

## Scottish Child Abuse Inquiry

Witness Statement of

HDZ

Support person present: Yes

1. My name is HDZ although I am known as HDZ. My date of birth is 1939. My contact details are known to the Inquiry.

### Life before going into care

2. I was born in Greenock. My dad's name was and my mum's name was which was possibly short for. My dad was a Sergeant in the army when I was born. I don't know what my mum did, apart from look after seven kids.
3. My siblings are born 1930, born 1933, born 1935, born 1937, myself born 1939, born 1941, and born in 1942 or 1943.
4. I don't remember life before going into Quarriers at all. We went to Quarriers because my father was in the army and my mother walked out on us. She left us with a friend of hers. My dad managed to get a bit of leave from the army but they wouldn't give him permanent leave so he arranged for a home. He took us to Bridge of Weir. He must have had permission but we never went to Bridge of Weir, we went to Ibrox in Glasgow, to a home called Overbridge which belongs to Quarriers. I don't remember going to Overbridge, my first memory is of being on the train eating some chocolate when my dad was taking us to Glasgow.

### **Quarriers Village, Bridge of Weir 1944 to 1950**

5. Quarriers was like what I suppose they would now call a gated community. There were gates at both ends. There were 43 houses, a church, a school, a central hall, a shop, a hospital, and a place for babies. It was a beautiful village with hardly any traffic at all. It is a self-contained village. Access to the outside world wasn't prohibited but at that age we didn't have much of that and we just accepted it. There was a lot of parkland, a lot of grass.

### **Cottage 1, Quarriers Village 1944 to 1949**

6. My admission papers state that I was admitted to Quarriers on [REDACTED] 1944. That must have been my admission to Overbridge, which I cannot remember anything about. I have an idea that I arrived at Cottage 1 in [REDACTED] 1944. I don't recollect it but my eldest sister [REDACTED] tells me I was hanging on to her legs saying that I wanted to stay with her.
7. All seven of us went to Quarriers together. [REDACTED] was 13, [REDACTED] was 12, [REDACTED] was 10, [REDACTED] was 7, I was 5, [REDACTED] was 3, and [REDACTED] was 2.

### **Routine at Quarriers, Cottage 1**

#### *First day*

8. I don't remember the first day at Cottage 1. It seemed like it was a huge house, not quite as big as a mansion. It wasn't just a big house from a child's perspective. These houses were built to accommodate 30 or 30 children.
9. The main room was a great big sitting room where're we used to gather. There were dormitories, toilets and showers. I can't remember how many.

10. The name of the housemother was Miss [redacted]. Miss [redacted] was a well-built woman with grey hair. She was a typical Matron type.
  
11. My first memory is from when I had been in Cottage 1 for about three or four days. It's the memory of getting my first slap on the head. Obviously I didn't want to be there, I wanted to be with my family and I was playing up. Miss [redacted] said something to me and I spoke back. She hit me such a clout on the head that my ears were ringing. According to some people Miss [redacted] was a saint but I didn't find her like that. There was another woman who worked in Cottage 1, she was a nice lady but I can't remember her name. I don't remember the names of any other children I was in Cottage 1 with but I can remember the language we made up and some of the rhymes like, "Hitler's in, getting his gin."
  
12. I was in Cottage 1 for about five years. My sister [redacted] was with me there. [redacted] might have been there for a short while but I don't know where the others went. I think there were about thirty children in cottage 1. I would say it was roughly half boys and half girls. I was one of the youngest. The age ranged up to 13 or 14. It might even have been 15.

*Mornings and bedtime*

13. We slept in dormitories. I can't remember how many children were in each dormitory. I think the dormitories were either all girls or all boys. In the morning, you were wakened, had breakfast, and got ready for school. I can't remember what time we were wakened, it was probably 7.00 am.

*Mealtimes/Food*

14. I couldn't complain about the meals in Cottage 1. If it was a nice day, we would have sandwiches outside. Cottage 1 had a lovely green leading up to the central hall. They would put cucumber sandwiches. We would all be outside like little Prince Charles and Princess Anne.

15. I don't think I ever had the problem of not liking something I was given to eat, apart from parsnips. I would usually eat anything. Coming from a family of seven you would eat it before someone else did. I would say we were fed sufficiently but you were always hungry as a kid.

*Washing/bathing*

16. In the morning you had a chance to get washed before you went to school. I can't remember if that was before breakfast or after. I think we got a bath about once per week. Boys and girls were done separately. I can't remember if the water was changed in between. They might have had a shower as well.

*Clothing/uniform*

17. We got given our clothing by cottage 1. We were given short trousers, shirts, socks, and shoes. We were also given special clothes that we wore on a Sunday, but during the week we were just dressed like normal kids. We weren't all dressed in the same clothes, it was just whatever came along. Clothes were given to children on the basis of what fitted you. There was no uniform as such.

*Leisure time / clubs / groups*

18. When you came home from school you were allowed to play games. Sometimes you had to listen to bible studies and stuff but you were allowed to listen to radio shows like the McFlannels which was like Coronation Street on the radio. The other thing we got to listen to was Dick Barton Special agent. However we were in bed pretty early and it would all start again the next day.
19. On Saturdays we could roam around the village. There were plenty of fields we could go in, roll down hills, climb trees, and play football. We could read or play cards. There was a river running through the village called the River Gryffe. When you went over the bridge there were football fields and my Saturdays were spent sat up a tree reading

books because I was an avid reader but there were kids playing hide and seek and kick the can.

20. I don't remember any groups like the Cubs, the Scouts, or Boys Brigade but I wasn't much of a joiner of groups so I may not have noticed. They may have had those things, but I can't remember.

#### *Trips and holidays*

21. Once a year they used to take us to Inverkip on the coast past Greenock. They used to take us to the seaside on big buses. I don't know if all the houses went on the same day but there was a lot of kids that went there. You would run around mad on the beach for a few hours and then get in the bus home. We would sing the Bridge of Weir song.
22. The only other thing we got to go to on a Saturday was in Glasgow and that was called the Tent hall. It was a bit like Billy Graham. I only went a couple of times but I didn't like it. It wasn't my cup of tea.

#### *Schooling*

23. I loved the school. I remember two of the teachers were in love with each other. I remember them telling us stories about Italy, singing. I can't remember the names of any of the teachers.
24. I found the exams very easy because I had a very good memory. I think I was in the year above where I should have been, because I found the exams easy. I did not manage to see my siblings at the school.
25. I don't mean to sound conceited but I found the school work very easy. To me, passing exams was a doddle. I think they put me in a class above where my age group should have been.

*Healthcare / medication*

26. I know that I got a poisoned finger and they took me to the hospital in Quarriers. The nurse who was trying to treat it had a small dish of boiling water. When she tried to treat me I threw the water up and it landed on the nurse and hurt her. I got a few whacks for that. I don't remember that, but my sister does. I also went to hospital in Quarriers for my ears. I think I had an abscess in my ear. I had to get rid of the wax that was in them.
27. I can't remember if we got regular check-ups from a doctor. I don't remember a doctor coming in to see us. If anything was wrong, I think they would get you a doctor. I don't remember ever seeing a dentist at Quarriers because I didn't need one. They encouraged you to brush your teeth. My baby teeth would drop out as I was growing new ones.

*Religious instruction*

28. On Sundays you got scrubbed clean and put on your Sunday clothes and walked in a crocodile to the church. We just went to church once on Sunday. When you got back from church, your good clothes were taken straight off you. As far as I can remember we didn't go to church during the week.
29. There was religion at Quarriers but in cottage 1 it wasn't forced on you. Even though Miss QNG was a hard hitting person, I believe that she thought she was religious.
30. We used to go to the central hall and they would show films about missionaries working in Africa. They were always going on about missionaries in far off countries.

*Work/Chores*

31. I don't remember any specific chores, or any rosters of work. Sometimes they might make you clean shoes. I can't remember any other chores. With being so young, I wouldn't have been capable of doing a lot.

### *Birthdays and Christmas*

32. At Christmas we went to church. There were great big fir trees on either side of the altar with presents on them. There were presents for the children, for every kid there. The service would start and then the good bit was when they started shouting kids' names out. We were all up in the balcony and they would have runners to take the presents to the kids. That was Christmas day.
33. In cottage 1 they had decorations up for Christmas and you got a bit of pop and a cake. I can't remember any celebration of my birthday.

