

Scottish Child Abuse Inquiry

Witness Statement of

CCY

Support person present: No

1. My name is CCY. My date of birth is 1968. My contact details are known to the Inquiry.

Life before going into care

2. I was born in Dunfermline. My father worked at the naval base there but I grew up all around the country. My mother was and my father was. I was their only child. My parents called me CCY. Very shortly after I was born my father went to sea so we went to live with my grandparents in Clydebank. My father was English and an Episcopalian. However, my mother's family in Clydebank were Roman Catholic. I was stuck between everybody.
3. I grew up predominately in Clydebank but we lived in Helensburgh and Cardross too. When I was seven we moved to Portsmouth for one year before returning to Helensburgh. I had spent most of my childhood in local, mainstream education. I didn't do very well at the local school in Helensburgh so my grandparents helped my parents pay to send me to a small, privately run school called Park Lodge. There were only one hundred pupils. I thrived there.
4. We lived there until I was eleven years old when we moved to Gibraltar because my father had been posted there. During this time, my parents began to argue frequently. My mother became an alcoholic and had a nervous breakdown. My father

viewed me as just another sailor. I had been due to go to the state run senior school which wasn't very good.

5. Instead, my parents decided that I should to return to the UK to go to Merchiston Castle School in Edinburgh. It was far enough away from my family in Glasgow that I had separation but it was close enough that they were there to support me. I had mixed feelings about going. The idea of getting away from my home environment and the idealistic view of boarding school seemed very attractive to me. It offered me a sense of calm.

Merchiston Castle School, Edinburgh

6. I started Merchiston when I was twelve in September 1981. We came back from Gibraltar one week early before school started because we had to buy the uniform. It cost my parents a fortune.
7. My mother took me there with my aunt. There were lots of new boys starting together. The vast majority of them had been through prep school so there were lots of existing friendships and connections. It was quite a strange environment. My accent had gone so I stood out a bit. I was also different because I was from a different social background. My father was relatively low ranking in the Navy, my grandfather worked in the shipyards and my grandmother worked cleaning schools but they thought they were a cut above the rest.

Routine at Merchiston Castle

First day

8. The youngest boys started in Pringle House which is off the drive way leading to the main building. Pringle House was completely separate from the rest of the school. I suppose the idea was that for those formative years the boys would have had a higher level of supervision. There were around forty to fifty boys in there. There was

a back corridor which had the dorms running off it. It had numerous small dorms like the Set, the Holt and the Den.

9. I ended up in the holt which was a small room with four boys. We had a cabinet beside the bed. There was also a locker in the corridor to store your clothes and other personal possessions. It wasn't locked and things would always be pinched.
10. I think there were three hundred boys in total in the school. I was in Pringle from 1981 until 1982. The other houses were Chalmers West and Chalmers East which were in the main house. They were very different to Pringle House because they had big dorms which housed twelve to fifteen boys to a room.
11. The other houses were Rogerson West and Rogerson East. There were also dorms but they were separated by cubicles in one of the Rogerson houses. In Evans you had your own room.

Staff

12. The houses had a housemaster. James Rainy Brown who was the housemaster in Pringle House but he had another master called Balfour Paul who assisted him. Balfour Paul had a cottage attached to Pringle House.
13. James Rainy Brown had an office and bedroom within Pringle. He was a single man who seemed to be incredibly misogynistic. He taught Physics. During half-terms and the shorter holidays he would be there to supervise the boys who didn't go home. The housemaster played a much greater role in Pringle than in the other houses. There were always organised events because for many boys it was their first time away from home. The housemasters had a lesser role in the senior school.
14. There was a medical matron and a house matron. They both lived in Pringle House. The medical matron had a room at the front of the house. She was called Morna McFall. She was an attractive woman in her thirties or forties and the vast majority of

us had a crush on her. She was wonderful. I was incredibly clumsy and was always breaking things.

15. The house matron basically did the laundry and changed the beds. We put all of our clothes in the laundry and they would come back to us washed and ironed.
16. There were also prefects based in each house. We would have had some of the sixth formers who lived in Pringle.

