

## **Scottish Child Abuse Inquiry**

Witness Statement of

**Charles HALLIDAY**

1. My full name is Charles F. A. T. Halliday. My date of birth is [REDACTED] 1943. My contact details are known to the Inquiry.

### **Education and career**

2. I obtained a Masters degree at Trinity College in Dublin and a Diploma in Education from Oxford University.
3. From 1967 to 1969 I was a classics master at Eton College. Thereafter, I was schoolmaster at Temple Grove in Uckfield. I then went to Canada, where I was a schoolmaster at Bishop's College. I returned to England and took employment at Eastbourne College in England as schoolmaster. I was then headmaster at Loretto Junior School in Musselburgh for nearly five years. Thereafter, I worked at Stonyhurst St Mary's Hall in Lancashire, and lastly, I worked part time at Moor Park School in Ludlow, Shropshire, also as schoolmaster.
4. In terms of teaching, I was a classicist by trade, so I taught classics subjects. I also taught English and History.
5. I retired in 2007.

*Anthony Chenevix-Trench*

6. I have been asked about Anthony Chenevix-Trench, who was the headmaster of Eton College until 1970. He was the one who appointed me to Eton so I was very grateful

for that. He was a very nice and very clever man. He had been a Japanese prisoner of war. He gave lectures and talks to fellow prisoners of war, I believe.

7. He was asked to leave Eton College, which he did in 1970. I was only 24 years old and a young teacher at the time so I didn't know a lot about the work politics. I did know there was a fair amount of tension between him and the 24 house masters. There are about fifty boys in each house, so the house master's union is a pretty powerful one, and if they decided that the headmaster was not their cup of tea then there would be problems.
8. He had a year with his family after leaving Eton, before being appointed as headmaster at Fettes College. He died in office while at Fettes.
9. Tim Card, wrote the book, "Eton Renewed." He was called the Vice-Provost of Eton when he wrote the book, which means that he was the deputy to the chairman of the board of governors. He had been a teacher and a housemaster at Eton so he knew the school through and through. He wrote in his book that Chenevix-Trench was fond of booze and beating boys. This was news to me and doesn't fit in with my recollection of him in 1969, although I did hear this about him with subsequent conversations with people.

#### **Loretto Junior School, Musselburgh**

10. I was headmaster at Loretto Junior School from 1987 to 1991. I was interviewed for the job by the school governors, both in Edinburgh and at Loretto.
11. The headmaster of the senior school was The Reverend Norman Drummond, the headmaster of Loretto.

*Previous headmasters*

12. At that time, jobs were advertised in the educational supplement of The Times, and that was where I saw the post. I applied and was invited for an interview. I suspect my references would already have been checked out.
13. I then came to Edinburgh on the sleeper train, and arrived early in the morning. I spent the morning travelling to Musselburgh to see where the school was. That afternoon, I had my interview in a solicitor's office on Charlotte Square with the school governors.
14. I succeeded Clifford Hughes as headmaster of the junior school at Loretto. Clifford Hughes had become headmaster after Hamish Galbraith, who had been at the Loretto junior school for a long time and was much liked.
15. Clifford Hughes left Loretto in the summer of 1986 and I was appointed to succeed him, but I didn't join Loretto until January 1987. Mr Armstrong was acting headmaster, and in charge, from September to December 1986, until I joined.
16. I don't know why <sup>CRX</sup> [REDACTED] I know that he was a very talented man and a talented [REDACTED] I know that Mr <sup>CRW</sup> [REDACTED] didn't get on with him but he never expanded on why that was. I think <sup>CRX</sup> [REDACTED] was perhaps a man of moods. Various people did not like him but that is no reason for a <sup>SNR</sup> [REDACTED] to be dismissed. That said, in a small school, it helps if the staff get on with <sup>SNR</sup> [REDACTED] because they see each other all the time.
17. <sup>CRX</sup> [REDACTED] went off to train to be a [REDACTED] and I think he went to Haddington for a time. He is no longer with us and I think he has been dead for some years now.

