



## **Mental Health: Lennox Castle**

*Resident's perspective: Jimmy*

### **Howard**

Can you remember the day that you went into hospital?

### **Jimmy**

You see a man came to lift me but my father said that he would take me on the Saturday. I was supposed to go on the Friday, but my father said he would take me on the Saturday.

### **Howard**

Right, so did you know beforehand that you were going?

### **Jimmy**

No I didnae know. I thought it, I thought it was a day out.

### **Howard**

What

### **Jimmy**

It was a school, it was a school trip day and my father says you know you're going to have a day with me and I didn't know where I was going. So we went in the car and we went to George's Square. and then we took to the, the train he said you sit there and I'll go and get the tickets and I thought I was going back home again.

Then this lass comes up to me and she says are you James lappin – Yes - and she put her hand out and she says 'you've to come with me and your father's seen the doctor' Then he was away and I had to go to a villa.

### **Howard**

So what did you father explain to you?

### **Jimmy**

He never told me, never told me, never told me

### **Howard**

No, no very much.

### **Jimmy**

No, I don't think he was pleased with me. I truanted from school and learned nothing then, you know.

### **Howard**

Do you still get visitors?

### **Jimmy**

No, no

### **Howard**

What family do you have left?

### **Jimmy**

Er, five.

**Howard**

Who are they?

**Jimmy**

I can't remember, you know

**Howard**

Er, there's your nephew and, and nieces. What side of the family is that? Is that your mother's side?

**Jimmy**

Sister's

**Howard**

Your sister's. Right, but your sister died.

**Jimmy**

She left, she left some of her family

**Howard**

Did you have visitors regularly over the years?

**Jimmy**

When I was in Larbert my father used to come every fortnight and once I got older it was my sister used to come.

**Howard**

All right, was there a particular visiting day in Larbert?

**Jimmy**

Just Wednesday and Saturday

**Howard**

Right and what about here in Lennox Castle?

**Jimmy**

Come anytime. Drugs.

**Howard**

I believe there was a apperient day when you got medicine for your bowels

**Jimmy**

Oh yes

**Howard**

When was that?

**Jimmy**

Oh it was a while.

**Howard**

Do you remember what day of the week it was? Was it twice a week?

**Jimmy**

I think it was just a week you know

**Howard**

Right, and what would happen?

**Jimmy**

They used to give me medicine

**Howard**

Did you get a choice of what to take?

**Jimmy**

No

**Howard**

What were you given?

**Jimmy**

They were black, they were black, salts, syrup of senna, you could pick what you want you know.

**Howard**

You could pick what you wanted

**Jimmy**

I always, I took syrup of senna mostly. That sweet stuff.

**Howard**

Right. Did it taste better than the other ones?

**Jimmy**

It tasted all the same but I didn't like castor oil.

**Howard**

So did you get some of that?

**Jimmy**

Yes, oh aye.

**Howard**

So what would happen if you didn't want to take it?

**Jimmy**

They'd take you into, they'd take you into the kitchen and stand, stand with you 'til you take it you know.

**Howard**

So did it have a bad effect on you?

**Jimmy**

No, oh no. You just had pain you know

**Howard**

So you'd have pain from it?

**Jimmy**

A pain and you, you were ready for the toilet you know.

**Howard**

So it acted quick did it?

**Jimmy**

Oh yeah

**Howard**

Um I see you still smoke a bit.

**Jimmy**

Oh yes I started up when I was twenty.

**Howard**

Twenty aye. And have you always had a good supply of cigarettes?

**Jimmy**

Oh yes

**Howard**

Where do they come from?

**Jimmy**

They come from the, they came from the cupboard in the day room.

**Howard**

Hmm, did, did you get paid cigarettes as wages at any time at all?

**Jimmy**

No

**Howard**

No, you always got them no matter what.

**Howard**

Have you had a girlfriend while you've been in here? No?

**Jimmy**

No

**Jimmy**

No. I talk to them but I don't .....

**Howard**

Has there never been a woman that you've been pally with at the dancing or?

**Jimmy**

Aye, there was one but she died

**Howard**

Right

**Jimmy**

She used to say 'you are my boyfriend' when I was round about forty or fifty you know.

**Howard**

Ah, what was her name?

**Jimmy**

Barbara Gilchrist

**Howard**

Right and where did she stay?

**Jimmy**

She was in the villas but I didnae know which villa she was in, I didnae know.

**Howard**

Right, would you see her every day or?

**Jimmy**

Well no she.....at the dancing you see, Because she worked in the laundry

**Howard**

And would, could you not see her during the day at all?

**Jimmy**

No she was working in the laundry and I was, I was up in apartment two.

**Howard**

Right. And were you, were you allowed to meet at night.

**Jimmy**

No No

**Howard**

Why, why, why not?

**Jimmy**

I don't think we were allowed out at night.

