
5 The dog was the only friend I had. My foster mother
6 asked why I was crying. She said the dog was just
7 an animal.

8 I went up to the hospital where my foster mother
9 worked. I spent time there seeing patients. They were
10 older people.

11 I got pocket money now and again. It wasn't
12 a regular thing. Most of the time, if I got money it
13 was from my foster parents' family. My foster parents
14 didn't know. Sometimes a neighbour across the road gave
15 me money. She said to buy myself something and not to
16 let my foster parents know. Later, people said that the
17 foster parents had been given money for having me.

18 I was dressed like an old woman. I had to wear
19 silly looking hats. At school to start off with I was
20 dressed in school uniform. There was a blazer with
21 a yellow badge. My school skirt was a long black skirt.
22 Everybody else's skirt was short. I used to haul the
23 skirt up to make it shorter and then lower it when I was
24 going home. I did that until I got found out. I had to
25 wear horrible looking tights. It was the same when

1 I wasn't at school. I thought I'd get something nice to
2 wear. I was given a dress that had been knitted. It
3 looked awful. I was made to put it on and go outside
4 with it on. Everybody was laughing at me.

5 At school I had to wear boys' shoes. The first time
6 I was allowed to buy shoes myself, I went into the shoe
7 shop. The woman knew me. The woman took me to the
8 girls' shoes. I said to her that I was in the wrong
9 place, I had to wear boys' shoes. The woman didn't
10 think that was right. I didn't buy shoes that day. The
11 next day, my foster mother came with me. She said to
12 the woman I was to get boys' shoes.

13 I went to [REDACTED] Academy when I went into foster
14 care. My foster parents were never happy with my report
15 cards. My report cards were never that good because of
16 the way I was treated. I thought I was a waste of
17 space. If my foster father wasn't in when I got the
18 report card, I had to hand it to my foster mother
19 unopened. She would say to the foster father the report
20 wasn't worthwhile looking at, there was nothing good
21 about it. My foster parents never came to anything at
22 school. They didn't go to the parents' evening.

23 I didn't do well at school. The only things I was
24 good at were English and reading. If I was ever called
25 out to do anything, I froze. When I moved up to

1 ██████████ Academy, I was pulled out to do a sum.

2 I couldn't work it out, it was fractions. The teacher
3 asked me what school I had gone to. One of the boys
4 said I'd gone to an idiot's school. You got rapped on
5 the knuckles with a duster if you got your sums wrong.
6 I didn't have much fun at ██████████ Academy.

7 If I was reported for doing something, I'd get
8 called to the rector's office and be asked what was
9 going on or get the belt from him. I got on great with
10 the English teacher and the art teacher, although
11 I wasn't good at drawing. There were a couple of
12 teachers I didn't get on with. It seemed that I was
13 nearest one and the teacher would pick on me.

14 I got the same thing at ██████████ Academy that I'd
15 got at my other two schools. I got pushed down the
16 stairs one day. A girl at school who could stick up for
17 herself, she wasn't a bully, said she wasn't having any
18 of this. The children from school had a place where
19 they met up. This girl would fight the ones who were
20 bullies. The girl told me I was to meet her at 4 pm and
21 we were going to that place to get it sorted out.
22 I thought I was to hit the one who was bullying me.
23 I was panicking, shaking like a leaf. The girl said
24 this was what to do, and knocked the bully out. The
25 girl said that was it, the bully wouldn't do it again,

1 and she didn't.

2 When I was pushed down the stairs, the school sent
3 for my foster father. He knew the headteacher, the
4 rector. I was called to the rector's office. The
5 rector and my foster father were sitting there talking
6 and laughing. I was told I had made up the story. This
7 is what the rector said to the foster father. I hadn't
8 made it up. I had witnesses.

9 The other children would laugh at me and say it must
10 be nice not having a mum and dad. The children would
11 ask what had happened to my mum and dad, if my mum and
12 dad didn't want me or did they die. The children would
13 ask who I was with and say that the foster parents
14 weren't my mum and dad. The children called me stupid.
15 I didn't mix with other children. Certain things
16 I found hard to do. I couldn't settle. I couldn't wait
17 until I left school.

