

Scottish Child Abuse Inquiry

Witness Statement of

BLQ

Support person present: No

1. My name is BLQ My date of birth is 1947. My contact details are known to the Inquiry.

Life before going to boarding school

2. I was born in Glasgow. My mum's name was and she worked as a housewife. My dad was called and he was a builder and property owner. I have three siblings, two sisters and one brother, and they are all older than me. In age order they are , she is seven or eight years older than me. My older brother is around six or seven years older and . She is around five years older than me.
3. I initially went to a pre-school in Pollockshields called Mrs Berry's when I was four years old. The family then moved to Bearsden and I went to Bearsden Academy for a year. Then we moved back to Pollockshields and I was sent to Albert Street Primary School for eighteen months. At the age of eight I was sent to a boarding school for boys called Crawfordton House in Moniave that was about twenty miles from Dumfries. This was a private prep school and I was there for four and a half years.
4. My young life was based around school. I didn't see much of my parents once I started at Crawfordton House. I don't know why that school was chosen. I felt I should have gone to a Glasgow school to get to know Glasgow instead. I never asked my parents and I couldn't have spoken to my dad about it in any case. My older brother

had been there before me. My two sisters also went to a different boarding school when they were thirteen.

Crawfordton House, Moniave, Dumfriesshire

5. This school was not a good experience for me. It was an all-boys school and the other boys at the school were from all over Scotland and not from Glasgow where I was from. I came out of that school with one friend, [REDACTED] whose family happened to be known to my family. School holidays were quite lonely and the kids I knew in Pollockshields were back in school when I was on holiday. I had a feeling of terror of going back to Crawfordton to start a new term. I didn't want to go back. It was just the thought of going away again, but on the other hand there was nothing going on at home either.
6. The boys ranged in age from eight to thirteen. Me and my brother [REDACTED] weren't in the school at the same time. He left the school just before I arrived. He went onto Merchiston Castle School in Edinburgh.
7. Crawfordton was built in the Gothic style and it looked huge to me then. I went back to see it with my brother-in-law who was also a former pupil when it was closed down twenty years or so ago to see if we wanted to take anything. It looked so small. I had no emotional reaction to it. The building is still there now. It became an international school and I believe it is now a private house. I don't know how many children were at the school, but it was all boys apart from [REDACTED]
[REDACTED] Her older sister was there before her too. They both played all the sports that the boys did.
8. You walked in through the front door and there were stairs up and you walked into a hall and the Head's study was to the left. There was a classroom next to it and there were classrooms below on the ground floor. There were changing rooms and a large bath for us to jump into after rugby. Upstairs were the dormitories.

9. In terms of staff I remember a teacher called Oswald Groser who lived on the premises in a turret. I was never taught by him. He was tall and thin. He was weird and just strange. He always had an apple on his mantelpiece and the room smelled of apple.
10. There were pupils who were known as prefects and sub-prefects in the school. I don't remember them wearing any special badge that showed they were a prefect. They must have been chosen by the staff or by the headmaster. They could report you for bad behaviour, but couldn't punish you. You would know they could report you. There was a captain of the school who was a senior pupil and as there was just one he was effectively the head boy of the school.
11. Senior boys bullied the younger ones, but nothing dramatic and they didn't bully me as I was too tall. I was bigger than them. There wasn't a system of fagging whereby a junior boy has to perform tasks for a senior such as cleaning and polishing his shoes.
12. All the dormitories were named after naval ships. There were four or five of them. I was in a dorm called Duke of York. I don't know how many beds there were in my dorm. The school didn't divide us up into houses. The boys were divided up according their dormitories. In the dorm itself I can't remember what I had in terms of furniture as well as my bed.

Routine at Crawfordton School

First day

13. I was beaten on my first day at school for not wearing my cap. I was seen by the headmaster Mr Fauvel and that night he took me into his study and I was beaten over the back of his sofa with a slipper and over my pyjamas. He hit me six times. Other boys were beaten at the same time in his study and we went in the room individually.

14. There was no buddy system at the school whereby an older boy would take care of a younger one when they first started at the school. There was no formal welcome or initiation into the school.