Mornings and bedtime

17. James Rainy Brown, the housemaster, would come around and wake us up. You could book an early call if you wanted to do some homework. I think lessons started at around nine o'clock.
18. We had breakfast in the dining room in Pringle House. The rest of the school ate in the main building. We got ready and got all our school books together and went up to the main school. There were loads of bikes around so you could borrow a bike and cycle up to school.
19. There was a set bed time of ten o'clock in Pringle. You could get a pass if you wanted to stay up later to do homework. The classrooms were in the main building and there were some situated outside in the grounds.

Mealtimes / Food

20. We used to have our lunch in the main house and we would come back to Pringle House for dinner. On most days we would stop our lessons at two o'clock to play sport until four o'clock. After that we would go back into lessons until six o'clock. We had supervised prep after tea which was from seven to eight o'clock.
21. The food was relatively basic fare. I had my favourite meals such as the Scotch Pie and Haggis. Up in the main school, you ate in the main hall. I have described it as

being like an American movie. There were the '1st XV' who were the 'golden boys'. They were allowed to sit at the top table with Rainy Brown and the other staff. The others sat at small tables on the main floor. On match days they were given steak and the rest of us were given normal food.

22. One boy from each table would collect the food from the servery and pass it around. As I got older I didn't like the food. I used to skip meals. I recall Pringle was better because it had a kitchen and you could book it to make your own meal.

Washing / bathing

23. There was a shower room next to the dorms. There was also a bathroom in Pringle House which had a bank of showers and two or three cast iron claw foot baths. Pringle at that time was relatively new but it still had these baths. We were not supervised when we were bathing or showering. We didn't shower in the morning, instead we showered after sports. We always had activities going on.

Leisure time

24. In Pringle House our daily routine and activities were much more organised than the other houses. Sport was compulsory. The boys always participated. We played rugby on Thursdays and Fridays. I was also involved in the Combined Cadet Force. On Monday, Wednesday and Friday we went back to class after playing sports. On Tuesday and Thursday we had the afternoon off. When you were older you could go into town.
25. We had lessons on Saturday mornings and in the afternoons we normally played sport. We played rugby or cricket matches. On a Saturday evening we might have an event like a disco or we would watch a film. It was the only time you watched the television. On Sunday afternoons, there would often be organised events, we might be taken to climb 'The Cobbler' or to a museum. Quite often, Rainy Brown would often take us to the ice cream shop in Musselburgh. If anyone didn't want to go, they

could stay back at the house. I think there were times when there were twelve or thirteen year old boys on their own.

26. I was away from home so I was away from the screaming and shouting every night. I didn't mind being away from that. As a twelve year old boy you don't appreciate what it's like but I was there and experiencing it. I enjoyed the sport and the physical element but there was a lot of bullying going on too. It was quite difficult being in an all-male environment because I had grown up with my mother, my aunts and my grandmother.

Chores

27. The prefects used to give you duties to do like cleaning boots or making the beds. The practice of 'fagging' which was the term used to describe the practice of a boy being allocated to a prefect and carrying out duties for him had stopped shortly before I had gone. I remember some of the boys saying that the prefects would sometimes give them a couple of pounds for doing it at the end of term. A lot of the older boys loved the sense of power and control that they had over the younger ones.

Clothing / uniform

28. There was a school uniform and a 'non-uniform' which consisted of corduroy trousers, a sweatshirt and shoes. You had to buy this uniform from Aitken and Evans, the school outfitters. It was very expensive especially for my parents who weren't very wealthy.
29. Even as you got older you weren't supposed to wear jeans. When we got older, most of us used to go out into town with a bag with a change of clothes in it. At that time, in the late eighties, I was a 'Goth' so I would get changed in the toilets in Princes Street Gardens and put black hair dye in.