18 It was a release when it was the school holidays but
19 I had to be in bed for 7 pm. If I was outside, my
20 foster parent would open the window and shout for me to
21 come in. The pals I had then would start giggling.
22 They would shout up at the bedroom that I had been sent
23 to bed.

24 I would go out into the country. I went to Skalpsie
25 Bay. I'd sit in the sand dunes from 8 am to 6 pm to

1 keep away from my foster parents.

2 On my birthday, I'd be given a card and a wee thing.
3 Then it would be taken off me and put away.

4 One time when I was 13 or 14 years old, my foster
5 mother came downstairs with a big sack full of things.
6 I got quite excited until I realised they were to be
7 shown to me and put away. I got one thing out of the
8 sack. I asked my foster mother why she did that. She
9 never answered me.

10 My foster mother bought me a bracelet when I was 15
11 years old. It was lovely. Then my foster mother looked
12 at the bracelet and said it wasn't mine, it was for some
13 relation. I never got the bracelet.

14 At Christmas it was the three of us. My foster
15 mother made dinner for us. I still went to bed at the
16 usual time. I bought presents for my foster mother and
17 father. They took my things away.

18 My foster mother sent me to the High Kirk, which is
19 the Church of Scotland. My foster mother didn't go to
20 church. My foster parents weren't religious. I had to
21 wear a horrible hat and long coat to church. When
22 I said I didn't want to go, I'd be told to go. My
23 foster parents had a picture of William of Orange on the
24 wall.

25 The only thing I was good at was the Bible. I read

1 the Bible that much I won all the prizes at the Sunday
2 school. They would do a competition. I would be
3 hiding, saying not again. I read from the Bible in
4 church.

5 The welfare officer from Wilton House came to see me
6 at certain times. I never saw anyone else, like
7 a social worker. One time I asked the welfare officer
8 about my brother. She said that he didn't want to know
9 me. The welfare officer said he had been in a car crash
10 and he was so badly hurt he didn't want me to see him.
11 He hadn't been in a car crash. She fobbed me off about
12 him. My brother was told that I didn't want to see him.

13 The next time the welfare officer came to see me, it
14 was to tell me that my dad had died. She said he was
15 killed in a car crash. I burst out crying. The welfare
16 officer said she didn't know why I was crying, I didn't
17 even know him. It wasn't true that my dad had been
18 killed in a car crash. It had been suicide.

19 My older brother came to visit me. My foster
20 parents said that this was the last I'd see of him, he
21 would never be back. My foster parents tore up the
22 pictures of my brother. That made me really upset.
23 They were the only photographs I had. I never forgave
24 them for that. I never saw him again until 40 years
25 later.

1 The welfare officer's attitude to my brother was
2 that he was trouble. She was mixing him up with my
3 other younger brother, who was in quite a lot of bother.
4 The authorities wanted to keep us apart, no matter where
5 we were. My older brother left Wilton House at age 14
6 to go into the Merchant Navy. He said to me he would be
7 back to see me. He went back into care until he was 16
8 or 17 at another home. I always thought I would see
9 him. As the years went by, I thought I'd never see him
10 again.

11 When I was 14, I didn't know what a period was.
12 I hadn't had a period. The foster mother took me to the
13 doctors and said there was something wrong with me.
14 I felt like a freak, the way she spoke about me to the
15 doctor. The doctor was lovely. He asked the foster
16 mother if she'd told me anything about periods. The
17 foster mother said she had not, why should she? The
18 doctor ordered my foster mother out of the room and told
19 her to wait. The doctor asked me what the problem was
20 but I couldn't speak to him. The doctor didn't tell me
21 anything about periods at the time. I left school at 16
22 years old and I still hadn't had a period.

