

## In the Beginning \*

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Since I turned 80 in October '13 and the school turns 80 in '14, I thought I would record some memories of the people and place. Due to my arriving aged almost one at the start of the school, Kurt Hahn used to call me 'The Oldest Old Boy'. However there were of course those older than me who came to the start of the school aged 13 or over when I was only one. The memories recorded here about the growth of the school are personal and their accuracy is dependent on the glow or slide of memory. Because my parents worked with the school between 1934 and about 1950, I will start with them:

They were both Scots - father a Highlander from Argyll and mother a Lowlander from the Tweed. Father, Keir Campbell (1892-1955), was educated at Eton and Trinity Cambridge, mother, Olivia Noel-Paton (1905-1999) at Downe House and Glasgow University. They had got stuck - unemployed - in the US in the Great Depression of 1931. Due to father's work schedule of 2 years in the field as a geologist for Shell Oil and then 6 months of leave, that 6 months was their window in which to get married. Mother's father, a professor at Glasgow University, died just at that point. In those days, a wedding in Scotland so soon after a funeral was thought inappropriate. So since mother's brother was working in Seattle and father was in California training to be a Field Manager with Shell after years in the Mid-East and Mexico, they got married in Seattle. Mother had just completed her PhD at London University. Their wedding trip was camping with horses and fishing rods in the Sierra Nevada. A month later, people started jumping out of windows on Wall Street, the Depression was on, and my father was laid off.

All they owned was a bed and a car, so the bed was strapped to the roof of the Buick and they set off for San Francisco, there being mistaken for refugees from a Southern California earthquake. They rented a room above Fisherman's Wharf and worked in soup kitchens and fund raising for charities. They made friends among the British 'remittance men' who had scandalized their families in some way and so were paid to stay away. They partied on 'bath tub gin,' being during Prohibition, which, like the later 'Drug War', never worked. One of these British lads had a brother at Oxford who turned up with a spiritual (not 'spiritualist') group then called 'The Oxford Group'. He invited them all to the St. Francis Hotel to hear their speakers. Their unusual honesty produced a reconciliation between father and his mother-in-law but no other obvious influence for them. However mother, as an agnostic, found a faith. Next morning she tried their idea of listening to what they called the 'inner voice' - basically intuition, and writing down her thoughts. She wrote; 'the banks are going to close. Take out funds and buy groceries'. That they did, and next day the banks all closed. Although I was later told that Kurt Hahn did not approve of the Oxford Group and its later evolutions, (now 'Initiatives of Change'), I believe that it may have been through that connection that The Rev. Henry Rogers became the first Chaplain at Gordonstoun.

My parents were rescued from penury by Uncle Donald Noel-Paton in Seattle. He found that the paper companies needed lime rock for their process and were looking for someone to start a quarry. Donald investigated known lime deposits in the San Juan Islands northwest of Seattle. He invited father to review his findings who in turn hitched a ride on a cargo boat and come up and checked out the lime deposits. The Buick was sold and second hand equipment and a tip lorry (dump truck) were bought. Trees were cleared and used to build a dock or pier. My parents lived in a rented two-room summer cabin with an outside privy and water pump and a wood stove. In the light snow at sea level in winter the brightness showed through the knot holes in the wooden walls.

At one point grandmother again visited and decided they were working too hard and had no fun. She bought them a sailing dinghy. Both mother and father had grown up sailing. Mother and Donald took their mother out in the boat but couped the boat in a squall just off the pier. Grandmother could not swim. Donald got her to a cross beam under the pier but then she could not hold on by herself. So mother, nine months pregnant, had to climb the dock to find father and a rope to rescue her. In doing so she precipitated my birth, and as soon as

grandmother was warm and dry she was rushed in a speed boat to Seattle where I was born at 2 am next morning.

By spring of the following year, 1934, the parents had enough funds made through the quarry to return to Britain where the Depression had mellowed earlier than in the US. They sailed on a cargo vessel via the Panama Canal and stayed in London with mother's Godmother Mrs. Montague Norman in The Red House (not Wm. Morris') where she had a collection of silver 'Nefs' in the basement. Montague had been chairman of the Bank of England.

Both father and mother were looking for work in Scotland. Mother saw an advertisement in *The Times* for a 'Housekeeper' for a new boy's boarding school being started in the north of Scotland. She called up and was asked to an interview at Brown's Hotel. Used mostly by people of a landowning background then, Hahn enjoyed the atmosphere and would often stay there. He had only recently been got out of the clutches of Hitler through British friends.

There, for the first time, she, Olivia, met Kurt Hahn. When he agreed to employ her, she asked whether she had any chance of using her PhD eventually and teaching history. He said that he would be doing that. However before long he realized that he had to raise funds and deal with parents and school morale and discipline and so she taught for many years. She then said that she should tell him that she had a husband and an infant. 'Where are they?' 'Out in the car' 'Bring them in'. So my father Keir came in and Hahn was evidently reminded of friends with whom he had been a student at Oxford before the First World War. Hahn immediately took to Keir and told him that although he could not offer him any salary at that point, if he would run the estate, they would have a house and food and a salary for Olivia. Eventually he would be employed, first to teach geography and later also as house master of Cumming House when it was first built.

### *Helping to Found Gordonstoun*

I was often told that their first and last task at Gordonstoun was moving beds. We lived first in Gordonstoun House, of which I only remember the San (clinic) which was on an upper floor and looked east. I was later told that when the house was prepared for the school, several cart-loads of bones were removed from the bottle-dungeon in the shower-room under the west wing. One of my earliest memories was of mother turning cart-wheels on the south lawn. Then we moved to the newly converted Round Square. An early memory was the smell of paint drying on the radiators. Just south of the Round Square was the vegetable garden where I remember being given a warm tomato right off the bush by the head gardener. I bit and it squirted all over my clean shirt, much to my distress. The pig sties were in the belt of woodland above the garden. To the south of these, in due course and perhaps after the War, there were wooden huts erected for a San and Bex's laboratory and eventually, the carpenter's shop. Some must have been there before the war because when the school moved to Wales for the duration, staff furniture was stored in one of these buildings. Unfortunately, during the army occupation of Gordonstoun during the war, someone knowledgeable about antiques broke in and stole a few items belonging to my parents.