Mornings and bedtimes

15. In the morning one of the pupils would ring a hand bell to get us up. Then we got up and dressed and went for breakfast.
16. I don't remember the routine for brushing our teeth. I do remember an incident at the sinks involving another boy who was called [REDACTED]. I'm not a fighter, quite the opposite, but he did something that made me angry enough to put his head into the sink and hit his head off it. No staff saw it, but they heard about it. I was belted with a slipper by Fauvel for it and in his study. Oddly, I saw [REDACTED] as an adult twenty years ago when Crawfordton School was being sold as he also went to the sale.
17. I can't remember what the bedtime routine was. I have no idea who was meant to be looking after us overnight if we should need an adult's help. I suppose it would have to be Fauvel or I suppose Oswald Groser as they lived in the school

Washing and bathing

18. I can't remember the routine for bath time. There were two big baths with hot water that we were expected to plunge into after sports in winter. There was a bathroom with toilets and the two big square tubs. I don't remember any showers.
19. We had cold baths in summer and we were expected to go right under the water. It wasn't a punishment and everyone had to do it. There was a queue for this huge bath with ice cold water in it. Staff supervised the baths, but I couldn't say who that was. It could have been the school captain or a master standing there. It was just something you had to do. It was every day in summer. We had to queue up for the bathroom with no clothes on.

Mealtimes

20. We got cereals for breakfast. On Sundays we got demerara sugar as a treat instead of the white sugar we got on other days.

Clothing and uniform

21. The uniform was purple with grey shorts and purple socks. We had to buy the uniform at a special shop in Glasgow.

School

22. In the school itself we had to move around to different classrooms for different lessons. In terms of the standards of education, it's hard to say as I wasn't the brightest spark. At the time I was just interested in music as Jazz had just hit the big time. I took a ukulele to school with me and it was taken off me when I arrived. I was playing it and singing to the other boys and it was taken off me by Fauvel. I wasn't allowed to have it. I got it back at the end of term. I was allowed piano lessons at school and that female teacher was nice. Her first name was Fiona and she was lovely.
23. From memory Oswald Groser lived there in the school and Fauvel lived there. I imagine the rest of the staff lived in Moniave. We were taught the standard topics and we got a decent education and sports depending on the season. We played other schools in sports matches such as St Josephs in Dumfries.

Leisure time

24. After school we had to do homework in the classroom. There was a supervising teacher at the head of the classroom. Prep was done after our evening meal. We played in the school grounds especially in summer in the evenings. We played cricket and we weren't allowed to play football. I used to go into the woods to smoke. We weren't allowed off the grounds of the school. I can't remember any toys, books or comics.

25. On Saturday morning we had lessons and in the afternoon you could do your own thing. On Sunday we had to go to a church service. It was Church of Scotland. We had to go to the chapel in the school grounds and it was compulsory. I don't recall religion playing a part in the school otherwise.
26. I had to write letters home and I kept them short. We did that on a Sunday. We weren't told what to write and I don't know if the teachers read them. My dad would write back and get his secretary to type the letter for him and he'd just sign it. My mum wrote letters to me and she always wrote in rhyme and there would be about two pages of rhyme.

Chores

27. There were no chores and no cleaning for the boys to do. The clothes were washed for us. We had our name tags sewn into our clothes.

Visits

28. My parents could come to the school for certain events, but my mum couldn't handle the school concerts. She couldn't hack hearing small boys singing. They would come but she wouldn't go to the show. My dad would just wander around the school.
29. I got a visit once a term. They came on a Saturday afternoon. They stayed in a hotel in Dumfries. We had lunch together and then I was back in school overnight and I would have lunch with them again in Dumfries on Sunday. They had done the same for my older brother when he was at Crawfordton.
30. I have no memory of any outside visitors or anyone who could have been an inspector.

Birthdays and Christmas

31. Birthdays were not celebrated. The staff did nothing for us on birthdays. I was at home for the Christmas holidays.

Healthcare

32. There was a matron at the school and she was there to see to our bumps and scrapes. Anything more serious meant we'd be carted off to the doctor in Dumfries. I'm not aware of that happening. As far as I know she wasn't there to offer pastoral support.
33. There was a set time between eight and ten in the morning when you were expected to evacuate your bowels. There was a list on the door to tick off your name. If it didn't happen you had to report to matron to get a dose of Castor Oil.

Running away

34. I didn't run away. I had nowhere to go to.

Bed wetting

35. I didn't wet the bed, but other boys did. I don't know how the school dealt with the issue.

Abuse at Crawfordton School

36. You'd be belted if you did something wrong. Fauvel was the only one who issued punishment with the slipper. If you were in trouble, teachers in the classroom would give you a clip round the head. We had a young male teacher. I don't know his name. He had a twelve inch wooden ruler and used the sharp narrow end to batter me on the top of my head with it. It was very painful. I'd probably done something. I was a bit of a rebel.