**Howard**

Right, so you'd maybe see her once a week would that be?

**Jimmy**

Aye....when she was going down the road to her work LAUGH and when I was, when I was up to go in mine, apartment two.

**Howard**

So was there ever a time that you hoped that you'd have a girlfriend and get married or anything?

**Jimmy**

No no

**Howard**

No? Did that not appeal to you or

**Jimmy**

Oh no

**Howard**

How was that then? Most people .....

**Jimmy**

Because, because if you marry you've a lot of worries, with work, and in doing things the house you know

**Howard**

Hmm, did you not fancy that?

**Jimmy**

Oh no, you're better single LAUGHS.....too old.

**Howard**

In the wards there were a lot of men who are pally with other men. Did you see that?

**Jimmy**

What, talk to one another?

**Howard**

No more than talk together. They were in bed together and things.

**Jimmy**

No, not as far as I know

**Howard**

No? None of that happened in any of the wards that you were in?

**Jimmy**

No, no

**Howard**

Over ....How many times in year would you go out? Just the once or?

**Jimmy**

Twice.

**Howard**

Twice

**Jimmy**

He started to take me out in July and then he said he'd way up for September and then December, three.

**Howard**

Hmm, and when you were out at times when it wasn't Christmas what would you do then?

**Jimmy**

Stay here LAUGH

**Howard**

No but when you were home, when you went to your nephew or niece's, what would you do?

**Jimmy**

I used to go, they used to go and visit other ones you know, aunties and that, you know.

**Howard**

Right, so was it a good time for you to go out?

**Jimmy**

Oh yes, I enjoyed it there.

**Howard**

Aye, and how, how did you get on with your relatives?

**Jimmy**

All right.

**Howard**

Was there no tension or hassle or?

**Jimmy**

No

**Howard**

Do you think they enjoyed your company?

**Jimmy**

Well I hope so LAUGHS

**Howard**

Everyone was always friends?

**Jimmy**

I'm very quiet you know. You have to watch what you say to people so

**Howard**

Aye. Looking back

**Howard**

Do you think you've had quite a reasonable life?

**Jimmy**

Oh aye, institutional life! You can't do nothing for yourself when you be in these places, that's what I say.

**Howard**

That's what you think?

**Jimmy**

Aye I do, too much worries if you go outside.

**Howard**

Could you think there might be some better place for you, for you to stay?

**Jimmy**

I wouldnae like to go into another home because you've got to start over again, get to know, get to know the staff and nurses and that and you don't know what kind of place it is, you know. Do you know what I mean, talk to them.

**Howard**

Hmm, say you'd been born in the last few years instead of in 1910 do you think things would be very different?

**Jimmy**

Aye I think so.

**Howard**

Hmm, what would you think would have been happening then?

**Jimmy**

You, you'd...you'd be looking for somebody to try and help you to get things straightened out for you, you know what I mean, get a wee job and go back home. No I don't think that would ever happen. Too old now. Oh, when I was younger I used to say 'when is my time up' to my people.

**Howard**

When's your time up. Aye, so you sort of when is your time going to finish, living in the hospital.

**Jimmy**

I never thought it was so long

**Howard**

Hmm

**Jimmy**

I think after my mother died everything seemed to fall away, do you know what I mean.

**Howard**

Hmm

**Jimmy**

Life seemed to fall away

**Howard**

How do you view yourself, somebody with a kind of slight disability, but you know you can hold a good conversation, how do you see yourself in terms of other people?

**Jimmy**

Doesn't feel anything. I just talk, if they talk to me I talk to them, know what I mean, but I don't make great conversation, you know what I mean. You might, you might get mixed up when you're talking you know what I mean, get things wrong in your speech.

**Howard**

Hmm, because me talking to you, you know, you don't seem out of sorts very much at all, and you seem you know as if you could maybe stay outside no problem. Do you no feel that at all yourself?

**Jimmy**

I do at times but what I do is, what am I going to do - just walk away?

**Howard**

Do you think they should build more hospitals like this or do you think they should not...

**Jimmy**

Oh yes

**Howard**

Hmm, do you think this has been an okay place to stay for you?

**Jimmy**

Oh yes

**Howard**

Hmm

**Jimmy**

Life is too bad, too many murders now in Glasgow.

**Howard**

Hmm

**Jimmy**

...in your home town

**Howard**

What, you're a fair age now, what are you kind of hopes for the future? What?

**Jimmy**

Nothing

**Howard**

Is there nothing you'd still like to do with your life?

**Jimmy**

No.....just have some folk to look after me. Have, take an easy time.



**Howard**

So you're quite enjoying life now?

**Jimmy**

Oh yes.

**Howard**

Do you enjoy life now more than in the past?

**Jimmy**

Yes, I'm getting older and settled down. I'm settled down now.

**Howard**

Thanks very much then James.