23 The only way I found out about periods was from
24 the farmer's wife who I used to visit. She would put
25 food out for me. One day she noticed I was very pale

1 and asked what was wrong. I told the farmer's wife that
2 I didn't feel well. I went to the toilet. I noticed
3 blood on my knickers. I thought I was dying. I was
4 taking that long the farmer's wife came to find me. She
5 explained it all to me. I didn't know how to use
6 sanitary towels.

7 I collapsed regularly at the factory where I worked.
8 I had really bad period pain. The boss sent me home
9 with one of the girls. The girl couldn't believe it
10 when my foster mother said to take me back to work, she
11 didn't want me in the house. The boss said for me to
12 lie down in the tea room with a cover until the pain
13 went away. I lay there until 4 pm when work was
14 finished. Every time I collapsed with period pains
15 I was always sent back to work by my foster mother.
16 When I didn't feel that good, my foster mother would say
17 that there was nothing wrong with me and send me out the
18 door.

19 I was always lucky with the dentist. He was a nice
20 person. He knew my foster parents.

21 When I was 14 or 15, I started to work in a boarding
22 house in the summer. I started work to get out of the
23 house and because my foster mother had said it was time
24 I got a job. I was asked back the next year. I worked
25 in quite a few of the boarding houses and then at the

1 chalets. I loved being out of the road. I got more
2 attention at the boarding house than I did at the foster
3 home. Any time when school was off I would go and help
4 in one of the boarding houses. I had to give my wages
5 to my foster mother.

6 Later I worked at the factory that made duffle
7 coats. I worked there for a few years. I earned quite
8 a lot of money that I had to give to my foster mother.
9 It was good working in the factory. That was a good
10 laugh. I enjoyed that. I got on with the older people.

11 I thought about running away. I knew I wouldn't get
12 very far. If I went to any of the foster parents'
13 relations, I would be sent back.

14 For the first week or so, everything seemed to be
15 quite nice and friendly. Then it seemed to me that
16 I couldn't do anything right. The foster mother put
17 food on your plate. One time she put a jelly-like thing
18 on the plate. I didn't want it. I had to sit at the
19 table to eat it. [REDACTED]

20 [REDACTED]
21 [REDACTED] Later I was told
22 I was eating too much and needed to eat less.

23 You didn't know how the foster mother was going to
24 be from one day to the next. My foster parents had
25 a son who had died when he was young. I didn't know

1 him. My foster mother's sister-in-law asked my foster
2 mother one day why did she take it out on me? She said
3 to my foster mother that my foster mother didn't let me
4 do things and to look at the way my foster mother
5 dressed me.

6 In the living room, my foster mother had a big
7 mirror. My foster mother would be admiring herself in
8 the mirror, putting her makeup on. She caught me
9 watching her and asked me why I was watching her.
10 I said I just wanted to know what she was doing. The
11 foster mother said she was making herself look beautiful
12 and that would never happen to me because I was ugly.
13 My foster father walked in and asked why I was crying.
14 My foster mother told him she had told me a few home
15 truths, that I'd never be anything and I'd never amount
16 to anything.

17 After that, the foster home seemed to be not very
18 nice. The foster mother was not maternal. I asked her
19 one time did she like me. She never answered me.
20 I tried to get closer to her. I thought if I came in
21 and did something for my foster mother or took something
22 in for her she might be all right. I bought my foster
23 mother flowers and a box of chocolates and took them in
24 to her. My foster mother asked if I'd done something
25 and that is why I'd brought her chocolates and flowers.

1 She shoved the chocolates and flowers aside. Nothing
2 I did was right, no matter how hard I tried.

3 My foster mother didn't make me feel good. She was
4 always lowering me in any way she could. My foster
5 mother admired herself. She wore beautiful clothes.
6 I thought about what my foster mother wore and what she
7 made me wear. One day, one of the neighbours was
8 surprised at what I was wearing. That was when I was
9 wearing the knitted dress. The neighbour said she could
10 give me something else to wear. That would have made
11 matters worse. When I did complain to my foster mother,
12 she would say I was ungrateful.