*Loretto junior school*

18. Loretto is not a large school, with about 400 or so pupils so it was like a large family. The junior school had about eighty boys in it, therefore, it was common sense that the junior school regard itself as part of the whole.
19. There were two boarding houses in Loretto Junior School. Just over half of the eighty boarders were in North Esk Lodge, in the main part of the junior school building which was on North High Street in Musselburgh. The rest of the boarders, just under forty boys, were in Newfield House, which was about a three minute walk away.
20. The junior school, was at that time, a member of the Incorporated Association for Preparatory Schools. To be a proper preparatory school, pupils went on to their senior school at thirteen plus. Loretto changed its relationship with the junior school, so that the junior school pupils went on to the senior school at twelve plus. Therefore, I don't believe the Loretto nippers are part of the Association anymore because it is not defined as a prep school anymore, but as a junior school.
21. I always felt that was what the governors of Loretto wanted. In some ways, I can understand why, because the junior school had a small number of boys compared to the senior school, so it made sense for it all to be considered as a whole.

*My role*

22. I was headmaster of the junior school from 1987 to 1991. In practice, I was responsible for the wellbeing of pupils and staff.
23. I was the housemaster of the main boarding house, North Esk Lodge, which had just over forty boys in it.
24. As well as being headmaster and housemaster, I also taught English and History while I was there.

25. No training was provided for the role as headmaster. There was continuous liaison between myself and the headmaster of Loretto during my employment. I referred to the senior school on matters out of manners, and to keep the lines of communication open. I had no say at all in the decisions to do with the senior school at all.

*Strategic planning*

26. I don't have much recollection of strategic planning; my memory is hazy after thirty plus years.
27. The major event that took place in my time was that the Loretto Nippers celebrated their centenary in 1991. There was a great deal of discussion that went on between all of us in the four months leading up to the event that took place in June 1991.
28. I do recall that a new classroom block was built for the junior school and when it came to the time to discuss the finance, I wasn't asked to attend the meeting of the finance committee, who met in Edinburgh and I thought I should have been because I would be the one having to implement whatever decisions were made. The bursar went along to the meeting.
29. Strategic planning was never undertaken, other than in conjunction with the headmaster and the bursar. I met the headmaster of the senior school, Norman Drummond, and the bursar, Major General Lyon, every week. It was mostly tactical planning, rather than strategic planning. We met to discuss the events of the week and what we would be doing the following week. We were constantly discussing how things worked on the ground. Strategy was less important than tactics.
30. It was difficult to be the headmaster of the junior school, in a sense, because you weren't entirely a free agent. In one way, the pressure was off because the bursar took the decisions to do with finance, and as headmaster, I just offered an advisory role. It did mean I wasn't entirely independent, but that was inevitable in a school like Loretto. In many ways it was the strength of the school as everybody knew what was going on and what was required of them.

### **Other staff**

31. During my time at Loretto, I had responsibility for half of the boarders at Loretto Junior School, which was approximately forty boys. I was assisted by a live in member of teaching staff and his wife.
32. We were all assisted also by my own wife, Juliet. She and I lived in North Esk Lodge. Also living in the building, when I arrived there, was a man called Bill Jones and his wife Hilary, as well as a live in matron called Maureen Woodward.
33. Bill Jones moved on to do other things and we were then joined by Dennis Dickinson, who I recruited. He was joined by his wife, Emma.
34. Maureen Woodward left and was succeeded by a Mrs Patricia Baigrie, who had a very powerful Edinburgh accent. She was a breath of fresh air.
35. Mr <sup>CRW</sup> [REDACTED] was the housemaster of Newfield House and just under forty of the boarders there. He had a degree of autonomy within his own building, assisted by his matron.
36. All of the staff in the junior school were responsible to me.

### *Recruitment of staff*

37. Recruitment of staff at Loretto Junior School was primarily my responsibility, subject to the approval of upper school authorities, who was The Reverend Norman Drummond, the headmaster of Loretto.
38. At that time, jobs were advertised in The Times educational supplement and people applied by post, with details of their references.

39. When somebody gave me a reference, the first thing I would do would be to get on the telephone to the fellow headmaster who employed them, and in the course of the conversation, learn what the candidate was really like. The referee would be consulted before deciding whether to invite the candidate for an interview.
40. All appointments were backed up by reference to supporting referees. These commented on the candidate's academic suitability, and also on their suitability for work in a boarding school.
41. Appointing good staff is even more important in a boarding school than in a day school, because there is a social requirement to fit in as well as having the academic skills to teach.
42. The headmaster of Loretto in the 1960s was reported to have said, "a school is like a club," and when somebody wants to join the club, you find out what the rules are and abide by the rules. If those rules don't suit you then you find another club. In a way, life in boarding schools is like that. The staff who join need to feel socially comfortable in the environment.
43. After checking references, a potential candidate would be invited to Loretto. I collected several people from Edinburgh Airport, and then the person would join us at the school for the whole day. It was not just a talk between me and the candidate; it was a full day for them to meet the staff and the pupils.
44. When I appointed someone in the junior school, it was solely my decision. I informed the headmaster, Norman Drummond, as a matter of good manners rather than anything else. I don't think he would have vetoed any appointment but he would have been puzzled if he hadn't been told.
45. In the case of Dennis Dickinson, who I appointed to Loretto Nippers in 1987, I struck gold. He had a very good reference from his previous school in Durham. He was one of these people who pupils could chat to but wouldn't misbehave in front of. He made