37. Fauvel hit me over the backside with his slipper on my first day at the school and he hit me like this three or four times over the years I was there. I knew of other boys being beaten because they told me. He inevitably did it at night before we went to bed and boys would be put over the back of the couch in his study and hit over their pyjamas. So it was virtually on bare skin. You knew who was getting it through word of mouth. They would be called into his study. I don't know if the parents knew this kind of thing happened. Punishments wouldn't be written in school reports.
38. There was a hula-hoop craze when I was at the school. I was school champion at the hula-hoop. We were doing our prep in the evening. There was a teacher, I don't remember his name, at the head of the room sat at his desk. I put my hand up as I needed to go to the toilet. He made me go to his desk and made me stand there. He wouldn't give me permission to leave the room and he made me wee myself in front of him and in front of the class. Then he told me to go and sit down. He went on about 'you and all this hula-hooping and all this carry-on'. I have a vague recollection of what he said. He made me clear it up as well.

Leaving Crawfordton School

39. I failed the Common Entrance Exam to get into Merchiston Castle School in Edinburgh when I left Crawfordton. This meant I had to go to Merchiston to be interviewed to get in the school. The school wanted me there because my older brother [REDACTED] was already there. I travelled in Fauvel's car and he smoked his pipe all the way there. It was just the two of us in the car and he never opened a window. It was a long journey in those days from Dumfries to Edinburgh with no motorway.
40. I was interviewed by various teachers. A guy came in the room wearing a cloak that was popular in those days. His name was Chas Chamberlain, and his name was mentioned in the later police inquiry. I never had any issues with him.

41. He asked me some general knowledge questions and asked what I would say if I saw a Gendarme in Paris. I replied that I would say 'parlez vous Anglais?' He fell about laughing at this. But I got beaten for it by Fauvel when I got back to Crawfordton as I was insolent. I was just giving a reasonable answer to the question. I was probably aged twelve at the time.
42. I was successful in the interview. I had no feelings at all about leaving Crawfordton. I had only one good friend there. I was leaving at age thirteen which was the natural age to leave that school.
43. My father told me I was going to the big boys school. He then gave me some advice that I have regretted to this day. He said if I needed help with anything in class and didn't understand what the teacher was telling me I was to put my hand up and ask as that was what the teacher was paid for. He said don't worry about passing exams as the business was there for me and my brother as soon as we finished school. It was a big mistake on his part.

Reporting of abuse when at Crawfordton

44. I didn't tell anyone about Fauvel belting me. It happened to everyone, he wasn't just picking on me. If you did something wrong you got beaten and that was the end of it. In the holidays I didn't tell my parents I was slippered, it was just part of boarding school life and it was part of the system.

Merchiston Castle School, Colinton, Edinburgh

45. I didn't have any feelings about going to this school. I don't know why that school was chosen, but I was just following my older brother who had been there before me. I wasn't especially keen or enthusiastic about it. I would have rather gone to a Glasgow school. I was thirteen when I started at Merchiston Castle. Other new boys started at the school at the same time as me.

46. The school is split into four houses and boys progress from one to another on the basis of their age. The first school house is called Chalmers West, then after a year boys went to Chalmers East. Then boys progressed to Rogerson East before ending their school career doing their A' Levels at Rogerson West. Boys moved house at the end of each school year.
47. The school is set in massive grounds in Colinton. They are impressive buildings with facades and turrets. To the right were the two Rogerson houses that were semi-detached from each other. On the left were the two Chalmers buildings, also semi-detached, but detached from the main building where the classrooms were. Boys lived separately inside these houses and they were all run separately. Meals would be taken in the main hall in the main building for all the school years together.
48. The headmaster was a man called Alan Bush. I had no dealings with him other than in passing encounters. All the appeals went to him such as an issue I had about the school searching our lockers and I have described that event later in this statement.
49. I don't know how many boys were in the school, I would guess around three hundred. Someone once told me that Chalmers West had 56 boys in it, but I have no idea. So there could be around four times that many boys at the school. The boys were mainly boarders, but there were some day pupils too. They were not popular in the school just because they weren't boarders. They were inferior and they didn't pay the same fees as the boarders. They weren't treated any differently by the staff as far as I know.
50. The four school houses had the same layout inside. They were all basically the same building. Chalmers West had a common room. The Master of the House had rooms on the ground floor and lived there. The house master was Mervyn Preston. There were showers on the ground floor and changing rooms. The boys' bedrooms were upstairs. In Chalmers West there was a house master and sub-house master. **CFK** **CFK** was the sub and he had a flat upstairs in the building and that was the same level as the boys' dormitories. There wasn't anyone presented to us as being there for pastoral care and someone to go to with non-educational issues. There was also a

