

Witness Statement

Leicestershire Police Force

Name: Patricia Cameron

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Occupation : Nurse

I am Gerry McCanns oldest sister, he is the youngest of five children. I'm married to Sandy Cameron and we have an adult son.

Gerry is married to Kate Healy and they became a couple after a trip to New Zealand in 1997 and married in 1998. They have three children, Madeleine, to whom Sandy and I are godparents, and the twins Sean and Amelie. Kate was an obstetrician first before becoming an anaesthetist, Gerry accompanied Kate to New Zealand and they began their relationship there.

Initially Kate and Gerry lived in Glasgow, before Gerry was transferred to Leicester. We used to see each other regularly when they lived close here in Glasgow and I can confirm that we continued to see them more or less every two months after they moved. We are a very united family and where are always there for each other when necessary. Kate and Gerry went to live in Amsterdam with Madeleine before the birth of the twins. Madeleine adapted well, she went to a creche once a week as well as to swimming lessons. Kate was quite unwell during her pregnancy with the twins and many members of her family would take turns to go and help Kate and Madeleine.

I would often visit them with my mother, after my father died, and we would normally stay for a week, coinciding with visits to my son at university, Madeleine liked to come with us.

I remember hearing about Madeleines disappearance by phone on the night of 3rd May 2007. I usually go to bed late but I was particularly tired that night and went to bed early. I was woken by the phone ringing at about 23.30. It was Gerry telling me that Madeleine had been taken. He was very upset on the phone, it was the worst phone call I have had in my life. remember asking him for contacts of people in Portugal so that we could call them. Gerry was in no state to say much. I tried to remain calm for him, I suggested that he contact the British Embassy and I remember him telling me that he had spoken to the local police but they were not taking the situation seriously. I remember Gerry saying that they did not treat the matter with urgency and only stated that Madeleine must have left on her own and that she would be back later. It was so frustrating, Madeleine did not do things like that, she was not that kind of girl.

Gerry is normally very calm and serene, he has a logical perception of things, but he was

hysterical ? he was shouting. He mentioned the possibility that that she could have been taken by a paedophile, I tried to calm him but there was nothing I could say to help him. I had never seen him so out of control. The pain and the anguish ? it was the worst scenario imaginable, the waiting was unbearable.

In total frustration, I contacted our local police to ask for help and advice but unfortunately they were not able to help us.

Sandy began to search for phone contacts on the computer and there were phone calls back and forth to Portugal and to the Embassy in Lisbon. I think Kate had called her aunt and uncle. I was left with the task of informing our family here. As my mother is quite vulnerable and fragile I decided to give her the news personally. That was one of the worst things I have ever had to do. We sat in her apartment feeling incredulous, wondering what to do next. I feel the necessity of contacting the media and called the BBC, gave an interview to a reporter and afterwards there were more reporters and more interviews. Sandy stayed at home to coordinate things. We tried desperately to get plane tickets. It was not possible to get a flight from Glasgow, the only solution was to fly from Manchester.

We went to Manchester and stayed at a friends house before catching the first flight of the morning, on Saturday 5th May 2007.

We arrived in Portugal on Saturday morning, where a friend lent us a car to use and we went to Praia da Luz. My first impression was that everything was busy, but there was also a surreal sensation of passivity. Kates mother and father were already there.

We stayed for 3 months, initially returning home for a few days in the middle of June in order to deal with financial affairs and work related subjects. We were there to offer our help and support, Sandy and I stayed in an apartment that also served as an office. Sandy dealt with the correspondence and I helped in the kitchen and with cleaning. In the afternoons we would go out with the children, I didnt think it was a good idea for them to be in the creche for the whole day, we tried to maintain a routine in order to give them a sense of normality.

Every day was the same as the previous one ? the same questions about whether there was any news, what developments had there been in the case, but we were there to provide support when necessary.

I remember that they had weekly meetings with a series of persons, the Portuguese treated Kate and Gerry cruelly. One minute they would help them and the next moment they turned on them, making them arguidos.

When we left in the middle of June we felt dreadful because we did not want to leave them, both Gerry and Sandy cried at the airport and I tried very hard to remain strong. Our only comfort was knowing that there were others travelling out to take our place and support Gerry and Kate.