### *Personal possessions*

34. I don't know if I had any possessions. I can't remember having anything that mattered to me. There were books and a few toys. My big thing was reading, I read non-stop. I remember these books about Crichton junior who was at public school, and his mater and pater would come to see him and give him five shillings. I was thinking, "Why doesn't his mum and dad come?" I didn't know that mater and pater meant mum and dad. I read all these adventures but they were totally divorced from the reality of life that I knew. There were also a few Biggles books.

### *Bed Wetting*

35. Bed wetting is not a problem that I ever had. Some of the kids in cottage 1 did have a problem with bedwetting. If they wet the bed they would probably get a smack from Miss QNG or the other lady and the sheets would be taken away, washed, and put on the line. They were humiliated because everyone knew who had wet the bed.

### *Visitors/celebrities*

36. I don't know if there were social workers as such who came to visit. There were people who would appear and say hello to the children, but we weren't interested in them. We were doing our own thing.

37. I don't remember any external visitors coming to see us but I do remember a couple of times that mid-week, out of the blue, we would be given a good scrubbing. That was probably someone coming to visit then but we didn't know about it. If you got your clothes dirty on those occasions you would get battered.

*Family Contact*

38. My father came to visit me once when I was in cottage 1. I was in cottage 1 and I saw him outside in his army uniform, the visit hadn't been pre-arranged. We met outside the central hall. We sat on the bench and had a chat. I remember he gave me two threepenny coins and a sixpence. I felt like I was loaded. It was just me and my dad on my own. I don't know if he got to see my siblings as well. It was years before I saw my dad again.
39. My mother also came apparently. I have got papers saying that she came to visit but I don't remember her coming. However I understand she was given a letter saying she wasn't allowed to visit and that she shouldn't come because she was with another man and there was all sorts of moral outrage about her deserting seven children. It was a different ball-game then, there were no support systems for women the way there are now.
40. I was told my mother was a 'hoer'. I asked one of the older girls in cottage 1 what 'hoer' meant. She said it was a woman who slept with men. I thought with all these injured men coming back from the war that a 'hoer' must be someone who helped them get over all the bad dreams. I thought my mother must be a nice person to do that. That's a child's perspective for you.
41. I did see my sister [REDACTED] now and again. She was in another cottage across the road from cottage 1. I saw my brother [REDACTED], who was in cottage 39. I didn't see [REDACTED], [REDACTED], or [REDACTED].
42. Myself, [REDACTED], and [REDACTED] knew we were siblings but meetings between us were fleeting. You didn't have much free-time to sit and chat.



*Running away*

- 43. I didn't run away from cottage 1 and I can't remember anyone else running away from there either.

*Discipline*

- 44. If you misbehaved, you got slapped around by Miss QNG. You didn't have to do much to end up getting a clout. If Miss QNG said something and you rolled your eyes, it was almost fatal. If you did that, you really got a clout. Because I am weird, I would do it again and again just to prove I wasn't scared of her, although I was terrified of her. I would roll my eyes and get clouted and then stick my tongue out at her.
- 45. Conservatively I would say on average she would hit me four days a week, although sometimes it would be seven days a week. She would sometimes leave marks but I never had to see a doctor for it.
- 46. There was another woman who worked in cottage 1 and although she didn't hit us, she was in awe of Miss QNG, so she thought it was the right thing to do.
- 47. The effect of this type of punishment was that it made my behaviour more anti-social. The more I erred, the more I got punished. I would deliberately do the wrong thing because they annoyed me. I would then do things wrong to annoy them and take the punishment. It was a bit rebellious. I hadn't started out like that but they took me away from my family and stuck me in Quarriers. People who weren't my family were telling me what to do and I rebelled. I stopped rebelling about 25 years ago.
- 48. During my five years in cottage 1 my happiest times were at school. I hated Miss QNG with a passion. I didn't hate the other lady, I felt sorry for her. I think she was bullied a bit by Miss QNG too. I think she was too scared to say anything.

### **Abuse at Cottage 1**

49. As an 82 year old, I consider all these slaps as abuse but the eight year old me thought it was normal procedure so I didn't think it was abuse at the time. However it definitely was abusive. There was no need for it.

### **Leaving Cottage 1**

50. I don't know why I left cottage 1. I just know I was set to cottage 39. It may have been because they knew I was anxious to be with my brother [REDACTED] who was in cottage 39.

### **Cottage 39, Quarriers Village 1949 to 1950**

51. Cottage 39 was another mansion house style place, similar to cottage 1 although they were all different. It had about thirty kids in it. I went there when I was eight or nine years old and there were boys there up to fifteen or sixteen years old. It was all boys in cottage 39 as far as I can recollect.
52. [REDACTED] QNB was the guy in charge of cottage 39. I don't know if he was married. If he had a wife, I can't remember her. I can't remember the names of any of the staff who helped either. I think there were a couple of ladies who did the laundry and the cooking.
53. I don't know if other people from Quarriers have mentioned this but in every house in Quarriers there was one child who was treated as a pet. With [REDACTED] QNB he had a pet. I can't remember his name. He might as well have had a dog collar, he could wander around and do what he wanted. [REDACTED] QNB lavished more attention on that one child than he did on the other 31

## **Routine at Cottage 39**

### *First day*

54. Cottage 39 was just a different version of cottage 1. There were dormitories, bathrooms and showers, a dining room and a play area in the yard. It wasn't any shock to the system to me, as I had been in cottage 1. I didn't know anyone there apart from my brother.

### *Mornings and bedtime*

55. We got woke up at 7.00 am I guess, did our ablutions, went downstairs for breakfast, and off to school. I can't remember how many boys were in each dormitory. It might be eight or more.

### *Mealtimes/Food*

56. You had to be in for your mealtimes. You got your tea about 5.00 pm. We had lunch at school. I think we got a biscuit around 7.00 pm and then off to bed. The food was O.K. for the time, it was normal food. They had one dish called Pease pudding. It is horrible stuff but we used to get a lot of that.

### *Washing/bathing*

57. You had a wash in a sink most days. The women were all scrubbing the back of your neck for some reason. There must have been a time when they gave us a bath or a shower but I can't remember any specifics. There was nothing horrific about bath times that I can remember.

### *Leisure time / clubs / groups*

58. On Saturdays you were allowed to roam around the village. We played football and in the summer we played cricket.

59. I was always reading and roaming about. I liked to be on my own wandering around the village, climbing trees, or looking for fish in the river. I was quite happy doing that in the school summer holidays

*Trips and holidays*

60. We still had the wonderful trips to Inverkip every year. We did not get taken on any trips for potato picking or berry picking. They used to take us on walks in the countryside around the village. When we went on these walks we would look for conkers or just look at the cows.
61. It must have been 1947 when I was eight years old and we had the worst winter in living memory. We went for a walk and the snow was piled up five feet high on either side of the road. I'll never forget that.

*Schooling*

62. When we came back from school around 4.00 pm we took our school clothes off. The school clothes were good quality. We would get in to our play clothes and get in to the yard, climb trees, the normal things that kids do.
63. I should have gone up a level in the school but the powers that be decided that the school couldn't offer what I needed so I went to Camphill School instead. I used to get a bus to Bridge of Weir train station and then a train to Paisley every morning and come back again at night. It wasn't my choice to go to Camphill School. They thought that Camphill would be a better school for me. It might sound like I am conceited but it was them that decided this, not me. I resented not having a say in decisions affecting my schooling.
64. The change to Camphill School meant that my time in Quarriers was limited to the time I came home from school until the morning and first thing in the morning I would be down at the gate to get the bus. I had to wear the school uniform for Camphill. I didn't suffer any bullying at Camphill due to coming from Quarriers

65. When I was in Camphill there was an older kid who was a prefect. I was swearing in school and this idiot said to me that I must write 100 times that I must not swear in the playground. I asked him where I could swear and he said that meant it was 200 lines. I threatened that I would write 200 lines on his face and he told the school masters on me. I think they actually expelled me because I owed this prefect about 2000 lines. I wouldn't do them on point of principal.

#### *Sex Education*

66. I didn't get any formal sex education at Quarriers.

#### *Religious instruction*

67. Sundays were the same as in cottage 1. You put on your Sunday best clothes, walked to church, listened to the service, walked home, and got out of your Sunday gear.