teacher who taught German and Religious Instruction and I believe was German. He was known as Mr Morrison Cleator. He was harmless and got abuse hurled at him by the boys because they believed he was German.

51. I don't remember how many beds there were in a dormitory. There was a row of beds on each side of the room. Outside the room was an area of toilets, sinks and baths at the back of the room. Each dorm had the same layout. The common room had tables and chairs, books, comics and board games. It was a place to go to. We were allowed to have transistor radios and we could lock them away in a cupboard.

52. After Chalmers West I moved onto Chalmers East and it also had a house master and sub. I don't recall their names. In Rogerson East the house master was called Ian Balfour-Paul and his sub was a new guy, BRW that we all called BRW. Balfour-Paul was weird and he was considered to be a D-Day hero. BRW was good fun and he was obsessed by The Beatles. He was always immaculately dressed and drove a Lagonda. He would invite six of us into his room to listen to Beatles records and rave on about them. I was asked by the police, when I made a report to them two years ago, if I had been touched by BRW and I wasn't. He was a good laugh and a nice guy.

53. I can't say who was house master and sub in Rogerson West as I never got that far in the school. I was taken away before that.

Routine at Merchiston Castle School

First day

54. I don't remember my first day at the school. I don't remember if there was any proper welcome for the boys or being shown round and I don't recall any initiation amongst the boys. I'd already visited the school when I'd had my interview and I knew roughly where everything was.

Mornings and bedtime

55. In Chalmers West, the bell went in the morning. It was an automatic bell. I think it went off at seven-thirty. Then we were up and out of bed and dressed in our uniform to go to breakfast at eight-thirty before lessons started at nine. A prefect or head of dorm supervised the night time routine. I don't recall any issues with that and they just did their job. I don't know how the prefects were chosen.

Mealtimes / Food

56. At meals I sat at a specific table and picked my own seat on that table. Mealtimes were supervised by resident staff who were also eating at the same time. The food was alright. I didn't have any issues with the food. All the meals were an ok standard. I think if a boy wouldn't eat something then something would be done about it and he would be accommodated and given other food.

Washing / bathing

57. We had cold showers in summer. I don't remember going for a shower before bed.
58. In the shower room in Chalmers West there was a locker room and the lockers were about six feet high, like wardrobes with a shelf at the top. There was a row of showers next to them and the water ran onto the floor so it was sodden. Boys would stand on their towels to dry themselves next to their lockers. Mervyn Preston used to walk along and use whatever he had in his top pocket to lift a boy's penis to check if their testicles had dropped. If they had, you'd be sent off to Chalmers East as you were too mature to be in Chalmers West.
59. So some boys would leave at the end of that term, earlier than expected, and move onto the next house. Preston did that every night and went round every locker. He would then ask that boy to come later to his study to tell them they were finished in Chalmers West. It happened to me and all the others. I wasn't aware of any objections to his behaviour. You grew to accept it.

60. Preston would also call boys to his study to physically examine how mature they were and assess whether or not they required a jockstrap for sport or particularly playing rugby. Boys would go to his study by themselves. He would then check the boys testicles to see if they had dropped. If he decided they had you would get a line to take to the school tuck shop and they would give you a jockstrap in box. Any boy who wanted one for sports had to go and see Preston, so it was a common thing.
61. He also used any excuse to examine a boy's hamstrings and use it as an excuse to fondle boys' legs. It wasn't because the boy had an injury. It happened to me and to other boys and it was a fairly common thing. In fact if a boy had an injury on a sports' field he'd be told to go and see the matron about it.

Clothing / uniform

62. I was taken by my mother to a different shop for the uniform and that was Aitken and Niven in George Street. The uniform was blue and grey coloured. There were long trousers for prefects and shorts for everyone else. I never wore long trousers.