a success of his time at Loretto, to the extent that he is still employed in the upper school there even now.

46. Some staff are inspired and some are inspiring, but the most important thing about staff in schools is that they should be reliable and turn up.
47. I came across one or two members of staff who were hypochondriacs. One of the members of staff who I appointed was a gentleman who I felt suffered from a bad back a little too often and wouldn't be able to go into work. It is always a nuisance in schools when staff are absent.
48. I didn't drive any change in the appointment of new staff while at Loretto. I followed the accepted practice, which was to look for somebody even better than the person who was being replaced.

#### *Training and supervision*

49. No formal training was undertaken by the staff, but I was in personal contact with the staff every day.
50. In a small school, which had about eighty boys, I was constantly monitoring staff. That was my involvement in the supervision and evaluation of the staff.
51. Staff appraisals were in their infancy in the 1980s.

#### **Living arrangements**

52. My wife and I lived in the same building as the forty boarders in our care. The supporting staff, male and female also lived in the same building.
53. All responsible staff had access to children's residential areas. This was a strength of the school and a requirement of the school governors.



54. There was a personal touch in Loretto and that was regarded as humane, rather than having distance from the boys just for distance sake.
55. When I arrived, I discovered that the youngest boys' dormitory, for the eight year olds, was only accessible through my living quarters. This meant that boys and their parents had to walk from the school part of the house, into my flat, to get into the dormitory. The governors regarded that as a strength because the youngest boys were literally in the care of the headmaster and his wife.
56. I did go on to challenge this arrangement as time went on because once or twice, I was caught out with a parent standing in my living quarter as I was coming out of the bathroom with a towel wrapped around me. In about 1989, I persuaded the governors to let a separate entrance be created into the boy's dormitory, that didn't go through my flat, and this was done.

#### **Culture of communication at Loretto**

57. The boys at Loretto were encouraged to voice their opinions on all matters.
58. Loretto was not strong on written rules, but the headmasters of the upper and junior school met the pupils every morning in what many would call assembly, but at Loretto, we called it "double."
59. I attended these meetings in the main hall with all 80 of the junior school boys every morning, just me and them, except once a week when other staff would be present.
60. At these meetings, I talked about all sorts of things with them, including current affairs, what happened in class or in games. There was a general feeling about what was considered to be good, and what was less good. I didn't always manufacture something to say, and if the boys didn't have a lot to say, we would play music. I would often play recorded classical musical to them.

61. The upper school had a similar occasion where the headmaster met the upper school pupils in the school dining room. He walked around the room and spoke to the pupils.
62. There was a minister who had two sons, who joined the school. They had very strong Edinburgh accents. Another boy had also joined from Surrey who had a posh accent and it was interesting seeing them communicate and trying to understand each other. That was a good thing in the school; they were all different animals from different backgrounds, and they recognised that they had to get on with each other. I felt that was a strength of Loretto, that it was classless, unlike some other independent schools in Scotland.

### **Discipline and punishment**

63. I abolished corporal punishment on arrival at Loretto, in 1987.
64. When I arrived, I discovered that independent members of staff were sometimes smacking boys in the classroom with a tawse or gym shoe. I abolished it by saying in my very first staff meeting, in January 1987, that if any teacher felt strongly that a child should be beaten, then they should send the child to me. I had no intention of beating any child myself, so the practice simply stopped. I don't remember any member of staff objecting to it or even questioning it.
65. Pupils were punished largely by curtailment of their free time. This was a recognised policy.
66. In a boarding school, boys had a lot of free time at the weekend, which they valued very highly because they could go out. By keeping them in at the weekend and making them sit in a class room as a punishment, meant that they felt they were losing valuable free time and was a big deal for them.