#### *Work*

68. I can't remember any specific chores other than a lot of shoe cleaning, like cottage 1. I think sometimes we swept the yard. I don't know who made the beds, it certainly wasn't me. I think there might have been a maid. It's very difficult to remember as my memories of cottage 39 are coloured by QNB.

#### *Bed Wetting*

69. I didn't have a problem with bed wetting at cottage 39 but other children did. They would get a few whacks and the sheets were taken away and washed. I don't think the bed wetters were made to lie in the sheets or anything like that. Everyone knew who had wet the bed but that was as far as the humiliation went.

### *Running away*

70. After an incident about eating parsnips I brooded for a bit and then I decided I was going to run away. I came back from school in Paisley. There was a road that went down past the three gates into the village. I walked down this road, past the gates, and got down to the main road with Greenock. Then I got to Greenock. I got arrested there because they thought I was vulnerable. I had been hanging about in [REDACTED] in Greenock near my old family home.

### **Abuse at Cottage 39**

71. On the other side of the road into Quarriers was a big estate belonging to Lord McClay. I had some friends from Greenock who were camping there. I went swimming with them and that meant I was late home for tea. QNB [REDACTED] didn't slap me, he punched me. He gave me such a punch in the mouth and said, "You little hooer's son, you're late. You think this place is run for your benefit."
72. Tea was put in front of us and there were parsnips on the plate, and I can't eat parsnips. I pushed them to one side. QNB [REDACTED] asked me what I was doing and I said that I didn't eat parsnips. He said, "You don't say what you eat, I do. You'll eat them." I told him again that I wasn't going to eat them. He was trying to force me to eat them and I was sick. The vomit went on the plate. He took me into another room and took my clothes off. He told me that I would sit there and eat the plate of food. I told him I wouldn't, I had just been sick on the plate.
73. QNB [REDACTED] called me a snotty little bastard. He called my mother a hooer and said my dad didn't want to know me. All that was supposed to bring me round but it just made me worse, there was nothing that would have made me eat that stuff. I was sent to bed that night with no food. The next day when I went down for breakfast the plate from the night before was on the table and he told me again that I was going to eat. I said, "I won't fucking eat it. You can do what you fucking like, I'm not eating it." It was there at dinner time again but by tea time he had given up. He said, "You little bastard,

you think you've won." He gave me a few punches and kicks but it seemed to me that I had won a victory.

74. To me that was the worst abuse. My face was swollen, I had a cut lip, and my body was bruised. Looking back that was the worst episode that I experienced. I couldn't tell you how much I hated QNB. That was the only time he tried to force-feed me. He gave up on me after that. I don't think any of the other children were force fed because I don't think any of them had the nerve to defy him, they were all terrified of him.
75. I didn't get any medical care as a result of my injuries. Some of the teachers might have seen my injuries but when my friends were camping near the lake, it may have been the summer holidays so I don't want to swear that the teachers would have seen me. I didn't report what happened to anyone, there was no point.
76. The point I want to get across about QNB is that he wouldn't just slap you, he punched you. Punching was a regular thing with him. A lot of it I brought on myself because I was always defiant, I was always a bit of a rebel. I would do something and depending on how serious he thought it was, I would either get a good slap or I would get punched. Sometimes I would get a kick. Then I would get sent to bed with no tea.
77. We used to sit at the table in the living room and play football with buttons. Like tiddly winks only it was football. Before we started the game, QNB would ask us bible questions on a topic that he would have set the day before. He asked me a question one night and I told him that I didn't know because I didn't read the bible. He had one of those big heavy family bibles. He hit me with that and knocked me across the room. Even at that age I knew you didn't hit people with the bible. I was stunned but I wouldn't give him the satisfaction of letting him see me cry. I had a huge bruise on my face. It occurred to me that he was asking us questions about the bible and then he was striking me in the head with the bible. I thought there was something wrong about that. That is something I will never ever forget. He was a brute.

78. I did not suffer any sexual abuse in cottage 39 or elsewhere in Quarriers. I did not see anyone else suffer sexual abuse there either. I did hear years later that it had happened.
79. In Quarriers the form of abuse that hurt me the most was continually being told that my mother was no good and that my father didn't want to know me. When you are a kid that hurts, it really hurts.

#### **Reporting of abuse at Cottage 39**

80. I didn't report the abuse at cottage 39 when I was there. When I ran away and got caught by the police, they didn't ask me why I had run away.

#### **Leaving Cottage 39**

81. When I was arrested in Greenock for being vulnerable, at that time my brother was in a remand home in Dumbarton. I was told I had a choice. I could either go back to Quarriers or go to Dumbarton with [REDACTED]. I said I would go with my brother as [REDACTED] was my hero. I'm not sure who gave me the choice it might have been the guy who was the head of the social work department. His name might have been Mr Wales, I'm not sure.

#### **Bellfield Remand Home, Dumbarton 1950**

82. I was in the remand home in Dumbarton for a couple of months. It was for kids who had broken the law and we hadn't broken the law. I don't know why [REDACTED] had been put there. There are only a few things that I can remember about being there. I can't remember the names of any of the staff.



## **Routine at Bellfield Remand Home**

### *Leisure time / clubs / groups*

83. We wanted to go to a football match in Dumbarton. This Master said that we couldn't so [REDACTED] said we were going on hunger strike. That was the first time I had heard that expression. He maintained that we weren't prisoners and that we should be allowed to go to the match and I admired him. We were in a room and they sent a man in to get us to do what we were told. There was a table tennis table in the room and [REDACTED] told me to hit the guy with the edge of the bat when he came in. When he was angry [REDACTED] was a nutter. They sent this guy in and we had the table tennis bats and they decided that we could go to the match, although we should have been paid to watch it.

## **Abuse at Bellfield Remand Home**

84. I can remember one of the other inmates at Bellfield. I think his name was [REDACTED] and he was supposed to be one of the hard kids. For punishment there, you would get the tawse on your backside. I remember this boy [REDACTED] crying about getting the tawse.

## **Reporting of abuse at Bellfield Remand Home**

85. I didn't report any abuse when I was at Bellfield Remand Home.

## **Leaving Bellfield Remand Home**

86. After a couple of weeks at Dumbarton we were fostered out to Greenock to two of the nicest people you could ever meet, [REDACTED] and [REDACTED].

## ████████ Foster placement, Greenock 1950

87. I was about twelve years old when I went to the ██████████ foster placement. ██████████ was a big Irishman. He worked on the building sites. ██████████ was a big fat woman. They lived in ██████████ in Greenock, in what you would call a room and kitchen. ██████████ and I were there for a while and I loved it. ██████████ and ██████████ were good to us.

## Routine at ██████████ Foster placement

### *Schooling*

88. When I went to Greenock, I was sent to The Mount School. Then the powers that be decided I should go to Greenock High School. once again, I had no say in decisions affecting my education. I was quite happy at The Mount and had made friends there.

### *Work*

89. There was a chip shop round the corner from the ██████████ flat and I worked there working the machine that turned the potatoes into chips. I would get fish and chips to take home to the family. Chella the owner of the chip shop used to take me to the football on a Saturday. He took me to away matches as well sometimes.

## Leaving ██████████ Foster placement

90. I don't know what happened, maybe it got too much for ██████████ and ██████████. I think I might have done something wrong. ██████████ left and went to London and I got put in a tiny little home called Ravenscraig opposite the mental hospital in Greenock.

## Ravenscraig Children's Convalescent Home, Inverkip Road, Greenock 1950

Secondary Institutions - to be published later

91.

92.

### Thornly Park Approved School, Paisley 1951 to 1953

93. I was about twelve and a half, or maybe thirteen years old when I was sent to Thornly Park. I think I was there for over a year. I was there in 1953 until after the coronation. I was told, and it's on record somewhere, that I was sent to Thornly Park because I was a child in need of care and protection. This was because I had previously run away from Ravenscraig and slept in a pipe.
94. Thornly Park was for boys only, from eleven to about sixteen years of age. There were about 240 boys. In charge was the Headmaster. We used to call him Stepan Fetchitt, after an actor in cowboy films because he bobbed his head when he was walking, just the same as the Headmaster. I can't remember his real name.
95. I don't know if Thornly Park was run by the education department, but I'm sure it was some part of the government, as it was called an Approved School.

## **Routine at Thornly Park Approved School**

### *First day*

96. I don't remember my first day but my first impression of Thornly Park was that it was just another institution. It was a big school building on three sides of a square. It surrounded a big yard.