As the number of boys increased, we moved out to a farm on the Duffus-Hopeman road called Williamston. The scrubbed stone floored passage back to where the farmer's family lived often smelled of bleach. I was taught to say 'Oy-Oy-Mun!' to the Ploughmen as they brought the plough horses in at evening.

We then moved to the farm house of Plewlands north of the school, a charming house where for the first time Olivia could decorate and furnish the place with family antiques and pictures. There was even a day nursery and a night nursery and a green baize door under the curving stairs. The years of camping out were over. Our Nanny, Meg Tyndale would - after the Second World War, be housekeeper at the Round Square. Later she married Dave Gordon, the estate Gamekeeper and they had a hidden cottage south of Elgin. She had been a Guide in the troop my mother had started while a student. Her father had been head forester on my great-uncle's place at Dawyck. Our cook, Janet Yates - known as 'Jinit' - came from a farm in Aberdeen and had been poorly treated at her previous post at a small tower house near Elgin. She would later be cook at the school in term time and come on holiday with us to Wester Dawyck on the

Borders in the spring or Argyll in the summer. She could have been a teacher, had she not been so heavy, for she did the *London Times* crossword each week. By our time at Plewlands my sister Felicity was born, followed by brother Oran in 1942-3 and youngest sister Mary in 1945.

During those early years many local people were most suspicious of the school, even those who were more cosmopolitan but had perhaps suffered in the First War. I am aware how father, with his DSO and OE tie, and his sister Aunt Olga, Lady Byatt who had come north to be near him after being widowed, did their best to integrate with 'The County' and re-assure people about how Hahn had suffered imprisonment by Hitler and was no threat or spy. Since some early boys and staff were refugees from Germany or Austria, their accents added a 'foreign' feeling to the school in the eyes of local people. However Hahn himself was successful in making friends among the fishing people in Hopeman. He knew some families on the Findhorn and had once leapt across Randolph's Leap himself.

Among such 'County' people I remember visits from Mr. Brodie of Milton Brodie and his friend Mr. Chadwick who was rotund. I was told that he had been 'blown up by gas in the war.' Having experience of balloons, the image produced was startling. Aged five, I was taken to a most grand and elaborate children's party at the Moray's place at Darnaway. There another boy, furious at being dressed at Little Lord Fauntleroy, came up and knocked me down. Tearfully I asked my mother 'Why?' She, who had been known at Downe House as 'the pugnacious Pict' was astonished that I did not just hit him back. Another visitor to Plewlands, bringing a large woven bag of Cox's Orange Pippins, was Miss Willis, founder of the girl's school at Downe House.

From age five I was taken each week day to Duffus House where there was a kindergarten (as it was then called) in a creosoted wooden hut in the orchard. This was run by Miss Mathers who braided her hair and wound it around her head. We learned reading and writing, hand crafts and had 'milk & biscuits'. Perhaps also our 'times tables'.

Kurt Hahn being a great Shakespeare enthusiast, as soon as he was able, he mounted an out-door play. My first memory of one of these plays was of *King Lear*, performed on the South front of Gordonstoun House. A great series of stairs and landings in unpainted lumber was always built to lead down from the windows of the Assembly Hall on the first floor in a symmetrical design. On one occasion when I must have been about 4 or 5, my mother was roped in to play Goneril or Regan and I was concerned, asking my father 'Why does she look so sad?' The great tree in the middle of the south lawn was used in *Hamlet* as the location of the grave. The whole audience would leave their seats and move over there for that scene. Later, as a school boy after the war I took part in *Julius Ceasar* in the crowd scenes. We started behind the east wing-wall that hid rubbish bins, trained by Hahn to say 'Rhubarba-rhubarba-rhubarb' first quietly and then more loudly, over and over again to make a growing threatening sound. Later we watched a star performance by a boy called Graucob giving a most impassioned speech at a rostrum down by the Lake and had to respond suitably to that while wearing our bed-sheet togas. The horses were also used in the plays, charging up, their lords or messengers dismounting with swirl of cloak and wooden, silver-painted swords. Later, and I presume again after the war, I remember watching Kurt Hahn following the play with his script, as he usually did. He wore his Hamburg with the curly brim. The rain was collecting in the brim and as he looked down it poured onto his book and so down into his lap. He did not flinch, being transfixed by the language.

The old Nativity Play was taken from an Austrian peasant play, translated by Frau Richter, mother of Bex. Another couple of refugees, this time from Austria, were Victor and Traudle Saloschine. He taught riding from the stables at Duffus after the war. Who played Mary in the play before the war I do not remember, but afterwards Traudle played her and said the line 'Ze road iss dark and sick viz ice, and if I fawl I cannot rice' having a fine Viennese accent. Our chuckles were politely muted. The notable creature in the play was 'The Devil' who was a boy dressed entirely in skin-tight black, his head covered in a cowl with horns. There was also a long tail which he could hold and twirl menacingly. His job was to take Herod away to fry as sausages. When first seen, this image stuck in my childish mind terrifyingly. Later that night, in bed, I imaged him sitting on the bedside chair and yelled. I could see the lights of Lossiemouth through the grey image. My father came up from dinner and sat down asking what was the matter. I said 'You sat in it!' and he leaped up.

Athletics were a major part of school life, interspersed with 'Practical Work' which was estate work, organized at the beginning by my father Keir. The athletics field was on the western half of the south lawn. Long jump and high jump had pits of sand for a softer landing. Hahn had rescued Prince Phillip, later Duke of Edinburgh, from his school at Salem where he was in danger of arrest due to laughing whenever anyone made a 'Heil Hitler' salute. As a 16 year old he had white-blond hair and was athletic. As a child when other boys were cheering him on, I was told I would shout 'Hip-hip!', confusing the sound of his name with 'Hip-Hip-Hooray!'. Kurt Hahn was personally involved in running the athletics. He had wisely realized that while 'competition' could be corrosive, a degree of rivalry was useful, provided it did not result in athletic 'stars', so designed the inter-house competitions so that some non-athletic skills were included, such as projects and expeditions.