67. In such a small school as Loretto Junior School, all the staff and children knew what sort of behaviour was required and desirable. It was a very small school. All of the pupils and the staff were in contact all the time, all meals were eaten together so there was just a school feeling about what was desirable and what was unacceptable.
68. There was a new school minibus that somebody had scratched initials onto with a compass.
69. Everybody recognised that this was unacceptable, and it was also recognised that to punish everybody for it was not fair or desirable, but it is very difficult to avoid doing that at times. I kept the whole school in for about 45 minutes after school in the hope that the person who did it would own up, but I never got a result. Sometimes people just don't own up and the person who did it got away with it, but it did make them all realise that this kind of behaviour just wasn't acceptable.
70. Senior boys had no power to punish the junior boys in Loretto Junior School. I remember other schools, like Eton, boys would beat other boys right up until the 1980s. I always thought that that was unacceptable, even at the time. I always thought anybody turning their bottom towards another person to be beaten was humiliating.
71. No fagging took place in Loretto. In such a small school, I would hope that any form of ill treatment would have speedily come to my ears as I had daily communication with the boys.

*Concerns about the school*

72. Children were free to talk to me at any time, or indeed to any member of staff, male or female, if they wished to make a complaint or report a concern.
73. I am not aware of any complaints having been received.
74. To my knowledge, the school and its pupils were never the subject for concern. I was not aware of any concern.

75. If there were any concerns, it would have been my responsibility, in conjunction with the headmaster of Loretto, to inform parents of them.

*Trusted adult or confidante*

76. Children could speak to me or my wife at any time if they had a concern. They could do this at the morning meetings, or approach us in private if they wished.
77. I was at the school for just under five years and I was not aware of any concerns that the pupils had. I felt I had a good relationship with the boys of all ages, and I am quite confident that if any of them were truly concerned about anything, they would have come to see me or Mr <sup>CRW</sup> [REDACTED] who was the house master for half of the boarders.
78. It is quite possible, I suppose, that the boys wouldn't have come to speak to me or see me if they had a concern, but I think they would have done. There was no barrier between myself and the pupils.

**Abuse at Loretto**

79. Abuse really depends on what people mean by it. Some people may define beating a pupil on the bottom was abuse in the currency of nowadays, but it was quite common practice about a century ago.
80. Matters of abuse were being raised for the first time towards the end of 1980s, when Esther Rantzen was around, and also Childline had come in. Before that, schools were extraordinarily private places, especially boarding schools. In a way it was a good thing, but I think it also encouraged pupils to read more into the fact that a member of staff maybe just didn't like them, which would be inevitable in any school.
81. At the time, I understood from hearsay, that if a staff member anywhere misbehaved in a criminal manner, they would just be given a note and told to leave without any

reference to the police, and thus be free to be employed in another school. I don't know of any specific examples of this having happened.

82. In my time, "abuse" meant the personality clashes inevitable in any group where day to day tensions arose, where one pupil perhaps struck another. That would be dealt with by getting to the bottom of the matter.
83. Frequent staff meetings gave an opportunity for any concerns of any individual pupils to be aired.
84. I thought physical abuse was quite unacceptable and was aware of absolutely no physical or sexual abuse taking place at Loretto. I don't have any more to say about that.
85. I was not aware of, or part of, any investigation into abuse at Loretto School. I was not aware of any police investigations either. I also do not know of any person working at the school who was convicted of abuse.
86. I worked in schools from the age of about twenty and onwards, and was never aware of any abuse taking place in any of the schools I worked at.

#### **Child protection arrangements**

87. Guidance to the staff on child protection measures took the form of constant discussion about pupils in our care, and the airing of any concerns about personality clashes.
88. I am confident that staff with major concerns would have approached me about them.
89. It was always the case that the Housemaster had a degree of autonomy in their house. It was their home as well as their place of work. In most boarding houses, the

headmaster would still ask permission to go into somebody's house, or at least give notice that they intended to visit, because it was the person's home.

90. This was the situation when I arrived and it didn't change during my time.

91. There were no formal child protection measures in place.

### **External monitoring**

92. During the period that I was in Loretto, there was no outside monitoring of the school.

### **Record keeping**

93. On arrival at the school, I was not aware of any record keeping, apart from on academic matters.

94. During my time there, record keeping was confined to academic matters. Copies of all reports were kept.

95. I could not say with accuracy what records from my time there would still exist.

### **Leaving Loretto**

96. I left Loretto in the summer of 1991. It wasn't an easy job because there was a tension between the need to feel independent, and the need to feel part of the whole of Loretto. I think a number of people found that difficult to sustain.