### *Mornings and bedtime*

97. You went into the first dormitory when you arrived at Thornly Park, to see if you wet the bed. If you didn't wet the bed, you went to the next dormitory which was for kids who only wet the bed sometimes. If you didn't wet the bed there, you got moved into a normal dormitory where nobody wet the bed.
98. You got up at 6.30 or 7.00 am and made your bed. You had a wash or a shower and went down for breakfast. After breakfast you went to school on the premises. You did normal school hours and normal education. I can't remember when lights out was.

### *Washing/bathing*

99. I think we could have a shower twice a week in Thornly Park. There was a master there to supervise but he never bothered us. The showers were in a big long row. They were only six feet high if that. We all got underneath and it sprayed a big long row of us. The masters never bothered us. You just got your shower, got dried, and went to bed.

One of the times you had to go for a shower, e called it a spray, you would take all your dirty clothes off but you had to take your underpants off, turn them inside out, and stand in a line. It was called the Goldie Parade. They had a matron at Thornly Park and she would walk along the line inspecting the underwear for marks. If there were any of what we would call skid marks, you had to clean your pants yourself. We would always come up with excuses saying that it was mud from falling on the football field.

Me and another fellow, ██████████, decided that if they wanted to play games, we would play games. This was around the time when sweets stopped being rationed, in the early 1950's, so chocolate was available. We clubbed together and got some chocolate, melted it, and put it on our pants. We held our pants out ready for inspection and the matron came along. She called out, "HDZ ██████████." I said, "It's a lovely evening isn't it?" and licked the chocolate and ate it. The matron turned white, she nearly fainted. Me and ██████████ were on the floor laughing. The masters were hitting us, calling us bastards but it was hysterical. I wrote about this in my memoirs.

### *Clothing/uniform*

100. The school provided us with clothing but it wasn't a uniform as such. We would get jerseys, shirts, trousers, socks and shoes. Just usual clothing. On a Monday or a Tuesday night they gave us these wooden mushroom things. You put your sock over it and you had to darn your own socks. The matron was in charge of all the clothes and the laundry. She thought it was quite normal to have us all darning our socks.

### *Leisure time / clubs / groups*

101. After tea you would have a bit of free time to play table tennis or whatever. They had a swimming pool at Thornly Park too. There was a member of staff called HEA ██████████. He had previously swum the English Channel. He would sit us all down and tell us ghost stories. They did have a full size snooker table and I played a lot of snooker.
102. At weekends they would take us out to the Glenifer braes near Paisley. One of the staff had a pellet gun. HEA ██████████ would try to shoot you with it. It sounds terrible and Health and Safety would have a field day. We had to run and hide and he would try and shoot us with his pellet gun. If he shot you, it was just like getting stung. There was no badness in it, it was all just good fun. I never got the impression that any of the other boys were scared by the pellet gun. Most kids played with pellet guns. We knew they could hurt you but we weren't frightened of them.

103. On Saturdays and Sundays I was allowed to go into Greenock, if I had been a good boy. We each had a number, mine was [REDACTED]. On Saturday morning a master would read out the numbers of all the boys who had been good. If your number was called out you went and got your going out clothes on and you went into Paisley, then you would get a bus or a train and go to see family in Greenock. You had to be back in by 6.00 pm. Fortunately for me I got quite a lot of home leave. I went to see a friend of my mother and father who we called uncle. His name was [REDACTED]. His wife was called [REDACTED]. They had a couple of kids and we used to go along the promenade, look at the boats, and that kind of normal stuff.
104. On Sunday, I can't remember if they had a religious service or not. They did have a nativity and we put plays on.

*Trips and holidays*

105. They took us to a camp at a place called Ormsary in Argyllshire. It was on the shores of Lochgoilphead. We went there camping in tents and making camp fires for two or three weeks. We enjoyed that. There were no problems in the tents at night, either with other boys or with staff. We were all tired out from being out in the fields and the shores of the loch
106. They sent me to work on a farm at Lesmahago during the summer holidays. That was good fun.
107. I was in the Air Training Corps at Thornly Park and we went to Dyce in Aberdeen and to Kinloss for an RAF camp, for flight training. We were flying about in old planes. That was a good trip.
108. I remember the Queen came to visit Scotland on 28<sup>th</sup> June 1953. She came up to visit Templeton's carpet factory in Glasgow and we lined the route through Paisley. So I know I was definitely in Thornly Park in 1953.

### *Schooling*

109. You got schooled in the approved school. I'm not being conceited but I found the schoolwork very easy. They had a wonderful teacher, Miss Murray. I believe she used to sing with the Glasgow Orpheus Choir which is a world famous choir. She tried to teach us some classical songs but they were so far out of our life experience. She taught us country dancing too, when we all had big tackity boots on. You've never heard anything like it in your life, it was hilarious.
110. Miss Murray used to arrange for us to do Scottish country dancing. They had people who used to come in, people who gave money to the school. We used to put on a display. We were dancing wearing kilts and our big tackity boots. [REDACTED] told me we should take our pants off so we did. We were doing a dance called the Petronella and we flashed them. All these old ladies looked shocked. It was hilarious. I didn't stop laughing for about an hour. It was worth getting the tawse for.

### *Healthcare / medication*

111. They had doctors and people who used to come in and examine you. They had a dentist who came round and examined your teeth. There were regular health care examinations.

### *Religious instruction*

112. We didn't really have any religious instruction at Thornly Park.

### *Work*

113. We didn't really have any work to do apart from cleaning the showers as we were out at school all day. They must have had cleaners because I don't remember any other chores.

114. I did work in the gardens at Thornly Park during the summer holidays, picking berries and things.

*Birthdays and Christmas*

115. Most boys at Thornly Park would get leave to go home for Christmas. I couldn't go home as my family had all moved to England so I stayed at Thornly Park. I don't remember anything about my birthdays. I think I was the only one there who knew when my birthday was.

*Personal possessions*

116. I had a few boules, marbles. I didn't have a watch, they were for posh people. I had access to a lot of books.

*Bed Wetting*

117. Boys who wet the bed stayed in the first dormitory. You had to wait a couple of weeks in each one. I don't know what they did to help the kids who wet the bed, because we had moved on. There was no punishment for bed wetters but it was an achievement when you got to the dormitory with no bed-wetters. The bed-wetters didn't get any aggro from the rest of us. I just accepted that some people wet the bed.

*Visitors*

118. My dad came to see me once. He took me out to a café in Paisley and I had a bit of a feed. I ate my fill of chocolate and pop and went back to Thornly Park again. I never saw him again for years. I don't think anyone else ever came to visit me. I don't remember any social worker coming to see me. You were in the system and that was it.



### *Family Contact*

119. I didn't have any contact with my siblings when I was at Thornly Park. I knew [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] were still at Bridge of Weir, and [REDACTED] had gone to London. My other two sisters and my brother were out earning a living. There was no suggestion about taking me back to Quarriers to see my brother and sister. I did write a letter to my little brother and sister at Quarriers but they never gave it to them, they never got to see it.

### *Running away*

120. I think I ran away twice from Thornly Park. The first time, I went in to Paisley and I was just hanging about. I went up a close and there was a man and woman who were drunk and trying to have sex. They fell over and the man split his head open. I thought he was dead. Even though I was on the run, I went to the police station and told them about the guy so that something could be done to save him. The police then took me back to Thornly Park but they gave me sweets on the way back as a reward.
121. The reason I ran away was for the adventure. When I got taken back I got belted with the tawse strap. You had a special pair of gym shorts that were really thin. You had to put them on and bend over a radiator. Then you would get six or eight whacks of the tawse on the bottom.
122. There was another guy in Thornly Park who we used to call [REDACTED]. He only [REDACTED]. He was like me, we used to pal about. He ran away but they caught him and brought him back to Thornly Park. The Headmaster got him at the front door and held him by his arm. The Headmaster said to [REDACTED], "Now run away." [REDACTED] hit the Headmaster [REDACTED] and when he hit you [REDACTED], you knew you had been hit. He ran away again and they didn't catch him again for two weeks. That seemed like poetic justice but Stefan Fetchitt wasn't a bad man. He was a product of his time.
123. The second time I ran away I got to Carstairs. I thought I was in Carlisle. This copper caught me and sent me back, but I didn't go straight back to Thornly Park, they sent

me to a place called Dalry in Ayrshire. They put me in an Approved School there, then after a couple of days they sent me back to Paisley. Once we got to Glasgow Central Station a couple of ordinary guys saw this bloke pulling me along and they asked if I was alright. I said, "No, he's dragging me." they told him to let go of me and I ran away. The poor bloke was only doing his job. They caught me after about ten minutes and took me back to Thornliepark. I got the usual, I got whacked with the tawse. I just ran away for the adventure, because I liked it. It wasn't to get away from any abuse.