Trips / Holidays

30. For the first couple of years of my being there, my parents still lived in Gibraltar so during half-term I would return to Clydebank to stay with my aunt and uncle and grand-dad. During the longer holidays I would fly back to Gibraltar. I was taken to Edinburgh Turnhouse Airport, I would fly down to London and RAF Brize Norton and escorted from there before being flown out on a flight. The only people who went to Gibraltar were normally in the military or their family members.
31. After my parents had returned to the UK, I would get the train from Edinburgh to stay with them in Plymouth. I wasn't visited by anyone but you could occasionally be given permission to leave the school on a Sunday. It was called a 'pass out'. After church, I used to go into Edinburgh and get the train through to Glasgow to be picked up by my family. I would spend the afternoon with them and I'd come back to Edinburgh at tea time. As a twelve or thirteen year old I was used to travelling on my own.

Birthdays and Christmas

32. Birthdays weren't celebrated in Merchiston. In my later years it has become a bone of contention between my wife and me. I have never really celebrated my birthdays due to being in boarding school.

Visits / Inspections/ Review of Detention

33. I remember the Queen coming to visit once. I think there would have been an inspection but I don't remember it. I remember seeing an article in the Scotsman with a photo of me walking in the grounds so there might have been. If there had been any, they would have come in and sat in the classroom. They wouldn't have spoken to us. The visits wouldn't have been done the way they would be now. It would literally just have been observation and definitely no engagement with the boys.

Healthcare

34. If you were unwell you reported to the matron in the morning before class. You would be sent to the sanatorium. I remember at twelve or thirteen getting a lot of jabs and I always felt ill after them. I caught chicken pox for a second time when I was seventeen. I ended up in the sanatorium on my own for a week. There used to be GP surgery up in the main school or you'd go to hospital.

Religion

35. We went to church on Sunday mornings. I would describe church as being the classic archetypal film version of all the boys together in the big hall. The religious instruction was allegedly multi-denominational but it was very much based on the Kirk. The boys who didn't reside at the school were called 'day boys'. They came in on Saturdays for lessons and church on Sunday.

Discipline

36. I think James Rainy Brown used to talk you through stuff. I received the tawse from the masters during my time. In Pringle the punishment was to be given the tawse or a slipper. As you got older you got the cane too. Those were the official punishments. I remember having a slipper fight in the dorm with one of the boys and being caught by Rainy Brown. He gave me a telling off in his office and then he gave you the tawse across the bottom. I can't remember if it was on my bare bottom. It was acceptable at the time.

Bullying

37. I had a very difficult time in Pringle House. I had become quite an aggressive individual because of the situation with my parents and I wouldn't back down in an argument. As a result, I had problems with a couple of boys giving me a hard time. There were quite a few fights in my time there. It wasn't uncommon to be hung by your underpants by the older boys from the row of coat racks outside the main the dining room.

38. The bullying in the main school was particularly shocking. It was rife. There was a 'lord of the flies' culture. As I'd grown up moving around with my parents I was quite mature in some ways. I remember I had been back chatting to prefects in Rogerson. I woke up in the middle of the night with two of them holding me down and punching me in my bed. I think they had decided that I needed to learn my lesson. They were sixth formers but I don't remember who they were.
39. On another occasion I had been cheeky to an older boy when we were doing athletics so he took his running spikes off and decided he would beat me with his running spikes. I had blood running down the backs of my legs.
40. I remember another time I was having an argument in the dorm with someone in my year. We were arguing when he stood up on the bed and punched me out. I had to go to hospital and have my lip stitched up. He lost his dorm captaincy for two weeks.
41. I remember falling out with a particular boy called [REDACTED] once. We were supposed to be having a fight. His older brother was going to beat me. It didn't matter on the outcome of the fight, his brother was going to beat anyway. This boy had previously hit someone on the head with a full size pool cue but he was allowed to stay in the school. I didn't see it happen but I saw the boy's injuries.
42. Boys were punished for getting into trouble or fights, you got 'gated' which meant you weren't allowed to go out. Another punishment was that you used to have to turn up at different parts of the day in different types of uniform. There were also 'blue papers' which were lines but on blue paper and you couldn't do them in prep so they stood out. So boys were punished but the idea of wrapping a pool cue around someone's head would result in someone going to a Young Offender's Institution now.
43. I think after the incident with the boy who punched me, I realised that you just had to get on with it and that it was accepted as part of life then.

