



Lewis Alexander Connolly  
Born 3rd May 1988  
At Stobhill General Hospital  
Glasgow

Lewis.

I'm writing this retrospectively starting from when you were born (or maybe a bit before) and intend to leave you some kind of record of your life or at least the part of it that you were too young to remember yourself.

It's not intended to be terribly grand, just my best attempt at telling you some of the events in your life that tend to get forgotten - so you'll get some idea of what you were like as a baby, notes on your development the things that made us laugh and why we love you so much.

Mum

Thursday, 20th, Oct '94.

I'd like to tell you the one about the Mummy & Daddy who knew they were going to have a little boy called Lewis - way before he was born.

At about five months into pregnancy I had a test (routine) called A.F.P. which can tell if there is an abnormality in the unborn baby = of course. Sometimes the results are WRONG.

Dad was down in London on a course or at a conference or something when I got the phone call from the doctor.

"Yes it's positive, you'll have it redone, a formality!"

I was devastated but managed to plod on (not the easiest of pregnancies) while waiting for the results of the re-run.

Same again - an even higher reading. Hardly surprising of course (I told myself) since I was something like twenty-twenty-two weeks pregnant and

the protein levels do increase as the pregnancy progresses.

I was aware of what the consequences might be - at best a child with nothing more than a mole on his spine. At worst - a spina bifida baby who would not lead a normal life.

I was to go to Stobhill Hospital for further tests - of course I wanted to know what the worst scenario might be but I had made up my mind about any further action to be taken. Well, we had together your Dad and I, had decided that given the choice we would have you no matter what - after all, you had been causing such a fuss, kicking and moving about, just whenever we decided it was bedtime - you decided it wasn't.

Anyway, unknown to me, a further test was to be carried out 'amniocentesis' this time. Excuse the spelling. This test is more

accurate but also carries the risk of miscarriage. Fortunately you were lying 'placenta praevia' (all this jargon) and the test couldn't be done, so Dad and I were sent to the Queen Mother Hospital for a 'High Resolution Ultrasound Scan' this was 'State of the Art' technology - stuff that wasn't available at Stobhill, and what do you know - everything was fine!

Yes - and in the process of running this test the doctor said she could probably tell us the sex of the baby.

Of course we were both relieved and delighted to hear we were to have a lovely healthy baby - but a boy as well! Just what we always wanted! From now on whenever we talked about you or to you, you were always known as Lewis - even before you were born.

I had been pregnant before you know (Julie & Paul) but nothing like this. I had the most awful sinus problems almost from day one. Dad took to sleeping in the spare room to avoid my snoring. I had burning, itchy hands and feet, I would get up in the night and go and stand in the bathroom, the tiles were so cool. On a bad night I would run some cold water into the bath and soak my feet.

I would toss and turn all night, so often I would have a quiet evening only to go to bed and you'd be kicking and re-arranging yourself, I couldn't sleep a wink. And the heartburn, that was something else. Fortunately though, that didn't last forever. I was huge - about six days overdue you arrived.

# The Day before the 'Big Event'

2nd May

Dad and I wanted to go for a bit of a walk, it was the holiday weekend and I had my bag packed ready in the boot of the car just in case, for the last week or so that bag went everywhere with me, just in case.

We had been quite keen on walking before you were born when I was six months pregnant you did three munros in one day - in utero. This however soon became a thing of the past - I was getting bigger and was getting tired by the minute - I couldn't even see my feet.

Anyway, we drove out to Carbeth, one of our favourite local haunts and walked a small section of the West Highland Way. During the walk I started to "go into labour" although only mildly. The day was lovely, bright and cool. I was able to time my

contractions although they were still very far apart, they were very regular. Even so, they were so mild we chose to ignore them and later they did slow down to become very irregular again but I'm sure that the whole time your Dad thought they were "Braxton Hicks", a form of false labour, or that I was having him on.

Anyway we completed our walk and spent the rest of the day doing nothing in particular.

(Our last day of freedom)

Lewis makes his debut..

3rd May '88

OK, this was it.

Daddy was getting ready for work, he used to give me a cup of tea in bed in those days - every morning, and this was no exception.