### *Inspections*

124. There must have been inspections because it was an Approved School so there must have been inspections for it to get that title. There must have been a system to regulate it and I suppose there must have been people who came up but I can't remember. We wouldn't have known about it anyway.

### *Discipline*

125. We got the tawse at Thornly Park but you would get the tawse in a normal school anyway. The tawse was the only form of discipline at Thornly Park. I would say I got the tawse once a fortnight. How many strokes of the tawse you got would depend on what you had done but also, adults don't like cheek so if you were cheeky you might get a couple of extra strokes. One of the times I ran away from Thornly Park, I wrote a poem about running away next to my bed. The last lines were, I'm sorry now that I did go, but I would go again quite soon you know. That didn't go down well when they found that, I got a few extra whacks for that.
126. As an eight year old, I viewed the tawse as discipline but as an eighty year old looking back, I would view it as abuse.
127. I was not aware of any punishment books being filled out at Thornly Park.

### **Abuse at Thornly Park Approved School**

128. Other than the tawse, I didn't suffer any abuse at Thornly Park. I didn't have a problem with Thornly Park, it was what it was.
129. I was never a bully and I was never bullied by my peers at Thornly Park but that's because I wouldn't let myself be bullied. Some unfortunate kids who were still crying for their parents would get physically bullied by older boys. It didn't happen to me because I would have hit them back.

### **Leaving Thornly Park Approved School**

130. After the second time I ran away, I think I had made a bit of a nuisance of myself and they decided that I should go to a senior Approved School. I was taken to court or some sort of tribunal and they sent me to Rossie Farm in Montrose.

### **Rossie Farm Approved School, Montrose 1954**

131. I went to Rossie Farm School in 1954 when I was fifteen years old. They drove me there in a car. I think it was a police car. Rossie Farm School is near Montrose, the opposite side of the country to Greenock and Paisley where I had been staying. Rossie Farm School was an approved school so I imagine it was run by the Home Office.
132. Rossie Farm School was a big building on three sides of a square. If I had to describe it I would say it was an art deco building. It was a beautiful building in a lovely position. It is a disgrace that they tore it down.
133. In the inside play area at the back, they had round sinks. They were about six feet around, with about five taps on them. It was an absolutely fantastic building. They had a swimming pool, laundry rooms, a big dining room, and recreation rooms where we

played snooker and things. Upstairs there were several dormitories with showers and stuff.

134. It was all boys at Rossie Farm School. I would say there had to be between 150 and 250 boys, there were a lot of boys there. The age range was from about twelve to sixteen years of age.

### **Routine at Rossie Farm Approved School**

#### *First day*

135. By the time I ended up in Rossie Farm School I was immune, it was just another institution. I was becoming institutionalised by that time I suppose.
136. I can't remember the name of the person in charge, it might have been Mr Grant. There were civilian staff, we called them Maw Lett, Maw Maughan, and Maw Grant. They were three of the women who looked after us, I think there might have been a fourth lady. They had separate quarters in their own building close by the main building. I liked those ladies, they looked after me.
137. There was a janitor and maybe three other men, I can't remember. There was a guy called Mr Falconer who taught cobbling so we learned how to make shoes. There was a builder called Mr French. We made concrete blocks.

#### *Mornings and bedtime*

138. I can't remember how many were in each dormitory but I would guess it was fifteen to twenty in each. Most days we were up at 7.00 am, we got washed, dressed, and had breakfast. We went to school or went to work on the farms. If it wasn't a school day I can't remember what we did. If it was the weekend we spent the day playing music. We were in a pipe band. Mr Falconer the cobbler was the pipe man. Others would play the pipes and we would march. I was a drummer. Some weekends we would go out

and play at fetes. We would put on a display of gymnastics and the pipe band would play and march up and down.

139. I don't remember a formal lights out. You went to bed, and if it was your turn you had to clean the showers out, so you went to bed later.

#### *Mealtimes/Food*

140. The food was fine. One night a week we got scotch pie and chips. That was our favourite one. We ate venison because there was a lot of shooting around there. You would be eating the meat and you would find bits of shot. I can't complain about the food, it was good, healthy Scottish food for kids.
141. I don't remember any problems with any of the kids not liking something they were given to eat. To be honest, when you had done a days' work on the farm, you weren't too fussy about what you were given to eat.
142. I can't remember what we did for lunch if we were working out on the farms. We wouldn't have gone back to the school building, that wouldn't have made sense.

#### *Washing/bathing*

143. We got regular showers and had washing facilities. They had a summer janitor. One of our chores was that at night, before we went to bed, three or four of us would have to clean the showers and the baths. If you had been good you didn't get picked for this, you just went to bed. But if they didn't like you, you would get picked more often. There were no real chores apart from that.

#### *Clothing/uniform*

144. The school supplied our clothing, we never had our own clothes. That would consist of whatever they could scrounge up. We had jerseys, shirts, shoe and trousers. We got whatever we needed. If it fitted you, you wore it. Sometimes if it was a bit big for

you, you wore it. I can't remember how often our clothes got sent to the laundry. The three ladies took care of that sort of thing, and of cutting our hair. Our clothes were washed at regular intervals and we got the same clothes back as our names were on labels inside our clothes.

#### *Leisure time / clubs / groups*

145. After tea you could play snooker, read, play cards. We had plenty of books and magazines. If it was a nice night you would be out in the fields playing cowboys and Indians, stuff like that. I liked climbing trees. One time a master shouted at me, "HDZ HDZ, get down from that tree!" and I replied, "I'm not up a tree." I just automatically denied doing it even though I was forty feet up in the air.
146. On Sunday mornings I used to go to Mr Falconer's house to chop sticks for him as he was an elderly man. He wanted to adopt me but I said he couldn't because I had a mum and dad. Years after I left Rossie Farm School I was touring Scotland and I found where he was living and went to see him. He remembered me. He told me that Rossie Farm School was completely different now, that they take the boys skiing in Aviemore.

#### *Trips and holidays*

147. We went to a place near Blairgowrie. We camped and we had a flat bottomed boat we used to row up and down the river. We stayed there for weeks in the summer. I remember Mount Blair was nearby and we walked up Mount Blair. Mr French said to me that when you reach the summit of Mount Blair you let off flares. He told me that I was going to carry the flares. He gave me a tin and put it in my back pack. I was quite excited. We got to the top and he told me to empty the tin. It was full of rocks, he had tricked me. Other than that there were no other problems on the trips away. Kids would fight or get scrapes but there were no problems.

#### *Schooling*

148. I don't think I had much schooling in Rossie Farm School, it was mostly working on the farms, which I quite enjoyed. There were two school rooms and they were for pretty basic education. We spent more time practicing our marching and our playing in the band.

*Sex Education*

149. I never got any proper sex education at Rossie Farm, or anywhere else. We were at the age where sex was on your mind. We were becoming adults. We would masturbate and the first time I masturbated to completion I got all my mates to have a look. We had a big celebration because I was a man now. Other kids were saying they hadn't managed to do it yet, it was quite funny.

*Healthcare / medication*

150. We saw doctors in Rossie Farm School. On one of the occasions when I ran away, I went into Montrose and I had walked for miles. When they brought me back I couldn't walk, my feet were very sore and I was crawling. They took me up to a private hospital at Strathcathro and the doctor told me I had sever foot strain. They gave me some exercises to do and I got over it.
151. I don't recollect seeing a dentist at Rossie Farm School but then again I don't recollect needing to see a dentist.

*Religious instruction*

152. On Sundays we had to walk from the approved school to a church on the outskirts of Montrose. We all used to walk down there and there was a certain bit where the boys from the approved school sat. There were girls sat across from us and we were at the age where we were getting interested in girls. There was one girl I liked called [REDACTED]. I used to call her [REDACTED] because she had a purple jacket. I hope she is still alive.