44. I didn't tell my parents about the bullying. I don't know why. I look back on it now and I think it really screwed me up psychologically but at the same time, I didn't want to leave because it was what I knew. I didn't want to be at home because when I went home during the holidays I saw how difficult my parents' marriage was.
45. Having physical altercations with people was common. Unfortunately, it was just part and parcel of school life. I can't imagine that the staff failed to notice that the bullying was going on, it was so overt, but they didn't intervene in it. Looking back on it now, it was shocking that we were allowed to just get on with it.

Abuse at Merchiston Castle School

James Rainy Brown

46. I was around twelve or thirteen when I started having problems with cramps in my legs. I would sometimes wake up in the middle of the night because my thigh was locked out with cramp. I remember on one particular night, James Rainy Brown the housemaster suggested giving me a massage to help with the cramps.
47. He took me into his bedroom and told me to lie down on the table. I was standing next to it and he told me take off my briefs. He said that they would restrict the blood flow and that it would be better if he massaged me without them on. I did what I was told because he was my house-master. He was a father figure. He proceeded to give me a massage. I don't remember him touching my penis but I had taken my briefs off so I can't be sure. The massage ended and I went back to my room.
48. Looking back and recollecting it, I don't know why he needed me to remove my underwear. I think there must have been some form of sexual gratification for him because there was no need for me to take my underwear off. I don't remember anybody specifically telling me that they had been massaged too but I'm sure other boys would have experienced the same thing.

49. On some mornings James Rainy Brown would come into the dorm and wake us up earlier. He would parade a group of boys into the shower room. We would all be naked and would have to take turns to sit in a claw foot bath which was filled with ice cold water. We would have to sit in it for a few minutes. He would take control of those sessions. It wasn't normal for a house-master to be supervising a group of boys who were naked in a room.
50. I remember a boy called [REDACTED] who told me that James Rainy Brown had asked him how often he masturbated.
51. There was a master called Gordon Cruden. He taught French. There were suggestions and gossip about him. They were rife within the school.
52. I remember another time going cycling in Colinton Woods and one of the boys had fallen down a hole. We took home into a house there to get help. A man started walking through the woods and he got a couple of us to play fight with them. My friends were going back to the school but I told them that I wanted to wait on my friend who was injured. This man tried to carry me towards the bushes. My friends came back and he left. Looking back on it now he had every intention of abusing me. I don't know who he was.

Final term at Merchiston

53. I had worked very hard for my O-Levels but I didn't really get the results I had expected. My attitude changed and I didn't do any work. I really blew things in the final term and wasn't doing any work. There was no check on wherever you were doing any work.
54. I got into a relationship with one of the house-matrons in the main school. She was about 21. One night I overheard that she had locked herself out of her room. I climbed up onto the flat roof and helped her get into her room. We developed a friendship over a period of time. She was from the [REDACTED] and, I think, she must

have been lonely. I would wait until the other boys had gone to their bed and I would climb into her room. I would stay there all night.

55. We were found out and I was called into the housemaster's office. I denied that we were in a sexual relationship. I had to phone my dad to tell him that I was being suspended. At that time, he was a warrant officer in the Navy. I went to meet him from Edinburgh Train Station. He just gave a cuddle and I loved it. It was one of the nicest things that he ever did.
56. We went into the housemaster's office. He was David Spawforth. He told my father that I was going to be suspended. I had to go to stay with my aunt for a week because my mother was so angry.
57. I came back to the school in [REDACTED] 1986. The girl had been sacked and sent back to the [REDACTED]. I spent my eighteenth birthday in the sanatorium because I had caught chicken pox.
58. I failed all my A-Levels.

Leaving Merchiston Castle

59. I left Merchiston in the summer of 1987. I was driven away from the school by my mother and aunt. I remember screaming "it's finished!"
60. After I left, I tried to re-sit my 'A-Levels' and worked in a Wimpy restaurant to save some money.