97. I was succeeded by a man called David Clark, who took over as headmaster at the junior school. He had been at Fettes junior school before. He didn't stay at Loretto very

long and was succeeded by a headmaster who had come from a school in Scarborough.

98. I think Loretto has got what it wanted in a way, and the junior school is now a junior house and not an independent school in its own right. It is now part of the whole of Loretto school so doesn't have a headmaster.
99. I went on to teach at St Mary's Hall in Stonyhurst. It was a large school in Lancashire, run by the Jesuits Order. I taught in their preparatory school. It was an informal interview, and they just really wanted to see if I was academically competent.
100. I think I had to advance a reference.

#### **Specific alleged abusers**

CRX

101. I have been asked if I knew a man called CRX during my time at Loretto. I am aware that CRX was SNR of the junior school, but that was before my time there. Our periods of employment at the school did not coincide.
102. If there was anything sinister surrounding CRX leaving, I was never told about it. Nobody mentioned anything about it to me. My impression was just that he simply wasn't that good at his job.
103. My understanding is that Mr CRX is now deceased.

CRW

104. I have been asked about a CRW, and I can confirm that I did work with him, for almost five years from 1987 until 1991. I believe he was in his forties when I worked with him.

105. CRW [REDACTED] was the housemaster of Newfield House, which had just under forty boys in it. He was the SNR [REDACTED] and also a teacher. He taught [REDACTED] at middle school level, to the boys aged nine to ten years old.
106. He became the member of the [REDACTED] while he was at Loretto and I am sure he retained his membership when he moved on.
107. We liaised with each other on every day matters and the [REDACTED] of the school, and we got on extremely well. We also had weekly meetings between myself, my wife and Mr CRW [REDACTED]. This was to keep channels of communication open. There wasn't a great deal to talk about because we knew our business. We took a diary to these meetings, and looked at what events were upcoming and decided on the best way forward.
108. I met with Mr CRW [REDACTED] every day at school, and also saw him with children every day. Children behaved well in his presence. I believe this discipline was achieved by children being aware of where the lines were drawn.
109. I recall him being a very caring and hardworking housemaster. He was a very effective teacher. He was also an excellent, caring and effective coach of [REDACTED] for twelve and thirteen year olds.
110. When I joined the school, he had a [REDACTED] moustache and looked quite eccentric. [REDACTED]. One little boy called [REDACTED] said he felt sick when he saw that because he felt the moustache was the part of the man.
111. I did not see him abuse children, nor hear of him abusing children.
112. I have been asked about Mr CRW [REDACTED] going on sabbatical in 1989, and the reason why. I have no recollection of him going on sabbatical. I know that he got married during that time, so maybe that had something to do with it. He married the [REDACTED] of the upper school at Loretto, [REDACTED].



113. I have been told that The Minute of the Board of Governors of 1989 to 1991 perhaps suggest the school were keen for Mr CRW to leave Loretto, and asked why that may be. I don't know the answer to that.
114. I think a good school needs to have a number of people who are in the staff for a long time, to provide stability, but also need younger people who come in for a short period with new ideas. I think in Mr CRW's case, he had been at Loretto for about years when I arrived, and people felt it was maybe time for him to move on and spread his wings.
115. Beyond that general feeling that he had exhausted his usefulness at the junior school and was a bit stuck in his ways. I don't know why it would be suggested that he leave beyond that. I was not aware of any sinister connotations. I always thought he behaved correctly with pupils and other members of staff.
116. Mr CRW left Loretto because he got a job as a SNR in a school in North Wales, which was a promotion for him. He left in 1991. I departed from the school in the same shortly after him.
117. I was asked to give a reference for his new job, but no doubt he asked for other references too.
118. I think Mr CRW now lives with his wife in

### **Final thoughts**

119. I understand that corporal punishment was occasionally carried out by individual members of staff until I arrived in 1987. I abolished the practice, believing that other methods of punishing miscreants were called for.
120. The key to protecting children in boarding schools is appointing good staff, who are reliable and can fit in socially as well as academically, and then to keep the lines of

communication continuously open. I believe that was the case in Loretto School between 1987 and 1991.

121. People are far more probing in their searches when appointing staff than they used to be.

122. 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.....  
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Dated..... 09 November 2020 .....