153. Other than going to church on a Sunday, I don't think I heard anything mentioned about religion.

*Work*

154. You had to make your own bed and sometimes it would be your turn to clean the showers but we didn't have to do any other chores. I don't know how the place got cleaned. I know I never done it.
155. There were three farms Rossie, Westerton, and Gightyburn. When you weren't at school or when you were old enough to leave school you worked on the farms. You would pick and plant potatoes, topping and tailing swedes, that sort of thing. It would depend on the season. Before the time to pick potatoes you would be weeding and hoeing the fields.
156. We build a wall around Westerton farm. We made the blocks ourselves. We concreted the big barn in Westerton farm, but mostly it was doing farm work. There was a wide variety of jobs we had to do and I quite enjoyed it. We were supposed to be paid when we went tattie picking. We went to a farm called Balglassie. The reason I remember it is because we had the best food I have ever tasted in my life. At break time, they had great big stainless steel bucket with potatoes that had been picked that day and they were mashed up with butter. You couldn't get enough of it. They had buttermilk too and that's healthy for you. I'll never forget those spuds.

*Birthdays and Christmas*

157. Christmas was celebrated but I don't know about birthdays. I don't recall any special celebration of my birthday. At Christmas a lot of the kids were sent home, if they had homes they could go to. They got leave. The queen got crowned in 1953 but in 1954 we got Coronation leave. I couldn't go on it at the time but a few months later I was allowed to go by train to my sister's house in Bristol for my Coronation leave. I stayed down in Bristol for a few days and then went back to the approved school.



158. For those of us left in Rossie Farm School at Christmas there was extra grub and we didn't have to work on the farm for a few days but the rest of it was normal.

*Personal possessions*

159. I didn't have anything in the way of personal possessions, you didn't need any personal possessions. They supplied the food and the clothes and we could keep ourselves entertained. I know it was wrong but me and a fellow called [REDACTED] went to Montrose and we stole 200 cigarettes out of a shop. Everyone smoked in the approved school, we were allowed to although we shouldn't have been. We were the most popular guys in the place. We didn't use them as currency, we just gave them away to our mates.

*Bed Wetting*

160. There was a dormitory where some of the kids wet the bed. I don't know how many but most of the kids were coming on to fourteen or fifteen years of age. I don't remember it as a particular problem.

*Visitors*

161. I don't think I ever got a visitor when I was in Rossie Farm School. I didn't see a social worker either. The only time I saw social workers was when I was too grown up to want to have anything to do with them. I never saw social workers as a kid. What you were told was, "You're here until we tell you to go and you'll do what you're bloody told." That was basically it, but Rossie Farm was alright. The people who ran it were nice people. There was no cruelty, I never saw any instances of cruelty from the staff. I saw one or two instances of cruelty from one lad against another lad.
162. I'm not sure if there were outside inspections because the guy in charge of Rossie Farm would sometimes walk about with two or three people but we were never told who they were or what they were doing.

### *Family Contact*

163. The only time I saw any of my brothers or sisters was when I got Coronation leave to go down to see my sister [REDACTED] in Bristol. I also saw my brother [REDACTED] and my dad who was also living in Bristol, working on the railways. I saw them for five days. I got a couple of letters from my dad. Other than that I had no contact with them.

### *Running away*

164. We weren't locked in the dormitories at night. I suppose the front door would have been locked by I never had any trouble getting out. I ran away just for devilment. It wasn't because of something happening to me in Rossie Farm School, it was for the adventure.
165. I absconded from Rossie Farm School a couple of times. The first time I ran away, I went into Montrose. I got arrested and got sent back to Rossie Farm School. Then sometime [REDACTED] 1954 I ran away again when I stole a tractor, then a van, then a car. It made the papers.

### *Discipline*

166. If you stepped out of line, you got whacked with the tawse. As usual it was with the gym shorts on. You would bend over and get whacked with the tawse. They did try once to cane somebody but the boy took the cane off the master and hit him with it. I didn't see this happening but it was common knowledge. As far as I know they never used the cane again. I never got caned but I got plenty of the tawse. I wasn't too bad, I probably got the tawse once every six weeks.
167. The guy in charge of the place was the one who gave you the tawse. You could get the belt for swearing at a master, for vandalism if you broke something deliberately, or for fighting. If they had known I had stolen 200 fags, I would have been in serious trouble.

168. I don't recollect them ever having a book to record when you were getting the belt. If they did, I never saw it. The tawse was the only form of punishment.

### **Abuse at Rossie Farm Approved School**

169. There wasn't any abuse at Rossie Farm. The only thing like that was that when we went potato picking, which was hard work, the approved school got paid for us doing the work but we never got paid. The only time I got any money from Rossie Farm was when I ran away and they sent me to Perth prison. They sent me £2.80 as earnings from potato picking, but that work lasted three or four weeks.
170. There were no gangs or anything at Rossie Farm. There was no such thing as gangs in those days. There was never any sectarian stuff that I saw.

### **Leaving Rossie Farm Approved School**

171. I think it was in [REDACTED] 1954, me and another fellow stole a tractor from the farm, drove it to Arbroath, dropped it off, stole a lorry, drove the lorry, dropped the lorry and stole a car which we drove towards Perth. We were picked up on the road to Perth. I was then put in the police cells and the other guy went back to Rossie Farm School. I can't remember where they caught me but it was near Forfar because I went to Forfar Sherriff Court.
172. I appeared in Forfar Sheriff Court and was sentenced to borstal training but they couldn't send me to borstal at first because I was too young. You had to be sixteen years of age and I was only fifteen. I was sent to wait in Perth Prison which is a penitentiary. In 1955, when I was sixteen, they took me to Polmont borstal.

**Perth Prison [REDACTED] 1954 to [REDACTED] 1955**

173. I was in Perth Prison for about two months. It was quite interesting. Because I was fifteen years old, the screws kept a close eye on me. Looking back I think it was to make sure there were no sexual predators on me. I had a single cell and there were always screws about when I was out doing anything so nothing happened to me. They never treated me badly at all. There is nothing else to tell you about Perth because I was only there for such a short time. After two months, I was old enough to go to borstal so I was sent to Polmont.

#### **Polmont Borstal [REDACTED] 1955 to 1956**

174. I was transferred from Perth prison to Polmont in an S type police Jaguar. It would have been a nice way to travel if I hadn't been handcuffed throughout the journey.

175. I think I was in Polmont for just over a year. My sentence was Borstal training. That meant you could do anything between one and four years.

176. There was a governor at Polmont but I haven't a clue what his name was. I don't think the staff wore a uniform. It was all boys at Polmont, there were about 200. The age range was from 16 to 20 years old.

#### **Routine at Polmont Borstal**

*First day*

177. Polmont was divided into four wings. They were called Wallace, Bruce, and two other names I can't remember. When you arrived you went to the reception. You would stay there for three or four months and then you were allocated to one of the other wings.
178. The first thing I noticed was that it wasn't going to be so easy to get out. There were bars on the windows, locks, and gates.

*Mornings and bedtime*

179. We were in cells. Some of the cells in the first wing were single cells. When I got allocated to Bruce House, the next wing, there were three of us in the cell. You got up in the morning and went downstairs for breakfast. Each wing had its own dining room. After breakfast, you went off to work.
180. I think lights out was at 9.00 pm but it might have been 10.00 pm. By that time the cell door was locked too. It was pretty secure, but not as secure as a normal prison.

*Mealtimes/Food*

181. It was institution food. It was pretty bland, uninteresting, and unappetising but with 200 hungry 16 to 20 year old lads, you would eat anything. You didn't really concern yourself with what the food was like, you just ate it. I don't recollect anyone ever refusing to eat the food. I expect someone must have but I can't remember it.

*Washing/bathing*

182. I think we did have to do slopping out in Polmont. I washed in the washing area. You could get washed in your cell but I preferred to wash at the wash area. There were baths and showers and you could make full use of them. You didn't have to ask permission to go for a shower. You were never using them during the daytime because

you were at work. You could go in the evening after your tea. I don't recollect any problems in the shower unless you had fallen out with someone, you would follow them into the showers and had your fight in the showers so the screws couldn't see you. I never got in many fights, I was never attacked in the showers.

#### *Clothing/uniform*

183. At the beginning of your time you had a red and white striped shirt. When you were a bit further on and you could be trusted a bit, you got a blue and white striped shirt. I think there were blue trousers, I don't know what sort of material it was. You could either have shoes or boots. They also gave you socks and underwear. Our laundry got done once a week.