School

63. The education was in the main building. I moved from room to room for different teachers and subjects. I was still more interested in music than lessons. I was told by my dad that I didn't need O' levels so I wasn't interested in education. I got one O' Level in English Literature. In the maths exam I wrote my name and sat for fifteen minutes and then walked out. The school didn't do anything about me not being interested. My school reports were sent to my dad, but were not discussed by my parents. There wasn't a Parents Evening and they only came into the school when it was the end of term and they inevitably sent the chauffeur and it effectively meant they didn't come to school. They didn't come otherwise.

64. There was a good education available in the school for those that wanted it.
65. There were plenty of sports played at the school including rugby, cricket, swimming, orienteering, cadet force. There was also a game called Fives where a ball is hit with your hands inside a hard glove. There was also fencing.
66. I was thrown out of CCF as I didn't have my Corp uniform on at parade. My mother hadn't packed it for the start of the school year. I was standing with the rest of group for inspection and I was the only one with my school uniform on. A teacher called Jack Lemon, who took Corp, was angry and I was thrown out of the group when I gave him a cheeky response. I was also thrown out of the fencing class for not playing it properly.

Religion

67. We went to a service twice on Sunday and said prayers in the morning. Chapel was in the main school hall where we did our prep work too. The service was given by the headmaster and sometimes there would be a church minister too.

Work/chores

68. Junior boys had to do fagging for senior boys and prefects. The boys in Chalmers West had to fag and I assume all of them had to do it. An older boy called [REDACTED] told me I was going to be fagging for him. He was ok. You only did it in your first year. [REDACTED] was in his final year. I had to polish his shoes and clean his rugby boots and his sports kit.
69. If you didn't do it right you were beaten. I wasn't beaten by [REDACTED] and I heard of it happening to other boys and witnessed boys putting their hands in cold water to get over the beating with the tawse that would be given by the school captain. He was the only one allowed to give this punishment. I had to wash [REDACTED] kit in the sink. Our ordinary laundry was taken away to be washed outside of the school.

70. The staff were aware that fagging went on. It was part of the school system. I'm not aware of any abuse at the school of the fagging tradition. I'm not aware of any bullying by senior boys as it never happened to me.
71. I didn't have chores to do apart from the fagging duties.

Trips / Holidays

72. I remember a one day trip with the CCF up the Pentland Hills. It was awful. Redford Barracks were right across the road from the main gates of the school. A Sergeant Major would appear at school once a year and shout and bawl at us. We had to do an exercise at the Ski Centre at Hillend. The weather was so bad. I got them all off the hills by taking the radio set from the operator and using it to order all the boys off the hill. The school never caught me and no-one told on me, even the radio guy.
73. The housemaster at Rogerson East, Balfour-Paul, had a Land Rover and he picked boys to take away on trips to Islay. He didn't pick me. He and I didn't see eye-to-eye.

Leisure time

74. After the school day we could play cricket, mess about or smoke in the grounds or hangout in the common room. Prep time would be in the evenings after our dinner and between seven and eighty-thirty. That wasn't optional.
75. On a weekend we had lessons on a Saturday morning and were free afterwards to play sport. I played badly. On a Saturday evening nothing happened. There was no tv, but we had transistor radios and I remember listening to radio comedies. We weren't allowed out of the school grounds without permission. You'd have to get a note from the housemaster called 'leave out' to go out to somewhere specific the next day or two days later. The 'leave out' was only at weekends. I had one good friend, another musician, whose family lived just half a mile away and I couldn't just walk out to his house and had to get permission. I don't know what would happen if you did. I never heard of it happening to anyone.

76. On a Sunday there were church services in the morning and evening which was not optional. We wore our kilts for church as an extra to our school uniform. I was also in the school choir.

Birthdays and Christmas

77. I would be at home for Christmas and summer holidays. There were no birthdays celebrated in the school.

Visits / Inspections

78. I had visitors very rarely. Visitors didn't just show up at school and parents were not encouraged to visit. My parents never came to end of term concerts. My father would send a chauffeur to pick me up and my luggage at the end of term.

79. I wasn't aware of any outside inspections taking place at the school.

Healthcare

80. There was a matron at the school. I can't remember her name. She would deal with injuries and minor illness. Doctors appeared sometimes. Matron had her own room in the school. There was also a Sanatorium or San in the school and you could be put there until you got better. I was in there when I had the flu. I don't know about boys going to see a dentist. There were also hairdressers who came into the school to attend to the boys' hair.