There was the Elgin taxi company who only drove old second hand Rolls Royces and these would sweep up the drive to take the headmaster to the train in Elgin. Once of course when asked by the driver 'Where to Sir?' he absent mindedly said 'London' - where he was going - and it was not until well beyond Elgin that he realized what the driver had taken him literally. I believe he caught the train from Aviemore.

The legend is true that Hahn's bathroom to his flat, on the first floor in the western end of Gordonstoun House, had two doors, and that a boy mistakenly entered by one of them and was told sharply 'Get out! Can't you see the door is locked?' As at the Vatican, the main Assembly Room was in the first-floor south front of Gordonstoun House with an array of large windows looking south, entered by an Ante-Room to the east. Here, assembly and chapel were held each morning and the terrifyingly rare 'School Meetings' when the Head Master would illustrate moral points he wanted to make by means of stories or experiences. His gravest concern was homosexuality. Masturbation was also frowned upon. Such words were not mentioned but he could make himself clear with such phrases as 'in-appropriate relationship' or that extraordinarily judgmental Victorianism, 'self-abuse'. To the west end of the Assembly Room, doors led imperially to the Head Master's Study.

The custom of having boys to his room for breakfast was certainly true after the War, but I believe must have been a custom Hahn had started at Salem. The breakfast was always good and I do remember his concentration on what a boy was saying to the extent that he went on spooning sugar into his coffee until it overflowed. This could be awkward during rationing. I suspect Miss Wicken subsequently went without. His only question that I remember from that occasion was whether, in the miniature model village I had built of mortar on an outcrop of rock at home, I saw the imaginary people there as living a utopian life. I said I thought so, although this had never occurred to me before. He hurrumphed agreement and went on to other things. Being on the southwest corner of the building, this room was well lit and pleasant. I presume his bedroom was on the northwest corner. After the war, the ante-room off the head of the main front stair was inhabited by Frau Richter who had a round table at which she taught French. There must have been a small kitchen there, for it always had an atmosphere of Middle European cooking.

The first school carpenter was Charlie Fraser, who was a good friend of Meg and Jinit's. He had earlier been a cabinet-maker in a Clyde shipyard trimming out liners. Later there was Mr. McIntyre, his Gaelic name meaning 'son of the carpenter.' When the time came to move to newly completed Cumming House (1938?) Charlie drove the school lorry and our furniture was loaded up and I was allowed to ride on top of the pile down the track and through the north gates and lawn and so to Cumming House. There we had an upper flat over the Henry Breretons below, who I believe were fairly new at the school. The bedrooms were in the west wing, but I remember not being very impressed after the graciousness of Plewlands. There, I recall hearing on the wireless (now 'radio') in the precise tones used by BBC announcers in those days; 'Sugar rationing will begin on Saturday.' The Second World War was beginning.

### *The Looming War*

The early school staff I remember included Bex (biology), his mother Frau Richter (French), both refugees from Hitler, the dashing English Mr. Pares with his sports cars who had taught

English at Salem and was reputed to have smuggled Dr. Meisner into Switzerland from Germany. There were echoes of Bertie Wooster in his style. I remember his sister Diana but not whether she taught. Of course one of the most essential people was Miss Wicken, Hahn's 'Secretary' yet in fact it was she who kept the school on the rails and Hahn on schedule. Miss Wicken was always on duty and precise. She was self contained and communicated well. Not being a student myself until years later, I do not remember others of the staff from between the wars. Was there a Dr. Bherens? Where did the Winthrop-Young fit in? When did Frau Lachman the musician come to the school, and Dr. Meisner? The Chaplain, the Rev. Henry and Duna Rogers, lived in the Michael Kirk Lodge when I was about five I believe. I remember playing in a sand pit there with their eldest daughter Shian, a neighbour now. Like my father's parents, theirs both had estates in Argyll.

My father Keir's style of teaching was quite intense in curriculum, yet relaxed in style. I found some of his notes on geography among his papers from the years at Berthddu in Wales. His nickname among the boys was 'Keirwalla' since after the First War, Shell had sent him for a time to Egypt where the word 'walla' was similar to the North American 'guy'. and he used this from time to time. His characteristic way of pointing in a general direction was to gesture with a half-open hand, fingers splayed and rotate his hand fast, a gesture easy to imitate. I was spared having any classes with him when at the school. When the Second World war began, my father, who had ended the First War a captain in the Grenadier Guards with a D.S.O, offered to train a Home Guard unit at the school. The suspicion of 'foreigners' was still strong and he was turned down. Something he felt should be swiftly forgotten. However Meisner was incensed and did a painting of Keir being refused by a paltry official figure. This my father must have protested for I sensed that there was a coolness there, and certainly Meisner, although a fascinating figure to me, kept me at a distance personally. Because my father was such an open hearted and intuitive person, I never resented any boy's comments about his style. They were always affectionately expressed. Oddly, for someone so fundamental in helping Hahn to start the school in an understandably alien community, I found it curious this year that the only item about Keir Campbell in the school archive was a cartoon of him drawn by one of the boys which I remember from the time in Wales.

My mother, Olivia, took her teaching most seriously, as would be expected as a woman in those days and having her PhD. She had always rather a worship of logic and tended to find remembering to be intuitive a slight stretch. I did take one history class with her. We each had to choose a subject for a research paper. Having been born in the United States I chose the Civil War of that nation. Somehow it seems I was able to condense an incredibly complex subject adequately. Years later she told me I had come out top of the class, but sensibly, to save us both embarrassment, she marked me down, for which I was most grateful. I never heard any comments on her teaching from other boys. Not that she was an ice-lady, but she was very firm in her style and expected the best of her students.

Curiously, I do not know whether my education was free as a part of payment for the early years when there were no funds to pay the staff adequately and many taught and served out of

There were bloodhounds in the kennels, kept mostly by one boy. They were used for search and rescue. When my brother Oran was Christened in the Michael Kirk, the table in the Cumming House living room was set up for a tea reception to follow. The famous Hopeman cream-buns were included, despite rationing. After the service we arrived back to find that the bloodhounds and their strong kennel smell had got out somehow and into the house and helped themselves to what was near the edge of the table. Clean-up was instant, but all the windows had to be opened to rid the space of their pong. A friend of Aunt Olga Byatt was called Molly Ayre-Crabbe. She stood by the door clasping people with her old cold hands greeting and repeating, 'My dear, isn't it absolutely freezing in here!' All attempts to drag her to the fire were in vain.