#### *Leisure time / clubs / groups*

184. In the evenings we just played cards or if you were a reader you read. Some people drew, others wrote. There wasn't any organised entertainment. I don't remember there being a television but there was a radio.

#### *Trips and holidays*

185. They didn't take us out on any trips at Polmont. If they did, no-one would have come back. Boys didn't get to go on home leave when I was at Polmont but I heard that they introduced that after I left. They introduced it in English borstals too.

#### *Schooling*

186. There wasn't any education at Polmont apart from a classroom for those who couldn't read or write.

#### *Healthcare / medication*

187. If you wanted to see the doctor, you put your name down first thing in the morning. They would put you on the doctors' list and you would see the doctor when he did his rounds but there were four different houses or block. I never had many health problems at that time in my life so I never saw the doctor, but I could have if I had needed.

*Religious instruction*

188. Religion was up to you. There was a church service I think but it you could chose to go or not. I didn't go. I can't remember if there were separate services for Catholics and Protestants. Sectarianism was not something I really encountered in most of my life so I didn't really know about it. I can't remember any sectarian problems at all.

*Work*

189. You were allocated to a certain job, and then they would teach you how to do that job. I worked in the shoe makers shop. We learned how to make and repair shoes and football boots. We went straight to work after breakfast, we went back to our dining room for lunch, then back to work for the afternoon. I don't know if there were woodwork or electrical job, I am hopeless with tools.
190. You didn't have any chores to do at Polmont apart from keeping your cell clean and tidy.

*Birthdays and Christmas*

191. At Christmas they laid on food and had some sort of recognition of Christmas. They didn't remark on your birthday at all. I think that the only time from the age of five that my birthday would have been celebrated would have been when I was in foster care.

*Personal possessions*

192. I didn't have any personal possessions apart from pictures, like pictures of your family or pin-ups.

*Visitors/celebrities*

193. I didn't get any visitors at Polmont, all my family were in England. I didn't see a social worker. I had a couple of letters from my dad but I wasn't in touch with the rest of the family. Writing to your family wasn't exactly encouraged but if you wanted to write, letter writing materials and stamps would be provided. Your incoming and outgoing mail was censored. When you got a letter, it had been opened. They said the reason for this was security but they read them. The reason I know that they read them is that I had a girl who wrote to me and she wanted to come and see me. Before I got that letter I was called into the office to see this man who said that I would not be allowed to see this girl. I asked why and he said it was because she was sixteen years old. I couldn't see the problem as I was only eighteen. He said, "Decent girls shouldn't be with the likes of you." I thought I should just shut my mouth and say nothing more otherwise I would have chinned him. I told him to forget it. I couldn't see how he could think that she could come to any harm in a secure borstal.

*Running away*

194. When I was in Bruce wing, my cell was above the store where they kept all your civilian clothes that they took off you from when you came in. they were kept for when you were going home. I worked out that if I could get in there, I could get some civilian clothes to get out of Polmont. From that civilian clothes store I could have got out. We broke through the floor of the cell and tied a sheet to a bed frame and dropped down but they heard the noise and were waiting on me when I got to the bottom so that was bad news. That meant two months in the chokey. Just a single cell with no privileges of any kind. You got nothing when you were in the chokey, you spent your days chopping sticks.

*Inspections*



195. I think we did see inspectors but we weren't told what they were there for. You would see these official people and the screws were kow-towing to them but they never bothered with the likes of us, we were below them.

### *Discipline*

196. You went before the Governor then you were just locked in your cell. He would tell you how long you were going to be locked up for and you just sat in your cell. Now and again they would come and get you and take you out to chop sticks. I thought that was a bit silly because you could put yourself in danger with the axe. There was never any physical chastisement. They wouldn't have dared because there were 200 nutters in there that would have torn the place apart if they started that. The boys wouldn't have stood for that.

### **Abuse at Polmont Borstal**

197. I don't know of any abuse taking place in Polmont. There were the usual slaps and stuff but there was nothing that would concern me or anyone I knew as being abuse. There was normal chastisement. The screws weren't supposed to hit you but now and again there would be a slap or a punch. We just shrugged it off, we told them to F-off.
198. Between the boys there were always fights. You would have a row with a boy and some fellows would say, "I'll meet you later on." You would meet them and have a fight in the showers or wherever and one would win and one would lose. Some guys would say, "I'll take you on in the boxing ring." They would tell the screws and they had a boxing ring they could erect. You would meet in the boxing ring with screws all round about. You would punch each other in three minute rounds until someone gave in. The screws would stand back unless someone was getting hurt bad, then they'd stop it. Otherwise they would let you keep punching until someone said they had had enough.
199. But our people thought that people who wanted to meet in the ring were cowards because when we fight the Marquis of Queensbury rules don't exist. You use anything

that comes to hand. You bite, you kick, you scratch, and you hit them with something, that's fighting. When you're all gentlemanly with gloves on, it seems like you're afraid. Basically, if anyone wanted to meet me in the boxing ring, I would attack them before they got there.

200. I did do amateur boxing, I had over 50 fights, but that wasn't because I had fallen out with someone, that was a sport.

### **Leaving Polmont Borstal**

201. I wasn't in Polmont very long because I applied to be transferred to an English borstal because my family were in England. I think my dad had asked me about it in a letter because it was too far for the family to come and see me. After a while my wish was granted and I was transferred to England. I think it took about three months from the date that I applied until I was transferred.
202. They called me into the office and told me that I was going to borstal in England. I was taken from Polmont one day in a car, to Durham prison. That was the end of my time in the Scottish care system.

### **Durham Prison 1956**

#### *First day*

203. Durham was my first English prison. The Scottish screws went home and I was in reception. The screw there asked me my name and I said, "HDZ [REDACTED]." He punched me straight in the mouth. He said, "HDZ [REDACTED], sir." I said, "No, HDZ [REDACTED]." and he punched me again. I said, "You can keep doing that, I'm never going to call you Sir." I

didn't respect him. To me, Sir, is a mark of respect. I said, "You can keep punching me, I ain't going to say it." He gave in, but that was my introduction to English prisons. I thought to myself, "I don't like this."

### **Leaving Durham Prison**

204. They had a big yard at Durham prison they used for exercise and what they used to do was get the young prisoners to play a game called Murderball. It was seventeen a side and you had to get the ball from one end of the yard to the other. There were no rules and people got hurt. There were people with broken limbs and busted up faces. The screws loved it.
205. I only played Murderball once. The next time, two days later, they told me to play and I refused. I said I didn't want anything to do with Murderball. The screw asked me if I was a coward and I said, "No, but I'm not here for your entertainment. If you want to come in on Murderball, then we'll have a go." but the screw didn't want to know and I was only passing through. A couple of days later I was gone. I was transferred to Wormwood Scrubs prison for about six days and then I was transferred to Feltham.

### **Feltham Borstal 1956 to 1957**

206. Feltham Borstal was near Heathrow airport. I stayed in Feltham for about a year, then I absconded. I got caught in Bristol because I had gone there to see my sister but she had moved. I was in Bristol prison for a couple of months then I was sent to Reading where they had a detention centre, which was for kids that had done bad things and had got sentenced to detention but it was also a punishment centre for boys who had been misbehaving in borstal, such as absconding and stuff, so I was sent there.

### **Reading Borstal 1957**

207. I went to Reading Borstal as a punishment for absconding from Feltham. I did three months in there. When you got in, there was a desk about five feet high with a screw sat behind it. When you arrived at the gate the screw on the bus would tell you to wait until you were called and then you had to double time all the way. All these idiots were running out. [REDACTED] who was sat in the seat next to me said, "I'm not running, just tell them to get stuffed." The screw called my name and I told him to get stuffed. [REDACTED] said he wasn't doing it either.
208. They dragged us off the bus and brought us in front of the desk. The screw told us to double time, he wanted to see our knees above the desk and i told him again to get stuffed. We got a few kicks and punches but we never double timed. They decided we were just a pair of trouble makers and we were put into the wing.
209. In Reading you did an awful lot of physical exercise. The trouble was that Reading Borstal was right beside Huntly and Palmers bakery where they make biscuits. We would be doing these exercises and when they opened the ovens you could eat the smell.