13 Quite often, my foster mother would buy me something
14 and take it off me. I wasn't good enough for whatever
15 she gave me. I was glad. It meant when I left I had
16 hardly anything to take. My older brother had bought me
17 two things. My foster parents gave the things away to
18 somebody else. It wasn't until years later that this
19 person told me that she'd had some of my things. She
20 put them into a charity place. She hated the thought of
21 having something that should have been mine.

22 My foster parents' wider family were okay at first.
23 I went down to Leeds where my foster mother's family
24 were. It didn't feel like a holiday. My foster mother
25 was always saying something about me. Her mother was

1 always pulling her aside. She asked my foster mother
2 why she was treating me the way she did. My foster
3 mother's mother was kind enough. She was the only one
4 who spoke to me on my own. She would make biscuits or
5 a cake for me. After I left foster care, I met my
6 foster mother's mother one time I was in Glasgow with my
7 husband. She asked how I was and handed me some money.

8 My foster mother had two brothers and a sister.
9 They were the same way, they didn't like me at all.
10 They would say I was lucky I had someone to take me.
11 When my foster mother's family came up to see her, I was
12 shoved aside. She would talk away. I was ignored. It
13 was as if I wasn't there.

14 My foster mother said I had to work because I had to
15 pay my foster parents. She got all the money back.
16 When I started work, I had to hand every penny over. My
17 foster mother was like that with her husband. He had to
18 hand his wage packet over. I stole from the foster
19 parents because I didn't have any money to buy sanitary
20 towels. My foster parents reported this to the welfare
21 officer. No effort was made by the welfare officer to
22 discuss it with me, to find out why I had done this.

23 I had been working for a couple of years when I said
24 to my foster mother that I wasn't giving her any money.
25 I don't know where I got the courage from to do it.

1 I still went out and spent money from my wages on my
2 foster parents. I bought a beautiful present for my
3 foster mother. She asked me what the hell it was.
4 Anything I bought for my foster parents was given to
5 people that I knew. Anything they bought me was given
6 away to people.

7 A neighbour asked me one time where did I go at
8 night. I said I was going to bed. The neighbour said
9 she meant where I went out to. I'd never been to
10 a disco. I wasn't allowed. I went out once. I was 15
11 years old. I was told I wasn't to go out and I went
12 out. It was the time of the hot pants. The girls in
13 the factory said we were all going to open our wage
14 packets and go and buy hot pants. I said I couldn't.
15 The girls talked me into it. I bought the hot pants,
16 took them home and hid them.

17 We were going out that night. I put the hot pants
18 on and something else on top of them. I was going out
19 the door when my foster father put his hands up my
20 skirt. He said to get the hot pants 'f'ing well off'.
21 He said I was not going out like that. As my foster
22 father walked out the door, I called him a 'dirty old
23 b'. I went out and thought I was being smart. Instead
24 of 7 pm I came in at 9 pm. It was the latest I'd ever
25 been out. I crept in the door. The light went on. The

1 foster parents said that was the last time I'd ever be
2 out. My foster father never did anything to me except
3 that once putting his hand up my skirt. After that, if
4 my foster mother wasn't there, I'd get out of the road
5 in case he did do something like that again.

6 Another time I went away to my foster mother's
7 parents in England. I was a fan of the Beatles. I had
8 pictures of the Beatles on the wall in my bedroom. My
9 foster father took it all down and put flowers up.

10 I felt that I was not part of the family. My foster
11 parents went to bingo one night, when my foster mother's
12 mum and her granddaughter were up. My foster father
13 came in, he was all happy he'd won at the bingo. My
14 foster father gave my foster mother money and he handed
15 money to the granddaughter. The mum asked where mine
16 was. My foster father said I was getting bugger all.
17 I got nothing. I was left out. He didn't want to give
18 me anything.

