I was born in 1948 and, according to the people I knew as my grandparents, whobrought me up, I was subsequently adopted.I should explain that my adoptive parent s broke up when I was about 3.5 years old, which is why I was brought up by my grandparents.

According to my original birth certificate, obtained under NSW adoption laws, I was born at the Women's Hospital in Crown Street, Sydney. However, my grandparents always told me I was born at St Margaret's Hospital which, at the time I was born, was located in Bourke Street, Surry Hills, and was run by the Sisters of Saint Joseph. I cannot explain this discrepancy, except to say that my grandparents at the very least, would have got their information from someone in an official capacity at the time in the NSW adoption bureaucracy. I have a vague recollection that I was told my adoptive parents collected me from St Margaret's, but I am not certain of that.

Furthermore, I cannot explain why the person listed as my mother on my birth certificate, , 24 years old, born in Goulburn NSW, appears never to have existed.

Despite extensive efforts to trace her, including assistance from the Salvation Army Special Search Service, I have been unsuccessful. My own searches have revealed that there is no record of birth, marriage or death in NSW.

I can nevertheless advise that, according to a copy of the consent for adoption which of Rossi Street, Hamilton Street, NSW" signed, she stated that she belonged "to the Roman Catholic Religion". There is no such street in Hamilton NSW, and there never was, which presumably would not have been a difficult thing for the bureaucrats of the time to have discovered. Yet this apparently false information (both the name of the person and the address information) appears on a document of the Supreme Court of NSW, dated 29th June, 1948, and was duly signed by , an official of the said Court.

So, for years now, I have had to live with the fact that I do not know anything about my natural mother, and that this is so because my official birth certificate, issued by the Registrar General's Office of NSW, contains false information. This has left a painful gap in the information about who I am and where I came from.

I can understand that the standards for personal identification in 1948 were lower than they are now. However, I think it is incredible that a pregnant women could have gone to a hospital, perhaps, as I have been told was common, lived and worked within the precincts of the hospital prior to giving birth, and then given birth to a baby, without those running the place having had solid evidence of who this person was.

I would ask the committee to seek information about the following:

1. Around the time of my birth, was there a culture and practice in the NSW bureaucracy which allowed or ignored the falsification of information which appeared on official birth certificates?
2. Was the Catholic Church involved in providing such false information, which the bureaucracy accepted without following due process?

3. Is it possible, even after all the time which has elapsed, that records still exist which would lead to the identification of my natural mother, and the mothers of other people who may have been similarly affected?

I would gladly forgo answers to questions 1. and 2. for an answer to question 3.

Paul Carberry
26th July, 2011