When we went back for the second time at the end of June to attend our sons graduation, it was even more difficult. I wanted them to come back so that they could get away from all the negativity and so that they could achieve some degree of normality and could feel the love and support of their family and friends, but they refused, wanting to stay where Madeleine had been seen for the last time in order to feel her closeness, it was heartbreaking.

Sandy found them a house outside of the Ocean Club to try to give them the stability that they needed.

Madeleine was a normal girl, she loved being Sean and Amelies older sister. Being the first daughter and due to the difficulties in conceiving her, she was very pampered by her parents. Madeleine is happy, very sure of herself, friendly, open and serene. Madeleine is much loved and desired by the whole family.

Madeleine began to play tennis, she had lessons in Syston. She was also learning to swim ? in fact she is a very good swimmer. Before she disappeared she was keen to start school. She a very intelligent little girl who loved to read books, who loved participating in activities with the family and who was learning to play cards.

Madeleine would never have gone off with anyone, she was not the kind of girl to disappear.

Madeleine generally slept well at night, although before the birth of the twins she used to get up and go to Kate and Gerrys bed. This situation led to a bonus point system being established if she stayed in her bed all night, although sometimes the twins would go to their parents? bedroom. The children would generally go to their parents bed because they were thirsty or wanted one of the parents, normally Kate. The children have a good routine, to which they have been accustomed since birth. The twins go to the creche two mornings per week and Madeleine would go to reading lessons as preparation for school.

This whole situation has been like living a nightmare, a horror film, it is difficult to live in this situation. It is difficult for me to believe it, one does not expect that our children would be taken or that someone robs a child from us.

The nightmare continues because Madeleine is still Missing and because of the fact that the arguidos status has not been lifted yet. The interest by the media is a difficult factor to bear, Kate and Gerry continue their campaign in the UK for the introduction of an alert system. They recently went to the States which meant that I came to stay with the twins. Normal life does not continue for them nor for any of us. I find it appalling that I was not heard nine months ago. None of us remember having been asked questions at that time. I know with all my heart that Kate and Gerry are completely innocent. For the, all of this situation is a torture. We request

that their arguido status be removed so that the authorities can concentrate on their responsibilities in the disappearance of Madeleine.

The following statement was elaborated as a response to questions raised by me on behalf of Kate and Gerry.

As Gerrys oldest sister, I have spent much time with them and their children, and as I said earlier in this statement, the children have a good routine and there was no change in routine with respect to their bed time. The children go to bed at about 19.00 after dinner, playing, bathing, washing their faces and brushing their teeth.

Normally they listen to two or three stories before going to sleep.

The children are very active during the day, they get up very early at around six/seven in the morning and generally go to Kate and Gerry's bed. Even at the weekend the children do not stay in bed for longer and do not sleep during the day. Madeleine, in particular, totally rejected the idea of sleeping during the day.

As far as I know the children did not wake up frequently at night, there could have been occasions when they went to see Kate and Gerry. It depends upon the time the children were with them or were sent back to their rooms.

With regard to medication, I only remember them being given 'Carpol' (sic) (paracetamol) to lower their temperature and certainly never to make them sleep ? never.

With regard to punishment, Kate and Gerry used the 'naughty corner' which gives the child the opportunity to think about his/her actions before saying sorry. I never saw any form of physical punishment by Kate or Gerry.

Kate always managed well with the 3 children, it is an exhausting work to have children, but Kate always kept them occupied with activities or invited other children to come and play.

Madeleine has never told me that she was unhappy. She was alert, happy, a normal child and much loved by many.

Gerry is a competitive man, when he was young he had to chose between athletics and football. He was organised, motivated and this has continued throughout his medical career. Gerry is ambitious but with his feet set on the ground, he will never forget his roots or where he came from.

Kate is stronger than Gerry in certain situations. Kate and Gerry have an equal for equal relationship and she does not hesitate to say what she is thinking. I suppose that Kate and Gerry form a very solid couple.

Source: http://www.mccannpjfiles.co.uk/PJ/PATRICIA_CAMERON.htm