Mrs. Brereton, downstairs, was delicately balanced and not easy. However she was kind to children and her daughter 'Barty' and I played in the construction rubble at Cumming House very happily. Piles of sand were most welcome. I remember no cats. The immediately pre-war Nativity Plays took place in the Assembly Room there, off which our flat opened. Above in an open ended attic were the varied belongings of Mr. Chapman, an explorer who must have taught

for a while. One day, sitting on the empty stage at the other end, Barty and I convinced ourselves that one of his kit bags was alive and going to come after us.

The architect of Cumming House, with the curious out-leaning style of the lower exterior walls, which must have added much to the cost, was Mr. Kennedy. He smelt and appeared rather like a smaller and more rotund version of Henry Brereton. He it was he who, no doubt inspired by Kurt Hahn, designed and painted the Master Plan for the 'campus' still on the wall of the main stair. He was reputed to have designed another building but forgotten to include a stair, however that may merely be scurrilous as he was admired in his day. In those days the woods between Cumming House and Gordonstoun were full of undergrowth, young trees and brambles. A rough path linked the new building with the Round Square, while the main entrance burst through the hedge along the drive, as today. After the war my father would have a tree nursery on the left of the entrance-way. To the right by then there was a long Nissen Hut containing the Laundry at the west end and a classroom (Latin) and Art Room reaching east. A small local lady called Eina came back after the war to run the laundry. She was a friend of Meg Tindal's. One of my contemporaries was a boy called Nissen, a very street-wise city kid. I imagined that his father had invented the Nissen Hut, but I am not sure.

Boys made their own beds with 'hospital corners' and sheets and clothes were washed once a week. Dormitories were inspected by the head of each one. The uniform under-clothes were designed for warmth, as were the flannel shirts. Bicycling from Duffus in normal shorts, one tended to get chapped knees and chilblains on toes in the winter term. The pale grey school stockings allowed individuality in the style and length worn. Blue shorts and jerseys were worn in the mornings and grey after showering following sports or practical work or seamanship.

After the war, the cutters kept at Hopeman Harbour for sailing were in charge of Danny Main from a local fishing family. Certainly one of his family attended the school. Bulky life jackets were worn, making rowing a little awkward. The rig of the cutters was designed to keep as many working as possible, each time you went about, the sail had to be lowered, the gaff and clew moved round the mast before re-hoisting. On wild days one learned knots in the shed, outside which Danny brewed cod-liver oil in a pungent bucket. A post seamanship visit to the bakers up the main street was de rigueur and cream-buns the favourite. They could be eaten at tea on return. Not all buns survived the bicycle ride back, although 'eating between meals' was an item about which one had to be honest with ones-self.

The basis of learning self-discipline was known as 'The Training Plan'. There were a series of items each responsible boy could check off each evening on one's mind or on paper; Two clean teeth; Two showers (each followed by a momentary cold one to 'close the pores'); 60 skips, a certain number of 'push-ups'; no eating between meals, etc. I do not remember whether very young boys had to recite their answers to the head of their dormitory. Certainly each dormitory had a skipping rope. My impression in the period I was at the school - from 1946-1952, was that this was taken as normal by almost all of us. This was all on trust and so appreciated and also never examined by staff.

I'm not sure when this was discarded, but by the time my younger brother Oran (1941-2 - 2004) was at Gordonstoun House, the whole system of discipline in the house had collapsed. He decried how three hefty white-strippers intimidated the colour-bearers who hence did not inform the house-master Roy McComish, and these three bullied everyone and used their 'Charles Atlas' body-building course to intimidate everyone, lying long in abed. Mercifully this was discovered shortly before the second royal arrived but the bad smell evidently persisted for a time and had spread to other houses. Mr. McComish was an excellent art master and later left to be head-master of a girl's school in the south. This incident was, of course, well after Kurt Hahn had retired to Salem. He was always keenly aware of the 'tone' of the school and read his intuition well.

Kurt Hahn was a sensitive man and had the genius to use his intuition consciously. One night at around 2 am my father was woken by a telephone call. Hahn was concerned about a particular boy in Cumming House. He named the boy and which bed he was in and which dormitory, saying that the boy was distressed and my father should go and comfort him. Which he did, finding the boy weeping as the head master had suspected. Father was a good comforter.

In August 1939 my parents had taken us to Argyll and rented Captain Sinclair's house at Bellanoch on the Crinan Canal. The Sinclairs retired to a tin tabernacle behind the house. My parents chartered a small green yacht. Meg embroidered me its name 'Zady' on my fisherman's jersey and I was proud crew while going through the canal. Knowing that war was about to be declared, my parents sailed off into the hot calm of the Sound of Jura to rest for some days, knowing that upon the declaration a telegram would come from Kurt Hahn, calling them back. They both knew from earlier experience that war was exhausting, even for civilians.

Hitler had invaded and occupied Norway. Gordonstoun was between two aerodromes, as air bases were then called, Kinloss and Lossiemouth. The threat of landings or bombings was considered serious. The sons of the most concerned parents were sent inland under my parents, Keir and Olivia, with some staff. A house was rented at Innerhadden in Perthshire, between the conical peak of Schehallion and Kinlochranoch. The family drove in the 1938 Austin 12 while Keir and the boys bicycled there from Gordonstoun. The house was a charming old place. When Olivia opened a kist on the landing, it was full of old linen. The top sheet had a note pinned to it saying 'Do not wash, Prince Charlie slept in these'. I made a fishing rod and caught my first trout, which Jinit cooked in oatmeal and I ate all but an eye. A clearing in the woods had an array of those deliciously scented yellow azaleas, a smell I have loved ever since. The boys were taken on an expedition to climb Schehallion and I was devastated that I was not allowed to go. In the garage was a car of very early date. Mother had told me how in 1745 one of our Robertson ancestors from Struan nearby had been sent back by B.P. Charlie from the battle of Prestonpans in the captured coach of Johnnie Cope, the British general. Never having seen a coach, I presumed that car was it.