19 One night I went to use the bathroom downstairs.
20 I heard my foster parents arguing. I was scared to move
21 in case they heard me. I heard my foster father say to
22 send me back to the home, he didn't want me in the first
23 place and that was the best place for me. I went up the
24 stairs and cried.

25 There was no love from my foster mother.

1 A neighbour was in one night when I went up to bed.
2 I said good night to my foster mother but didn't get
3 an answer. The neighbour asked my foster mother did she
4 never talk to me or do things with me.

5 I had met my future husband when I was 17 years old
6 at the disco I had gone to with the girls from the
7 factory. I didn't like him at first. The first time my
8 foster parents saw my husband, they said he was
9 a jailbird. They ran him down, saying he wouldn't
10 amount to anything. My foster parents didn't have
11 anything nice to say about my husband. My husband came
12 to the door for me one time. He brought flowers and
13 chocolates for my foster mother. She flung them aside.

14 My future husband always wanted to take my hand when
15 we were out. I wouldn't allow it. I knew that there
16 were many folk who would tell my foster parents. My
17 foster parents saw us holding hands once. When I got
18 home, my foster mother called me a 'dirty so-and-so'.
19 She said if she saw me holding hands with a boy again,
20 I'd be in trouble. Years before, my foster parents had
21 brought their friend's son into the house. They asked
22 me if I'd like to go out with him. They brought him
23 over a few times. Every time he came over, we moved
24 further away from each other. My foster mother said
25 nobody would have me anyway.

1 One day I decided I wanted off the island. Most
2 nights I'd be crying. I couldn't take it any more.
3 I was fed up living with my foster mother. I thought
4 the sooner I could get out of the foster home the
5 better. I had no money. I met my foster mother's
6 sister-in-law. She asked if I'd anywhere to go. I said
7 I could go to my future husband's sister's. She handed
8 me an envelope with money in it. My future husband said
9 he wasn't forcing me to leave the island. He didn't
10 want me to split up from my foster parents. I left my
11 foster parents when I was 18 years old.

12 My future husband and I stayed at my husband's
13 sister's in separate beds in Glasgow. My foster parents
14 sent a policeman after me. He was my foster father's
15 nephew. The policeman came up to Glasgow. The
16 policeman said he was there to take me back to the
17 foster parents. I was that naive, I asked what I was
18 going back for. My brother-in-law said the policeman
19 couldn't take me away and if I didn't want to go back,
20 I would stay with them. The policeman turned to me and
21 said I'd end up a prostitute. My brother-in-law told
22 the policeman to get out.

23 Not long after that, we went back to my foster
24 parents to get my stuff. My foster mother wasn't in.
25 He wouldn't allow my sister-in-law in the house. My

1 foster father let me in to see what there was. There
2 was hardly anything, only about three items.

3 My husband and I worked in hotels on the mainland.
4 We got married. I was 19 years old and my husband was
5 21 years old. We didn't have much money. I worked in
6 one hotel and my husband worked in another. When we got
7 married, we went back to the hotel I was working in. It
8 just looked deserted. In the bar, there were drinks set
9 up and music playing. We were taken down to the big
10 function room by my boss. The lights went on and all
11 the staff were there. The tables were all done and
12 there was a wedding cake. The staff had raised money
13 for us. The boss gave us the best room in the house for
14 getting married. They were really good to us.

15 My husband and I came back to [REDACTED]. It was the
16 only place I could think of going. There was no place
17 elsewhere I could settle. We stayed in a caravan. My
18 foster mother came up to the caravan. She brought
19 a pram for me. I thought she was being nice to me. My
20 foster mother came back to the caravan the following
21 morning. She took the pram back.

22 When I had my first son, I went to my foster parents
23 to see if my foster mother would talk to me. I thought
24 surely they would be different, there was a child
25 involved. I was willing to say 'There's your grandson'.

1 My foster mother took me into the kitchen. It was
2 really hard. My son started crying. My husband went to
3 pick him up. My foster mother told my husband to get
4 his hands off the baby. My husband stood up and said he
5 wasn't taking any more of it but I could stay. If my
6 husband was going, my son and I were going too. I never
7 went back to my foster parents after that. When I met
8 people in the street, they told me my foster parents had
9 asked them to have nothing to do with my husband and I.
10 Some people stopped speaking to me, others didn't.