I got up to go to the loo and before I got there I discovered that you were well on the way. Floods of amniotic fluid later - the ambulance was a thing of the past for routine deliveries - I was transported to hospital for the big event by a rather tense first time father. (Oh dear, he had to take a day off!)

Well, here we are after a mad rush of regular contractions at short intervals arriving at the hospital and then - nothing. Just like you that is, I guess you thought you might as well start as you would continue to be - contrary. Changed your mind thinking now maybe wasn't

such a good time after all.

The hospital staff didn't agree so one prostaglandin pessary later the contractions started, slowly at first, to get under way.

At this point I think I must say that I was strongly in favour of the "Natural Childbirth" until, that is, the pain dictated otherwise. I was given pethadin which made me a bit drowsy but you had decided this was it - so no rest for me.

Daddy was ever so good dispensing Gas & Air with large dollops of encouragement - all this in a "Parker Knoll" recliner. When your head was about to be born I transferred to a "Birthing Chair" very in. Anyway after lots of hard work from you and some from Daddy (well, he was there!) you arrived at 16-11 hrs. Rather messy, a bit bruised and battered but absolutely beautiful

and totally perfect. You were really animated - even then. All hands everywhere, waving all about you.

Now for some fun - the nurse says she's going to weigh you and check you out but Daddy won't let you out of his sight. He trots off after the nurse (abandons me!) and I'm left totally alone but very, very happy. Next thing he's running back to tell me how much you weigh-in at - nine pounds four oz almost. AMAZING. I didn't think it was possible. Julie was 7lb 9oz and Paul was only 7lb. Obviously the Connolly influence right from the start.

## Going Home

Quite an eventful day, so here goes. Before being discharged from hospital you were to be examined by the paediatrician to ensure you'd be OK before leaving. Mostly everything was fine - you were slightly jaundiced but not badly and had been feeding OK. When you were born you had quite a large birthmark on your head - the comments this caused were rather amusing. I said that it didn't matter as your hair would cover it when it grew in but the paediatrician said I'd have to let you know as you'd not be able to join a monastery in case you had to shave your head!

Now after lunch Daddy was to come and collect us to take us home - I had packed bags with our coming home clothes and had told Daddy the night before where he'd find them. As a parting shot I had asked him to bring the carrycot too, in case you were

sleepy on the way home. (13 miles between Stobhill & Kilsyth)

Daddy arrived only very slightly late which didn't matter as I had decided to give you a last minute feed before we left the hospital. I was sat in a chair next to my bed with the curtain drawn around us while I fed you. Daddy's head popped round the curtain and I was really pleased to see him. Where were our bags I asked. BLANK LOOK. Our bags? OH - DEAR

Daddy wanted us to go home in our pyjamas! I couldn't believe he'd forgotten everything and pulled back the curtain to look round for them, convinced this must be a practical joke. I'm afraid he really had forgotten and was amazed when I suggested he went back to fetch them. "Couldn't we go as we were" "Did I know that it would take more than an hour" etc etc.

Anyway, eventually he did go and

you didn't have to wear the hospital gown home after all!

Next when we arrive at the car - YES - he's remembered the carrycot - GREAT - but no sheets, blankets or anything. I declined allowing you to rattle around in the enormous empty thing. All this seemed a bit trying at the time - but we've had lots of laughs recalling these events and I never missed the opportunity telling anyone about it.

### Feeding

This wasn't your best subject! I hadn't fed Julie & Paul myself, I guess I was very young when I had them and besides nobody did that very much then.

So we were both beginners

You'd seemed to be feeding well in the hospital but now this was for real. You didn't want to stop!

You'd suck & suck and fall asleep!!

Then I'd try to put you down for a nap but as soon as I tried to you'd be awake again. How could this go on? Day and night this continued and you cried if you didn't get your way, I was like a zombie and really needed some sleep - I didn't get a proper night's sleep until you were seven months old.



## Defaecating.

You were really big on this. Lots of breast-fed babies have really loose bowels (Do you really want to continue reading this?) But not all babies do explosive 'JOBBIES'. I remember at least one occasion when you'd be lying on the changing mat without a nappy (Only while I cleaned you and fetched a clean one to put on etc.) What a problem this would turn out to be - you would just EXPLODE! It shot out and hit the wall. I didn't know what to do - it

went everywhere. I'd try to clean it up, all over the changing mat, the carpet, the wall where it had started to run down YEUCH!