Running away

81. No-one ran away that I was aware of.

Bed wetting

82. I don't remember any bed wetting happening at this school.

Discipline

83. There was a system of blue papers. And this meant writing out lines fifty times on blue coloured paper with red lines on it. You'd usually get someone else to do them for you and there was a boy who was very good at writing lines. I got blue papers when the school discovered we'd set up a radio station behind the organ in the main hall and it ran for two weeks before we were told it was broadcasting on the same wave length as the Light Programme. It was broadcast in the school, but what we didn't know was it was broadcasting round all of Colinton.
84. One night there was a raid in Rogerson East. I think I was aged fifteen-and-a-half. Three of us boys, [REDACTED], me and a boy called [REDACTED]. The school found matches and three cigarettes and in my locker. That was a beatable offence. I decided I wasn't going to accept this and told them they weren't going to beat me for that. I asked them for evidence of what right they had to go into my private property. I was telling this to the housemaster who searched my locker. He had the power to beat boys. I wasn't having it and walked out of the room. The shit hit the fan then. Eventually a directive was sent round the school that we had twenty-four hours to remove or hand in any contraband without any charge of offence, but they had to ask permission before they could unlock any locker.
85. The housemaster who was going to beat me for having cigarettes was called Rainy-Brown. He was a sub in one of the houses. He also, at another time, wanted to beat me for not clapping the school team at a cricket match. I refused to let him and I went see the Head, Alan Bush, and it was quashed. I was aged fifteen or sixteen at the time. Rainy-Brown was a bully and a weirdo.
86. The discipline given out wasn't recorded. I was thrown out of a teacher called Donaldson's class once. He was another weirdo. In those days we ordered the

newspapers of our choice. I ordered two newspapers, the Glasgow Herald and the Daily Express. This was my first year in the school. I walked into class and he asked me what I was carrying. I explained it was the papers. I was thrown out of the class for having The Express as he regarded it as tabloid trash.

87. I was left standing outside of the class in the corridor. By chance the headmaster, Alan Bush, came wandering along the corridor and wondered what I was doing. I explained the teacher had asked me to leave the class as he'd taken exception to my newspaper. The Head just told me to change my newspapers and walked off. So I did and then got the Daily Record as well as the Herald as I knew that would irritate him more and he couldn't stop me.

Abuse at Merchiston Castle School

88. I was beaten for drinking in a pub in Haymarket after a national rugby match at Murrayfield that I've never been in. We were encouraged to leave the school premises to watch Scotland play rugby, but we had to get permission. A prefect or senior boy reported seeing me and another boy called [REDACTED] drinking pints in the pub. I was aged fifteen or sixteen. I was beaten by the captain of the school, who was effectively head boy.
89. In those days the captain of the school had the power to beat boys. You'd wear scarves round your wrists to protect the undersides from the tawse. I don't know the name of the captain, but the guy who reported me was called [REDACTED]. I was strapped on the hands and six on each hand. This happened in the head boy's study in Rogerson West.
90. If your shoes were dirty you'd get one warning then the next time, beaten with the tawse. It was a three fingered leather strap. It was short at about eighteen inches long.
91. The sub-housemaster in Rogerson East, ^{BRW} [REDACTED] would strike a boy twice for no reason. He'd just say 'two strokes' randomly to a boy in the middle of class, belt

him and then carry on teaching afterwards. It happened in every one of his classes. Teachers had the power to issue the belt but I think they didn't. It was only him that did, he was notorious for it. The headmaster could use the belt and also the captain of the school.