11 When my son was older and we saw my foster mother in
12 the street, my son would smile at her. My foster mother
13 would walk by. Someone said to her he was her grandson.
14 She replied that 'it' was nothing to do with her.
15 Later, my husband and I rented a house. I was just
16 along the road from where I'd stayed with my foster
17 parents. I could be hanging out the washing and my
18 foster mother would come along the road. When my foster
19 mother saw me, she would turn away.

20 I worked as a cleaner for 14 years for an old lady.
21 The old lady said that the first time I went to her
22 house, I was terrified. She was like a mother to me.
23 The lady said to me one day that I was like the daughter
24 she'd never had. She never had a family. The lady
25 loved my son and daughter. It was great for the 14

1 years I was with her. I got on well with the lady's
2 niece and brother. They were a nice family. When the
3 lady died, I thought I'm not going to the funeral, I'm
4 not family or anything like that. The lady's niece
5 asked me to come to the funeral. She said I was the
6 lady's family. The lady left me money, a tea set that
7 had always been special to me and some other things when
8 she died."

9 From paragraphs 152 to 161, 'Agnes' tells of how she
10 found her siblings and her mother, but discovered her
11 father had died.

12 Moving to paragraph 162 on page 34:

13 "Being in the home was regimental. I never felt
14 safe. I never looked at anyone. I always kept my head
15 down because I was scared of getting into trouble.
16 I hid to get away from it all. When I walk down the
17 street in [REDACTED], I don't hold my head up. I don't
18 want anybody to see me. [REDACTED]

19

20 [REDACTED] My foster parents made it worse.

21 I never learned to socialise with other people.
22 I still struggle with that today. I don't have friends
23 as I was never shown how to communicate with people.
24 I was never allowed to have an opinion.

25 I feel I haven't done anything with my life. I'd

1 like to have done more things, if I'd had more
2 confidence. I sometimes think what could I have been?
3 I might have had a career but I was put down everywhere
4 I went. I didn't do well at school at all. It was the
5 same at every school I was at. I didn't have friends at
6 school. Everyone knew you came from a home, living on
7 an island especially. Everybody knows everything there.

8 Throughout my life, I wished I had never been here.
9 I had thoughts of ending my life. Life has been
10 a struggle. There was no thought or care given to help
11 me learn how to cope with life after care. Many a time
12 I think about where I could be in life if I had stayed
13 in Wilton House and been chucked out from there.

14 The thing that affects me most is the separation
15 from my siblings, specifically my eldest brother. The
16 welfare officer told me he didn't want to see me.
17 I found out later that was a lie. I can never forgive
18 them for this. He missed out on my family growing up.
19 I never got to see him getting married. I don't like
20 when I him and I have to say goodbye. We're trying to
21 make up for lost time, which you can never do. I'm
22 angry at that.

23 I didn't know my other siblings. I knew nothing
24 about them. I've not been able to have the relationship
25 I would have liked to have with them. I blame the

1 authorities for that. If we'd been told about our other
2 siblings, maybe things would have been better, if we'd
3 got to know them more. It would have been nice to be in
4 their company in the home. [REDACTED]

5 [REDACTED]
6 [REDACTED]

7 [REDACTED]. When my grandchildren call me
8 gran, I think about my grandparents. I imagine what
9 they would have been like.

10 It's not just my life, it's my brothers' and
11 sisters' lives. They've had a hard life. We missed out
12 on a lot. At one time, my eldest brother and I thought
13 it was just him and I. I had grandparents, aunts and
14 uncles. We found out that we have loads of cousins too.
15 Our cousins have said it was well known that my eldest
16 brother and I would be seen marching down the street in
17 Hawick. I have met two of my cousins. I'm in touch
18 with another cousin on Facebook. It's a lovely feeling.
19 It's amazing because they all say I look like the
20 family. Unfortunately, I did not find out about all my
21 family until it was too late.