Life after being in care

61. I started with the Royal Navy in February in 1988. I was sent to Naval College in Dartmouth. I spent about a year there which included a period in Dartmouth Training Squadron. Initially I joined as an Observer in the Air Crew but I failed flying training so I became a seaman officer.

62. I spent a period of time working on a frigate, north of Scotland. I hadn't joined the Navy to go to sea and I found it very boring. I left and was told that I had the best management training in the world but I couldn't get a job.
63. I managed an [REDACTED] shop in Croydon for a year. After that, I decided that I wanted to join the Royal Marines as I had originally planned to do so I came back to stay with my parents in Plymouth to prepare for it. However, I started working for the Crown Prosecution Service as an Administration Officer.
64. I then joined the Child Support Agency and was allocated to a role in the Child Support Agency Watchdog in Leeds. I met my wife there and we got a flat together in Leeds.
65. I joined the Prison Service in 1998. I started in Leeds Prison and worked there for two years. I worked in various prisons around Yorkshire over the years. I came to HMP Wakefield in [REDACTED] as a [REDACTED] I have worked in counter-terrorism and offender management.

Impact

66. I think Merchiston gave people confidence and a sense of arrogance. There was a sense of "you're a Merchistonian, you're better than everyone else". I don't think I necessarily believed that at the time.
67. I think it made me angry but I didn't have a good home life either. I don't know what the causative factor was but I was spectacularly aggressive in younger adulthood. I wasn't naturally like that so I think the bullying and frustration played a large role in that. I had problems controlling my temper. I managed my anger by playing sport in my younger years. I was very fit individual. I can't play sport now due to ill health. I think I've just mellowed with age but I still have a very short temper.

68. I also had problems with alcohol when I was younger. I saw myself going the same way as my mother so I stopped drinking overnight. In hindsight, it could have been my way of trying to cope with experiences at Merchiston. I think drinking is often a way out for people. I think, for me, it was about getting out of my head.
69. I have major issues with other people's lack of integrity. I have a highly defined sense of right and wrong and, I think, that's because of the bullying in Merchiston. I think that is why I have been selected for my current role within the Prison Service because there are no grey areas. The Prison Service aspires to be the epitome of professional standards. I became an Anti-Bullying Rep when I was a Prison officer at [REDACTED]. I was involved in delivering bullying awareness sessions to prisoners. I once fell out with a previous governor because she was bullying staff and I couldn't tolerate it.
70. I haven't sought support from counsellors or psychiatrists. I work with veterans and advise them to engage with counselling services but it doesn't appeal to me. I would rather deal with it myself.

Reporting of Abuse

71. In terms of the bullying, there wasn't really anything to report. There were assaults but the school dealt with them at the time. However, whether they were dealt with appropriately is another matter.
72. The only thing which prompted me to report the incident with James Rainy Brown was coming across an article on the internet about four or five years ago about someone who had alleged that Rainy Brown had abused him. I felt guilty that I hadn't reported it earlier. I was told by the police that they weren't progressing the matter.

Records

73. I came across a couple of my school report cards in a box when my father died. I have no intention of going back to visit Merchiston.

Lessons to be Learned

74. The driving force for me was knowing that there so many victims of crimes and abuse who aren't believed. I have learned about that through my work in the Prison Service. I believe that any person making an allegation has the right to have their allegation heard. In the case of the person who made an allegation against Rainy Brown, they had that right taken away because I read that Rainy Brown committed suicide before any case was brought.
75. Unfortunately, I don't believe Merchiston has changed from the elitist attitude that it promotes in its' pupils. In my view, private school education is better than state school because it instils ambition and drive in children. There is a sense of expectation on you. However, I would never have sent my own son to a boarding school because I wouldn't have wanted him to experience it.

Other information

76. The punishment and treatment of pupils was accepted at the time. It isn't acceptable to say "that's just the way it was" we have to be better than we were. I hope the Inquiry will help other people who have genuinely been abused in care.
77. 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.

CCY

Signed.....

Dated..... 11/09/2018