92. Prefects had power and they could make you do lines or 'blue papers'. If you didn't let a prefect through the door first you'd get beaten. When I open a door now I still look to see if there is anyone behind me to let them through first. The prefect wouldn't do the beating, but they would refer it up. By my time the school had taken that power away from them, but you were beaten by the school captain and the witness, the boy who'd reported you. In my older brother's era at the school all of the prefects would be in the room to witness it. By my time that had stopped and it would be the school captain and one witness to oversee the beating. Normally the person who had made the complaint. By the next generation of boys, after me, the school had stopped that too. The beating wouldn't be recorded in writing as far as I know.
93. CFK [REDACTED] was the sub-Housemaster at Chalmers West. He was a [REDACTED] and had appeared on a TV programme called [REDACTED]. My father's sister was a [REDACTED] and had been on the same programme. When my brother [REDACTED] was at Merchiston, CFK [REDACTED] broke his leg and my brother looked after his car when CFK [REDACTED] was immobile and [REDACTED] loved cars.
94. CFK [REDACTED] was invited to come to see us at the family home in Pollockshields when he had recovered and he stayed overnight. We were listening to music and CFK [REDACTED] enthusiastically went to his car to get his clarsach, a small harp, and then started playing it and singing which my father wasn't impressed with. Then CFK [REDACTED] started dancing with our housekeeper. I was told to go and get my guitar, so I did and started to play a few songs.
95. CFK [REDACTED] had an guitar at school and he told me when I started at the school I must come to his room and play his guitar. I arrived later on at Merchiston and CFK [REDACTED] reminded me I was to go to see his guitar. I started at the school aged

thirteen. I'd been there about one month and on a weekend I went to his study which was also his bedroom.

96. The guitar was hung up on the wall above the bed. He got the guitar down and I played a few tunes and then he asked me to put it back on the wall. I had to kneel on the bed to reach the hooks to put the guitar on the wall. CFK [REDACTED] leapt on me and pinned me down. He tried to put his hands down the front of my shorts and tried to stick his tongue down my throat. I pushed him off and he tried to do it again and I pushed him off me again. I left the room. He didn't say anything to me while he was doing this and he was fully clothed. He left me alone after that and the incident was never discussed.
97. He would also touch up boys in crowded areas in the corridors and as we passed by him you'd feel an exploring hand around your testicles. If I was walking down the corridor next to someone he'd barge in between the two of us and touch us up. CFK [REDACTED] was notorious for it. It wasn't talked about and nobody told me the same thing had happened to him, but it was common knowledge that he was someone to avoid.
98. CFK [REDACTED] was eventually caught in my third year at the school and removed from Merchiston. Three of the senior boys at the school, one of them was called [REDACTED] and two others went to the headmaster, Alan Bush, and told him what had been going on. CFK [REDACTED] was gone that same night. He allegedly ended up teaching at a girls' boarding school in England
99. Mervyn Preston was the housemaster at Chalmers West and he had his own study and bedroom in the house. He was the person that we had to ask for 'leave out' so we could go out of the school. We always had to go to his rooms to ask him for it at night time. He would be in his room with a dressing gown on and his hands behind his back and the dressing gown open in the front so he was totally exposed and naked. You'd have to ask him for the leave and every time he'd be standing by the fire place in the same manner. It happened to me and to other boys.

100. Rainy-Brown was completely wired to another planet. He took a dislike to me because of the searching of the lockers and I said the school couldn't search them without consent. Also I refused to let him beat me for not showing enough enthusiasm at the cricket match. He was creepy. I was street-wise after the incident with CFK and knew what I was looking out for. I didn't receive any sexual advances from him, probably because he'd begun to hate me.
101. Later on the school turned the Sanatorium into Pringle House, for younger children. I told the police when I made a report two years ago how crazy that was. I was told one wee boy's father went to see Rainy-Brown about a report the boy had made and within an hour of the meeting taking place Rainy-Brown had taken his own life. He was a man of 77, never married and a highly suspicious character and the school put him in charge looking after wee boys. He should have retired by 65 and left the school.

Reporting of abuse at Merchiston castle School

102. I never told anyone about the abuse at school or what CFK did to me. I couldn't have spoken to my father about CFK as I thought he would have told me I was talking nonsense. When I told my elder sister more recently she said I should have told our father who would have done something about it. There wasn't anyone in place that I could have told at the school about CFK and Preston. Apart from the Head there was no-one in place. I wouldn't have felt able to trouble the headmaster with things like that.

Leaving Merchiston Castle School

103. I put a lot of these stories in writing and the document was found at the end of term. Some of it had gone down the back of a radiator. I was summoned home and my father said who do you think you are, James Bond? There was the names of who was doing what to whom. It was all rumours and gossip about boys with boys and not staff. I'd destroyed the stuff I'd written about what happened to me and it was the things I'd

written about what happened to others that was discovered. My father said he wasn't going to pay any more money for me to write that rubbish.

104. I was sixteen and a half then and I wasn't going back to school. It was the end of the summer term. It meant I didn't go on to Rogerson West. I got just one O' Level so I wasn't seen as being academic. I don't know about any contact with the school about why I wasn't going back.