### *Gordonstoun Flits to Central Wales*

The governors insisted that the school move out of what was seen as a danger zone. Lord Davies, who was a governor and whose family had built many of the railways in Wales, offered his estate there in the Severn Valley at Llandinham. There were three country houses, Llandinham itself, a half timbered Victorian mansion set on a sculptured slope above the village, Broneiron (pron. Bron-eye-ron) an Edwardian pile across the valley where Dr. Meisner held sway among rhododendrons, and Berthddu, (pron. Berthdee) up the valley and a fine Regency place with its own park and extensive factory-like brick stables below, used for classrooms. Keir was made housemaster there with the 13 to 15 year old boys. Jinit came as cook, as she had been at Innerhadden. A parent, Mrs. Crole, was housekeeper. A tall Mr. Mountain with glasses was another teacher and ran a projector for rented 16mm films, Laurel and Hardy and the like, on Sunday evenings, I suspect. Behind the house and grounds was a conical hill with a rounded top called 'The Sugar Loaf'. We picked blaeberrries there. Although spherical in build, Jinit was a prime berry picker.

Meanwhile Mr. Holt who learned how many of the apprentices of his shipping line would panic when torpedoed, asked Hahn to run a course to help them learn discipline and how to care for each other in emergencies. So the Sea School was started. This would later evolve into Outward Bound. This had a start in Moray I believe, because I remember some burly characters not in school uniform. But when moved to Wales, Keir was put in charge of the Sea School at a place called Aberdovey, a summer holiday town on the northern side of a west-flowing estuary. I believe the students were housed in a former hotel above the town. Nearby you could walk up a grassy valley between woods and on the saddle above was an old stone farmhouse with low ceilings where pancakes and syrup were dispensed. There was reputed to be a sea-sunk village off the coast whose church bell you could hear as moved by the tide.. I got very sick and was given my first anti-biotic, M&B, turning me a little crazy, trying to catch flies up the wall which were not there. The school I attended on the waterfront was run by evacuated people, Mr. and Mrs. Tirley from Birmingham. He was lame from the First War and she had snaggle teeth. I was not happy.

They were not like Miss Mather. Or my recent school when, during the move south, I had been sent to Loch Aline in Argyll to stay with my grandmother and Uncle Donald. He had been taken out of the army to run the only silica sand mine for glass production in Britain there. The

teacher at Loch Aline, Miss McVicar, was a Gaelic speaker and among my fellow 'scholars' were children of those evacuated from St. Kilda.

Before we moved to Berthddu we spent a short time at a farm called Benbows'. There, among other unusual experiences, I heard my first bombs drop on the Newtown junction not far away. The Welsh farm beds were vast billowy feather mattresses and duvet type quilts and I was concerned at being smothered by feathers if a bomb dropped on us.

Food was short due to the hundreds of U-boats sinking great numbers of cargo ships crossing the Atlantic. Welsh hill farms did not then always have roads to them and farmers brought stock or produce to market on the hoof or in panniers on their ponies. Those with no roads were 'outwith' the rationing system. Keir walked up to several of these farms locally and arranged for them to deliver food to Berthddu. Hams, bacon, cheeses, milk, chicken and butter appeared, surplus to our regular rations.

The art master at Gordonstoun-Llandinham was called Hextall-Smith. He and his artistic wife had a loft at the lower end of the school grounds, perhaps above a garage. They painted all the beams in handsome patterns. He was commissioned to do a drawing of me. The only time I ever knew my father to be rude was when we were in the car driving to Llandinham and met H-S bicycling towards Berthddu with the finished drawing. The drawing was shown briefly through the car window. My father snorted and was not impressed, refusing it. I believe my mother must have paid for it because it has survived. Everyone was under considerable stress during the war.

One winter great drifts were left along the hedgerows and the boys made tunnels in these. They learned semaphore and did scouting exercises in the hills. All over Britain there were plans for an underground if invaded, although not everyone realized that their training might so be used. My grandmother was to take me to the United States 'for the duration'. I got new shorts and a new Hornby model train. But on arrival in London there were reports of more U-boats and my father decided to cancel the trip. I had agreed that if my grandmother told me to jump off the ship, however high it was, I would jump. I then rode the smoky bus daily to an old half-timbered house beyond Llandinham where Mrs. Whitworth, a parent and mother of Pat Whitworth and Peter, ran a school. She was kind and eventually I was 8 and ready to be sent to the Prep School for Gordonstoun which had been started before the war at Wester Elchies, an old Grant family place on a plateau across and above the Spey from Aberlour.

Barty Brereton and I were escorted up to Scotland on various trains by Dr. Victor Saloschine who would teach riding at Elchies. He was lightly built with bandy legs, a totally bald head and wore an eye glass. His own thoroughbred horses were called 'Hickory' and 'Micheline'. Although of Jewish descent he presented and sounded as quite Tunic. For him to travel through Britain in those days must have taken courage. Years later he would participate in training the British Olympic riding team. One of his sons, certainly, was incredibly tough and served in the British forces as, I believe, a Commando and had some brilliant escapes.

In the war the trains were packed with soldiers. Finding a seat often meant sitting on your suitcase in the corridor. Toilets were a mess. Stations were darkened with the 'blackout' so as not to be seen from the air. White lines ran along the platform edges so that you would not step off by accident. We changed at Crew at 2 am. In Edinburgh we spent the night in the Waverly Hotel, now the luxurious Balmoral. Doors seemed 16 feet high and we each had a room. We changed trains again in Aberdeen. One year the rails were closed with snow west of Aberdeen and one of the staff, Mrs. Stewart who lived in Aberdeen, collected many small pupils at the station and took us all to a bungalow in the suburbs where we had hot cocoa and a blanket each to sleep with on the floor. The rolled-out ticket on the tram car was a great length. Next day the trains were running but the road to the school was not yet clear. At Craigellachie we were bussed to Aberlour where we crossed the footbridge of the Spey and climbed up through the snowy woods to the school, the roads being un-ploughed as yet. Our trunks would come later by lorry. This was all an entertaining adventure.