I got to be the quickest nappy changer I know - I couldn't stand cleaning up the mess.

Eventually we managed to control these episodes by reducing the lactose intake that seemed to be the cause of them.

### Glasgow Garden Festival '88

We went to the Garden Festival two or three times and spent more than half of this time in the "Feeding tent".

You were still quite small when we went here so were still being fed on demand. This caused quite a few interruptions to our walks around the grounds but it was a really good summer and we just kept going back until we had seen everything.

## SKYE - Autumn '88

Your first holiday, and boy - did it rain!

Skye is one of those places where people expect rain. In fact I had been to Skye once before and had reasonably good weather. I guess I was rather naïve expecting a re-run of this.

On holiday we were four, You, Paul, Daddy and me. We had a lot of good walks, you saw your first seals and we stayed in an old stone cottage.

You didn't say whether or not you enjoyed yourself!

## BABY'S FIRST CHRISTMAS

Not quite eight months old, but you did have a lovely time - playing with wrapping paper and empty boxes.

Paul had given you a mallet and knock-through peg set - you loved to eat the mallet. Perhaps this was the onset of your Oral phase. (Freudian theory) - more about this later.

Anyway for dinner the whole family including Julie and Grandpa Allout would arrive and this was the first of many happy Christmases in Horsburgh Avenue.

### FIRST BIRTHDAY.

Firstly I'd like to mention that as you had still been having a breast feed once a day long after you had started solids - I had made up my mind that come May third '89 there would be no more.

I didn't have to employ heavy "tactics" you decided that it was time to give it up just about a week short of your birthday.

By this time you had loads of teeth anyway so enough was enough.

You had a birthday tea-party, only without the tea.

I had re-iced the top-tier of our wedding cake for the event. It's traditional to save one's top tier for

the firstborn's christening, so since you weren't to be christened we decided to save it for your first birthday instead. We all survived! It really is quite an event to celebrate a first birthday with ones own child although it must be said that not everyone else is quite as enthusiastic.

RECAP - the first year.

Lots of hard work  
Lots of sleepless nights.  
& Lots of joy & love.

My earliest memories with you are set in the front room at home. This was the 'smart' room so this is where the HI-FI was.

I had just recently bought the CD of Bruce Hornsby & the Range and would dance around with you in my arms to the track 'Look Out any Window'.  
This was, at this point in my life, -

the happiest time I could remember?  
You were only days/weeks old  
and I thought that I had everything  
in my life that I could possibly  
want. A happy marriage, a  
beautiful home and now we could  
share all this with our darling  
"Baby Loons". This nickname  
happened quite by chance - I would  
call you this affectionately, often  
when alone with you but then  
when Daddy heard it he thought it  
was great - shortened it to Loon -  
sometimes extended to Loonsworthy -  
whatever would take his mood.

Sorry it stuck - rather confusing  
as when we moved to the North  
east we were to discover it was  
Doric for 'boy' or 'lad'.

Anyway, teething hadn't been a  
complete nightmare - some  
sleepless nights but nothing moment-  
ous and weaning wasn't too bad  
either - in fact you were such a  
hungry child that you really did

thrive on solids.

Your development was about average, sitting up around six/seven months and you were a great crawler. It soon became evident that we'd have to have indoor (at home) and special (going out) clothes because you crawled around so much that you'd wear holes in the knees of your trousers.

Daddy caught you at your first attempts putting yourself to your feet on the 'kist' in the front room.

You were heavy!, so this couldn't have been an easy task - we're talking about 'Sumo' wrestler, you know the sort of thing!

It soon became clear that you were a perfectionist and entertainer all rolled into one. If you tried to do something and didn't succeed you'd really keep at it until you got it right, once it was right - it was old hat. Most of the fun was watching you try out new things though. Like when you'd try to get up and we

would watch the sheer determination that would go into everything you did - and if we thought it was funny and you caught us laughing you'd play to the crowd and would repeat it simply to entertain!

Walking - this wasn't something that worried you too much. As I said earlier you were a crawler and it seemed to us that you were of the opinion that you didn't need to walk 'cos you could get around just fine on your knees. So I'm afraid that you were a ripe old thirteen months before you joined the ranks of the bipeds.