Life after being in boarding school

105. After leaving school I had two weeks holiday and then went to work for my father's building company straight away. I was with a joinery firm called [REDACTED] and building high rises in Glasgow. They were the joinery contractor and I was sent there. I wasn't allowed a car. I spent two years working on high rises in the Gorbals putting windows in. After the joinery training I moved onto plumbing for a few years. I had no interest in it, but I was getting paid well. Then dad got cancer at 63 and couldn't be cured. He died three years later.
106. I was in the building trade until 2008 when I finally retired. I didn't know anything else. After dad died I was in partnership with [REDACTED] but he was really in control. He wanted me out and I left the company. I went to live in Majorca with my late first wife and our two daughters. We lived there for five years. After my wife died in 1987 I didn't know what to do. I came back to Scotland with my daughters and returned to the building trade.

Impact

107. Being at boarding school had a semi-negative impact on me. I had a good time until my father died. I was paid more than other people in my age group, but I had no options to do anything else but work in the family business. I didn't want to go in the building trade, but I had a lack of qualifications and I blame myself and him because he told

me the business was there for me after I finished school. It was the same thing for my brother. I just didn't push myself at school to get qualifications as I was told it was a waste of time.

108. The physical punishment with slippers at Crawfordton House was just done in that era. The abuse at Merchiston is something I think about now and again. Children now have no discipline and no respect for adults. To me, some short, sharp discipline was perhaps correct. We've lost that now. When I was in school I certainly thought twice about behaving badly, but I don't advocate heavily beating children. It was just a different era when I was in school.
109. I sent my own two daughters to boarding school when we were back in Scotland. After their mum died I thought it was the best thing for them.
110. In 2008 I had a breakdown and I was sectioned through an accumulation of things. I ended up placed in Levensdale Hospital for one month. I'd gone hyper and was told I'm bi-polar and I take medication now but not at a high dosage. I also have medication for anxiety and depression. I speak to a psychiatrist every four to six weeks. A renowned psychiatrist, Sir Carrickferguson, appeared at my house once. He was pals with my partner. I chatted to him. He told me I'd had a nervous breakdown and I wasn't bi-polar. This was about twelve years ago.

Reporting of Abuse

111. I contacted the police around two years ago because I had heard in the press about reports of abuse at Fort Augustus Abbey School. There was a number to ring and I thought I also have a story to tell and it needed to be out in the open. It was always in the back of my mind. I contacted an Edinburgh police station and the police were asking me for information about Merchiston. I spoke to them on various occasions. I can't recall the name of the officer I spoke to, but he rang me back several weeks after I spoke to him. He said with the evidence they had got, not specifically mine, they would have all been prosecuted, but they are now dead.

112. They did ask me for names of other people they could contact and I gave them my brother's name as he'd introduced me to CFK [REDACTED] [REDACTED] then phoned me after they spoke to him and wanted to know why I went to the police. He hadn't experienced any sexual abuse. He was as hard as nails and would have taken their teeth out. I told him about the Inquiry because what happened in Merchiston and in the other Scottish boarding schools wasn't right.

Lessons to be Learned

113. In a way I recommend boarding school and I'm not against them. My daughters have been successful thanks to their education at boarding school and went onto university. My two sisters never saw anything abusive in their boarding schools. I think it just happened in boys' schools.

Hopes for the Inquiry

114. I hope schools will be sorted out, with a better vetting process to find the abusers amongst the teachers. Modern pupils won't put up with what we went through in my school. My three nephews went to Merchiston, although one left after one term, the other two stayed there and were fine. The school had totally changed and pupils were encouraged to follow their individual interests whether that was music or sport and education wasn't just about the '3 Rs'. They didn't beat pupils anymore and they were allowed out of school when they wanted to. There still needs to be some form of discipline used.

Other information

115. I went back to Merchiston about twenty years ago with some other men who had been pupils. I was fine with the visit, but one of my friends couldn't go through the school

gates in his car. He tried twice and couldn't do it. He lived in the Colinton area as well and it was his house I used to visit on 'leave outs' granted by Mr Preston. He was terrified and wouldn't drive through them. I just felt disgust at what was allowed to go on.

116. I have no objection to my witness statement being published as part of the evidence to the Inquiry. I believe the facts stated in this witness statement are true.

BLQ


Signed.....

Dated *10th August 2021*.....