*The Wester Elchies Experience*

The headmaster at Wester Elchies was Pat Delap, of an Anglo-Irish family and his wife Dolly was English. 'Mr. D' as we called him was stern, humane and taught Latin. He was lightly built, authoritative and precise. 'Mrs. D'. with perm and lipstick, was also a disciplinarian and, fortunately for us, kept a great array of poultry; geese, ducks, turkeys and hens. On Sunday mornings we would have boiled eggs for breakfast but one never knew what size. She would also glance at our letters home which we were required to write in the library on Saturday mornings. This was to make sure we wrote and that there were no blots. I was incensed at the invasion of privacy and got my parents to agree that this scrutiny was not required. Because the great plate glass windows of the Victorian library overlooked Ben Rhines across the Spey valley, the style of letter was usually begun with 'Dear Mummy and Daddy, There is (or is not) snow on Ben Rhines', after which one had to come up with something cogent.

Each year in winter there was a model horse race with tracks lined out on the large library table. We would all make model horses, some as crude as bits of stick stuck in an apple, others handsomely if crudely carved. There were 'heats' and Mr. Stewart, as MC, would take a shuffled pack of cards and the horses would move along depending upon the cards drawn. This, and the carol service at Christmas were our main festivals.

In 1967 I would return to Wester Elchies with my wife on our wedding trip from Connecticut. As we came out of the trees a bulldozer began to demolish the round tower of the 19th century granite facade where the front entrance faced east. No use had been found for the place after the school had moved to Aberlour House, a splendid classical building across the valley, built by the Findlays who owned *The Scotsman* newspaper. Sadly this too was later abandoned by the school in the interests of tighter control. However it and the gracious grounds have been preserved by a local well-known family for their company. The site at Wester Elchies is now just a patch of nettles. The view and some of the great woods remain.

In the days of the school, the building at Elchies extended round a kitchen courtyard, accessed through an archway from the north. The original 15th or 16th century tower house was at the south-east corner of the complex. In the stone-vaulted ground floor was the boot-room. Next to the west was the 19th century south-facing library. The western side was 18th century and contained the kitchens on the ground floor and dormitories above. The northern side also held the 'drying room' and log store east of the archway, and above was the shower room and nurse's station, with the 'Big Top' dormitory in the roof above. From the nurse's station a back stair rose briefly past a potty-washing sink room into the grand suite of bedrooms behind the 19th century east front facade. Turning south along the spacious corridor towards the old tower house, one first came on the grand staircase which rose from a handsome tiled front hall to the sitting room on a mezzanine and then to two floors of bedrooms. On the ground floor was the dining-room including a space in the tower where later the bulldozer was working. Beyond the mezzanine sitting room, a fine drawing room had been made out of a wing of the old tower house and this faced south. Behind this on an upper level was Mr. D's study which faced into the courtyard, and the Delap's flat. Below the study on the ground floor was the washing up pantry where two friendly Italian prisoners worked. One had worked for GE in Napoli and had some English and a musculature admired by most pupils. I missed the great occasion when he was persuaded to take off his shirt.

When given a bed in the 'Top Back' and needing to go to the toilet in the night, the route was down stairs into the shower room, through the nurse's station to the little servant's stair, out into the 19th century corridor, down one flight of the grand staircase, adorned with the heads of fierce beasts, through the little sitting-room in the old tower where an arch led to the original spiral stair. The old entrance to the tower had been at the foot of this stair but it had been closed off, the lower part being a tool shed and the upper a lead-floored toilet. Opposite the toilet door were two bumps in the old stone wall, said to be 'Charlie's Knees' of a skeleton walled up there. Inside the door the stair continued to descend to the toilet. By that time some gave way and tried to pee round the curve to the toilet below. The alternative was to open a window in the Top-Back and pee into the gutter running across it.

We were all well fed by Chrissie the cook and also a chef at one point. 'Hookie' the bent-over boilerman also snared rabbits and rabbit pie or stew was often on the menu. Because two

Rowantree brothers were pupils, all the sweet ration was provided by their father's company. The head boy had to hand a tin of sweets around at the end of lunch. Roy Williamson, the later famous Scottish musician, was a pupil with his elder brother whose favourite expression of commendation was 'Peachy!' Churchill's doctor had a daughter there, Rosalind Pulvertaft with flowing bronze hair. She hated one saying (from M.R.James) 'The Well with the Four Yew Trees' and would cringe, poor thing. She had a fine face and freckles. Others were apple-cheeked Peter Walz, later killed flying RAF or Navy jets, and Detmar and Edward Hackman. David Stronach appeared from Canada after being chased by a Messerschmitt in the skies off Portugal. He was later a professor of Archaeology at the University of California at Berkeley with famous digs in Iran, Iraq and latterly Albania. After lunch we would lie about in the library for half an hour being read to by Mr. Stewart, a former Australian Rugby star with a prosthesis leg, either the scurrilous Bulldog Drummond or the excitingly evocative John Buchan. Mr. S. taught maths while Mrs. Stewart taught French and geography. Our main classroom was 'The Obs' which was a circular Observatory on the grounds, but the telescope was gone. There was a memory of a girl who sometimes appeared outside on a fine day. Other lessons were in the library or in the stables range.

Since swear words were forbidden, they had increased currency. An older boy called David Astel had the next bed to me one term in the 'Top-Back'. His mother 'Concie' lived near Hopeman and was a friend of my parents'. Lying awake in the long summer evening I asked him the meaning of the swear words. He did an inspired job of being unemotionally clinical in his sexual explanations which totally satisfied me. I was not attracted to use any of them. But at home next holidays I intuitively felt I must tell my parents what I knew or it would come between us. It took a long time but worked.

Other notable characters were Neil Henderson - a sturdy, brilliant and very temperamental yet talented fiddler. I was not a fiddler but was also temperamental, in those days excused as having 'an artistic temperament'. His red-aired sister played the cello beautifully. I understand Neil went into the School Inspectorate. I sensed that Mrs. Stewart, 'Stools', rather liked seeing him blow up and would tease him. He seemed to enjoy blowing up, so played along. I also had cousins there, two were Alasdair and Colin Campbell, but Colin must have been later. Earlier, Hugh Byatt had been at Elchies, the eldest of my Aunt Olga's three sons. He was followed by Robin and then David. Sometimes Robin and David would take me home on a week-end, walking up to Archiestown and taking the bus into Elgin where their mother had the charming old house called The College within a spacious high-walled demesne adjacent to the Cathedral. Tragically she died in the summer of 1943 and later the boys came to live with us, to my great advantage. Both Robin and Hugh became Ambassadors while David was later Second Master at Gordonstoun, but too near retirement to succeed as Head.