22 I had never seen a picture of me when I was young.
23 I didn't see one until I was in my 50s. When my
24 children were growing up, my son used to ask me why
25 I didn't have any pictures. We were never allowed any

1 pictures. Later, my daughter and I got some photos from
2 a lady from the home. When I saw the pictures,
3 I thought I looked like a boy with the haircut and
4 dungarees I had on.

5 When I went into foster care in [REDACTED] I saw kids
6 the same age as me who had a mum and dad. That upset
7 me, not having a mum and dad and not being able to say
8 what they were like. There was always something
9 missing. When I met my husband, I wasn't envious. He
10 had his mum but not his dad.

11 I don't know why I didn't leave foster care before
12 I did. I was frightened and I had nobody to turn to.
13 If it hadn't been for a relation of my foster father,
14 who said I shouldn't have to put up with it, why didn't
15 I leave, I probably wouldn't have put up with it. If
16 that relation had had the room, she would have taken me
17 in. I can't look in a mirror as I'm reminded of my
18 foster mother calling me ugly. I never felt loved by my
19 foster parents. I often wonder why they were foster
20 parents and why the home felt they were suitable to be
21 parents.

22 After I had left the foster family, their family
23 appeared one day. I was at the bank in [REDACTED]. They
24 were pointing at me, saying that was me. I gave them
25 a look and they turned away. I was glad I was able to

1 face up to them.

2 I asked my husband why he wanted to be with me. He
3 said because he loved me. Nobody had ever loved me
4 before. We are 48 years married. I had four children.
5 I lost one child. I have nine grandchildren. My foster
6 parents said the marriage would never work out. I have
7 a great family but I feel as if I'm not good enough.

8 When my husband and I were first married, my husband
9 asked the minister to christen my son. My foster
10 parents stepped in and said there was no way the
11 minister could do that because my son was a Catholic.
12 He wasn't. The minister said he couldn't christen my
13 child.

14 I was in the library in [REDACTED]. Someone tapped me
15 on the shoulder and asked if I was going to my dad's
16 funeral. It was my foster father's funeral. I said
17 I would be a hypocrite if I did and I didn't go.
18 I never called him dad.

19 I think about my time in care a lot. Sometimes
20 I wake up crying, thinking about things that happened.
21 I always had a fear of the curtains being closed at
22 night. I won't forget my time in care, it will always
23 be there. No matter how hard I try, there's always
24 something there, when I switch on the television or when
25 there's a film I'm going to watch."

1 Moving to paragraph 182 on page 38:

2 "My daughter tried to get my records for me. The
3 archivist at Hawick Heritage Centre found what we have.
4 The social work department could not find the records."

5 Now to paragraph 184:

6 "I don't want what happened to me and the others to
7 happen to kids nowadays. I like to think care won't be
8 like the way it was for me and the other children.
9 Children should have someone to talk to. We were only
10 children, we were human beings. Secondary Institutions - to be published

11 Secondary Institutions - to be published later

12

13

14 Secondary Institutions - to be published later. I don't know if it would be
15 easier nowadays to open up.

16 There wasn't enough done, especially when it came to
17 time to leave the home. When you were a certain age,
18 you were out. There wasn't enough support.

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

23 And the statement was signed by 'Agnes' on 21 August
24 2019.

25 LADY SMITH: Thank you very much.

1 MS RATTRAY: I think given the time we don't have time for
2 another read-in.
3 LADY SMITH: No, I don't think we do. I think we'll stop
4 now until 10 o'clock tomorrow morning. Do we start with
5 an oral witness?
6 MS RATTRAY: We do, yes.
7 LADY SMITH: Very well. I'll rise now until 10.00 tomorrow.
8 Thank you.
9 (3.55 pm)

10 (The Inquiry adjourned until 10.00 am
11 on Wednesday, 15 June 2022)

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