#### **Portland Borstal, Isle of Portland, Dorset 1957 to 1959**

210. I was sent from Reading to the Isle of Portland in Dorset. That was supposed to be a rough borstal. I was there until the end of my borstal training in [REDACTED] 1959 when I was 20 years old. It is supposed to be four years maximum of borstal training but I did more than four years. When I was discharged I was given tickets to go back to Scotland. That was the end of my borstal experience.

#### **Life after being in care**

211. When I came out of borstal I went to Cheltenham. My oldest brother was the head chef in a hotel there. I got a job as the breakfast cook. My brother did the cooking for the first few days to show me what to do. The first time I got in trouble in Cheltenham was

when I did an excuse me at a dance because I fancied this girl. Her boyfriend said he was going to get me but I broke his nose. He asked me where I stayed and I said I was at the hotel. The next day he came to the hotel asking for HDZ [REDACTED] but they sent my brother out. My brother told me there was a guy outside looking for me so I went out. There the guy was, with a big plaster over his nose. He told me to come down to his house that night and we would sort it out man to man. I told him if he didn't leave I would break his nose again. He didn't leave so I broke his nose again. That was the first time I got involved with the police in England. I just got a fine or something but it went downhill from then.

212. I ended up in prison several times including an eight year sentence for robbery. I was never out of trouble until 27 years ago when I met my partner [REDACTED]. I haven't been in trouble since.
213. When I was out of prison I did used to work. I wasn't afraid of work. I worked as a caretaker for two blocks of flats in Birmingham for two years. I was a foreman in a place where they made curtains and lampshades. I was a foreman in a place where they made and laundered work clothes. But I couldn't resist getting into trouble.
214. I used to work for six months. I wouldn't get into any trouble, I would just save my money, then pack my job in, and go around Europe for a few months. A lot of my time was spent abroad.
215. I did have a family. I have a daughter, [REDACTED], who lives in Canada now. She did come over a few years ago but we are estranged now. I was in Nottingham jail and my then partner came to see me, she told me she was pregnant. When the baby was born I was still in prison. She brought the baby to see me in prison. She was a good kid, she peed all over the screws trousers. I'll never forget it. However me and her mother couldn't hack it. I wasn't ready to be a father, I wasn't suited for the role.
216. I have been married twice. The day I married my first wife, I couldn't remember asking her to marry me but it was all set up so I didn't have the heart to say no. I married my second wife when I was in an open prison in Derbyshire. Both my wives are dead now,

both died from cancer. I left both my wives. There was no animosity, I just wasn't ready for it.

217. I have had the last rites read to me twice in the last five years. I have had cancer and they removed two thirds of my stomach. That nearly killed me. Then, in 2018 when I was on holiday I had further stomach problems and they found that I had gall stones that had become imbedded in my bile duct and they had become infected. The doctor wanted me to see my cancer surgeon to do the operation. I had the operation. They put me in a coma that was supposed to be for three days but they couldn't bring me out of it so I was in a coma for five days. They told [REDACTED] I wasn't going to make it but I did.
218. The last few years has been rough on my health. I have two leaking heart valves, an enlarged heart chamber, COPD, and an irregular heartbeat. I don't feel all that ill but with this heart problem I can be sitting and all of a sudden everything drains, I feel completely drained. I go to bed for an hour or two to get over it, and then get up again. I am waiting on some blood tests to see if they can figure out why this is happening.

### **Impact**

219. My take on it is that I never learned the normal association between people. I never learned to be an ordinary guy. I always felt I had to fight my way. I had a chip on my shoulder because I felt that if they hadn't allowed me to go to the remand home in Dumbarton things might have been different. I had never done anything wrong before then. When me and [REDACTED] went to Greenock, most of the kids there were from Greenock and I suppose I was easily lead.
220. We started doing silly, stupid crimes. It escalated and I decided that if I was going to do this carry on, I might as well try and get some decent money out of it. So I became an active criminal. I make no apologies for that. I done what I done. I done the crime and I done the time. As far as I am concerned I paid my dues. When I met my partner

■■■ she taught me to toe the line. She showed me that I had been an idiot. I decided to give things a go with her and I haven't been in any trouble since.

221. I don't want to come across as someone who is saying that it is the system's fault that I ended up a criminal. Up until I was sixteen or seventeen years old it probably was but since then I made the decisions, I knew what I was doing. I made the decision to commit the crimes and I knew what the consequences were. However there is a possibility that if I hadn't seen problems at such a young age in care, I might never have been a criminal.

### **Treatment/support**

222. I have never had any counselling about what happened to me in care. That's not anyone's fault, I wouldn't take counselling. I have never had any flashbacks about my time in care either. This last couple of days is the first time I have really bothered talking about it. My sister won't even mention Quarriers but I just don't think about it. Yesterday's gone. Tomorrow or the next day might be fine. That's my outlook on life. They keep on saying that I don't have morals but I have a moral code that I live by. It's dead easy. You don't harm children, you don't hit women, and you don't hit or injure in any way people who are mentally sick. You never disrespect the old, and you never hurt animals. The rest doesn't matter to me.

### **Reporting of Abuse**

223. I never made any report about the various beatings to anyone. I was brought up to that you stand up for yourself. My brother ■■■ told me to fight back, no matter what. One time in Greenock ■■■ and I were sitting up a close and this idiot said he was going to batter me. He was a big fellow and I was just a wee skinny thing. ■■■ told me to nut him, so I did. We fought and I got the better of him. That taught me to hit first and ask questions afterwards. That is how I lived my life until I learned not to hit first, to walk away and try to avoid it. That's what ■■■ taught me.

## **Records**

224. I have got some of my records from my time in care. They say that we weren't allowed into Quarriers until we were clear of scabies and nits, which apparently we had when we arrived. It also said that I had no mental problems and no physical abnormalities.
225. I only have my records from Quarriers, I have nothing from any other source. I have not tried to recover my records from the social work department. To be honest, I don't think I would get them. They would probably be redacted anyway, so you wouldn't know what they were actually saying.

## **Lessons to be learned**

226. The main lesson as far as I am concerned, is that children need to be listened to, and taken seriously. I think there should be a programme in the care system which ensures that only as a very last resort does a child involved in the care system get involved in the criminal justice system. That should be the last resort. In my case and a lot of other cases I know about, unfortunately, that wasn't the case.
227. Approved schools shouldn't be part of the care system. Approved schools were there to punish you for what you had done. I went to an Approved school when in their words I was, "A child in need of care and protection." How was that care and protection for me? I don't get it.
228. Regarding the separation of siblings I have another suggestion which would never be taken up because it would be too expensive. I believe that in a case like ours with seven children it should have been one house with a Housemother and Housefather and just us seven children, no-one else. That becomes expensive but it would save a lot of trouble.



229. I've got to be fair because there was no way they could prepare me for the outside world because I caused that much trouble that they had to get rid of me. People like me at that age, we were just a nuisance, a pest, or an irritant. There were probably lots of other kids who were probably benefitting from the care system but there is no real appreciation of the kids who will never benefit from the care system because they are by nature rebellious. I don't see how they can fix that problem. They are the children most in need of attention and assistance to prepare for life outside of care, they are the ones they should be looking at. However the situation at Cottage 39 is a good example, if you have 35 children and 34 are causing you no trouble, you're not going to bother much with the one odd child. You are just going to batter him and get him out the door. Out of sight, out of mind. The temptation to do that is high.

*Hopes for the Inquiry*

230. I hope that somehow the people who are employed to look after vulnerable children are highly trained, highly motivated, and paid a decent wage. They should be remunerated well. They should be routinely checked to make sure that they are still highly motivated and that the system hasn't worn them down.
231. There needs to be some care for the actual people who are running the care places. A lot of them were just detritus and nobody seemed to bother about them but they're the most important part. Because if they're not right, the system's not right. You get people who go to university to learn the principles of social care but you need to know about the practical side of it as well. You need to have lived.
232. You need to get a system whereby people are not judged by exam results alone, because in every profession now you need to have passed exams. Some people are not academic, some people do not have a good memory and learning is not easy for them but they can make wonderful carers. We had a carer when we had a home in Scotland and she was fantastic but she had no education. The only qualifications that she had were the ones that we helped her to get. NVQ's in caring and stuff like that.

**Other information**

233. 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.

Signed..... HDZ [Redacted Signature] .....

Dated..... 17-4-2021 .....