Mrs. West came out from Elgin to Elchies to teach Scottish Country dancing and reels. She sat on the broad and high window counter of the library with her back to Ben Rhines while her assistant whom we nicknamed 'hammer and tongs' due to her long clickety finger nails, played the piano. Swinging her elegant dancer's legs, Miss West's cry for 'pas de Basque' was 'into the centre, turn right round, fall back, fall back.' I think if it sometimes in the bathroom.

Miss Kim Murray, a leading lady of the Elgin music scene, sometimes came and taught music.

In the woods to the north of the house and off the main drive was a rubbish dump in the woods of which great use was made in the excavating and construction of 'forts'. Further down the drive on the same side was the 'curling pond' which sometimes froze enough for skating. The drive was made of pink rotten granite, much the colour of the main house.

Local schools had time off for the 'tattie howking' or collecting the potatoes whirled up by a rotary series of blades behind a horse or tractor. The school had about an acre southeast of the house and above the large walled garden that was down the south-facing slope beyond. Our 'tattie-howking' was bitterly cold which kept one working hard. I believe that the walled garden was largely abandoned, but that Mrs. D grew vegetables there for the school,

The art room was in a shed across the back drive on the north side of the house. Two steading wings ran west towards some magnificent pines on a low hill. A garage contained an

ancient car called 'Blundy'. Above another class room in the southern stading wing was a loft accessed by a ladder. Up there was the remains of an oval O gauge Bassett-Lowke model railway layout. Having been taught copperplate writing at Loch Aline, my hand was destroyed by the art teacher Miss Hogg who made us all write vertically and circularly. In retaliation, when she got engaged I asked whether she would have a lot of little piglets, but for my cheekiness I was not skelped, bless her.

### *Studenthood at Gordonstoun Post War*

I left Wester Elchies in 1946 aged 13, and was sent to Switzerland for a term to learn French in the mornings and to ski in the afternoons. I stayed with a family in Chateau D'Oex in the Bernese Oberland. Mother escorted me out and while in Paris I saw my first 'American' car and, in my new long trousers, stood on the blessedly warm heating louvres in the Louvre, looking at the Mona Lisa. Mother thought, rightly, that although I was little use at French, my ability to imitate would give me a leg up in that language at Gordonstoun. She was right. At the school I was taught by Mr. LeQuesne, a Chanel Islander. Years later he told me and my parents how he had been enlisted as a 'sleeper' at Oxford, as had Henry Brereton. He had given it up when Stalin allied with Hitler, but Henry had not. He was an encouraging teacher of French.

Henry Brereton was from an old Norfolk (I think) family and had family portraits in his study. He taught English literature among other things and at Christmas each year told a story in inimitable style of how all the animals could talk to each other at midnight. He was known as 'the Bear' being somewhat growly and burly. While Dr. Meisner and his large and bouncy poodle 'Ponto' had a room in the north-east corner up stairs, Henry Brereton's study faced the south lawn nearby.

I arrived at Duffus House that spring term of 1947 accompanied by my cousin Robin Byatt in a taxi. At the last moment he warned me not to become involved with a boy called Forsyth. I didn't, which puzzled Forsyth. Duffus was presided over by the tall and balding Bobby Chew who was brilliant with boys. When he heard I liked working with stone, he kept me off dreaded cricket to repair the dyke around the rubbish dump. Later he put me to removing, cleaning and oiling all the locks on all the doors in that charming place. He even let me into the front hall gallery to examine the extremely provincial yet fascinating Dunbar family portraits. A friend called Davis with whom I was later at Cambridge, took me to tea with the Dunbars, friends of his parents. Old Sir Archie Dunbar was a dear man with a tongue too big for his mouth. They had moved into the Manse when the house was let to the school on a long lease. I became passionate about country houses and the 18th century and read up all I could, educating myself in the handsome curved library, up-stairs in the Round Square. The then Chaplain, W. P. Young, whose daughters had been taught with me by Miss Mather before the war, smoked the most pungent tobacco in his pipe and his study was beyond the library.

A new Post War member of the staff was a small, tightly built and bouncy Sergeant Major Kelley, in charge of what he called 'Atha-Leticks.' The obstacle Course had been built along the east side of the Lake and the rope across, tied to trees. There were, and presumably still are, leaches in the lake. Between the western edge of the south lawn and the vegetable garden, there was a curving drive descending to the lawn with a sharp hairpin bend. One memory is of a number of us boys carrying a long telegraph pole down that drive but too long to go round the bend easily. Mr. Kelley yelled at the leading boys 'Into the Ruddy-Denderons!' and we had to smash into the ponticum as best we could without falling.

At some point after the war a man came from the United States to teach. He was called Mr. Minor and would later, I believe, run Outward Bound in North America. One of the items on the obstacle course involved climbing a hefty net slung from a log across two poles and perhaps 16 feet high. On reaching the top, one was expected to reach over, grab the far side of the net, and somersault over. This I found alarming and Mr. Minor saw me ease over instead. He came up to me later and offered that at any time, whatever he was doing, he would come and stand by me while I did it correctly. I was enormously impressed by him offering that to me, although in fact I sneaked off and illegally performed what was expected by myself one day

A good looking, dark Miss Lorrimer had followed old Nurse McGowan (known as 'Gowlie') as Matron at Elchies and although she had at one point shocked pupils by spitting out of an upstairs window, she later came to Duffus House. I was a scruffy boy and for a time had to report to her little surgery half way up the main stairs so she could examine whether I had washed the back of my neck. She used surgical spirits which will always produce a smudge. I got out of that by sneaking into the surgery earlier and cleaning my neck with a swab and spirits. She found her cotton wipe so clean she could not believe it, but I did not have to be wiped again.

