

1 JUN 1984

Lily  
MRS H. ALEXANDER

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DUMBARTONSHIRE.

Dear M<sup>rs</sup> McQueenie

reading your  
story in the Sunday Mail, I  
cried, I cried for you and  
your poor sister, and I cried  
because of the terrible memories  
it brought back. In 1944 my  
mother died of Tuberculosis, my  
father was in the army so my  
two brothers my sister and I  
were taken to Quarters Homes.  
my brothers ages 10 and 8.  
were put in cottage no 9. my  
sister age 7 and myself age 5  
were sent to cottage no 1.  
our house mother was Miss  
Cooper. like you I will never  
forget my first meeting with

2.

that woman, the rest of the children were waiting in the playroom to meet us, they were seated on chairs that went all the way round the walls of the room, there was a long table the length of the room the table was bare except for a large black strap. Miss Cooper told us to tell everyone our names and where we came from, then she asked us if we could recite anything from the Bible, we couldn't, but I told her I knew a poem, she told me to let the others hear my poem, I did, and the next thing I knew I was

3.

being thrashed with that strap she was like a mad woman shouting that I was a filthy little heathen, you see being only 5 I didn't know that my poem which I had picked up from older children was dirty, I didn't even know what it meant, that was the first of many thrashings, and from then on I was always called the heathen, I think it was the shock of that scene which turned my sister into a bad wretch for she never was before, and she suffered terribly for it, we only saw our brothers once a month on visiting day, when we went

4.

to the big hall where our  
granny waited for us, that first  
visiting day we begged her to  
take us away, and I remember the  
tears streaming down her face as  
she left us, I was 11 when I  
left that place, but I have never  
forgotten it, or that terrible  
woman, I am glad someone has  
at last spoken of the misery of  
those times, and I am truly thankful  
that children nowadays are looked  
after and loved.

Good luck to you,  
Sily Alexander.