Later Miss Lorrimer left and Miss Chapman came. She was a kindly London oriented lady of brief stature and a fondness for classical music. While the prancing Mr. Burkhardt had arrived at Gordonstoun to teach music and Latin, when I asked him to play records of which I had only heard fragments on the wireless, he would say 'Oh no, that's hackneyed!' But Miss Chapman would give me tea and biscuits while she played well known bits of Bach, Handel and Mozart, filling in my education. Mr. B. had an incredibly accurate aim with chalk if one was dozy in class and could ping it off one's forehead. Failing that the board rubber might be flung. But he was likeable, although he failed to interest me in Latin. There were 'rest-groups' after lunch for half an hour and of course those from Duffus had no bed in Gordonstoun House. Some of us would lie on the floor of the music room, which faced north, and Mr. Burkhardt would play classical records and tell us about the music, which was most enjoyable. Years later when working in Los Angeles and PDQ Bach was produced as a record on the newly invented Moog Synthesizer, I sent him a copy of the record and he was genuinely touched, sending a message by Walser with whom I had been a shepherd in the Nativity Play one year.

My cousin Robin was of an older generation, as were Champion de Crespigny and Toby Coghill. They got involved in a muddy frenzy once, digging up an ancient stone drain near where the chapel now stands, in search of the truth or destination. There was a legend that the wizard Sir Robert Gordon of Gordonstoun had a tunnel under the round square and was this another end of it? Tommy Lauffier and Christopher Beadle were made Colour Bearers while I was at Duffus. Tommy's family from Czechoslovakia had been brutally treated by the Nazis. He became notable in the medical field. At the end of one term, Christopher and I bicycled to Fort William on our way home, camping on the way. We avoided B&B's, new since the war, thinking they were houses of ill repute. While I rode on to home in Argyll, Christopher took the train south from the Fort. Once before, we were in an upstairs tea shop in Elgin and a lady asked if she could join us. It was clear she was from the South, knew nothing about the school and thought we were Borstal Boys. We played her along.

Our studies smelt of burnt toast and fug. Two friends who bounced were Graeme 'Grimy' Smith and Tony Blair. Graeme was a beefy red head from Glasgow who lost his accent while doing his National Service as an officer. I met him again briefly when we were both de-mobbed and was vastly impressed. Blair went out to West Africa. Another very distant cousin came from Skye, Alisdair Campbell. Although our cousinship derived from 1674, I was told by my parents to watch out for him as he had seldom if ever been off the island. I need not have worried. On Skye, he had hung onto the wireless and memorized the scores and names of all the football players and their teams and fit in perfectly with big red-haired Donald and delightful grinning Mike O'Connor from Aberdeenshire who were soccer fanatics. Another Aberdeenshire family were the Patons. David's elder brother had been at the school in Wales, but David later got sent down from Oxford for creating a mock funeral for one of the Dons.

The Hon. Hermione Stuart, eldest daughter by his second marriage of the 19th Earl of Moray, was a keen horsewoman and used to come to the stables at Duffus to ride with the Saloschines. Her presence attracted much interest among some of the more senior young men of the school. She would die in a riding accident in 1969 as wife of HRH Prince Freidrich Karl of Prussia. Being 8 years younger than her, I never considered myself 'in the running', however I found it extremely embarrassing when, riding with her and Traudle over a series of log jumps in the strip of pines along the eastern march, I suffered an extremely painful incident, parts coming between myself and the saddle when landing.

Of course we were all smitten by Eva Chew when, at the start of one term, she unexpectedly appeared, married to our housemaster. She was a willowy Norwegian of

considerable beauty, incredibly charming and interested, yet firm. House morale rocketed. She had escaped from Norway into Sweden through the woods, stuffing her little boy's mouth with rare chocolate so that he would make no sound and alert the German guards. Lt. Col. Robert Chew had, I believe been in the intelligence service, but how they had met, I do not know. A meal with the Chews was a great privilege. As already mentioned, breakfast with the Headmaster was another slightly less relaxing privilege, but if achieved without incident, raised morale.

One hot summer week-end, Max von Baden and I took a bunch of younger boys on an expedition beyond Kellas. We found a seemingly abandoned row of one and half story cottages which we explored, finding the upper floor with wall paper peeling off the walls. This we cleaned up and swept out and used for our sleeping bags. I remember Roy Williamson starting to chuck stones at the slate roof, which I stopped and remembered later. We either read or explored up a wooded burn to the moors. A week or so later, Max and I were called in by Hahn and told that a complaint had been received from a nearby farmer who was also teaching at a prep school in Banff. He said some Gordonstoun boys had vandalized his empty cottages. We explained that we had cleaned up the place and I was thankful I had stopped Roy. We heard no more about it although we could only wonder whether this particular farming master had a prejudice against the school.

I remember much cross-country running, which I enjoyed. At Duffus another contemporary was Bidulph, whose lineage was as exotic and unusual as his looks. He tended to mumble with surges of emphasis and we found much to discuss of an esoteric kind. Other boys I remember from Duffus were Pendleton, Brown, Cole, Faber, Roach, Bielby, and Kent. Rugby was fun because of the rough and tumble, but I never achieved any skill. We played in the field just beyond the woods to the east of Gordonstoun House. Also at Duffus were two boys called Dougall. The elder, Hamish, went on to work in what is now Malawi. The younger raised handsome antirrhinums for the beds along the house and south lawn at Duffus. Sitting outside of a sunny spring day, Mr. Chew's wallflower gave a splendid fragrance. Our morning runs were usually off to the east of Duffus House. In the strips of windbreak woodland were riding trails which also served as exciting rough cycling routes, with leaping over roots being important. Trail-bikes would not be invented for some decades.

Bicycle improvement and maintenance was a spare time occupation. Old Sir Archie caught one of the boys sunbathing on one of the 17th Century table tombs in the ruined Duffus Kirkyard behind the stables which was embarrassing. I used to spend quiet times there, sometimes shaping bits of old sandstone into fragments to fool archaeologists. I 'took' riding for some terms and that meant regularly cleaning out the stables early in the morning, water and hay for the horses and cleaning tackle. Occasionally we worked for Donald the gardener in the walled garden north-west of the house. He had married Chrissie from Elcies and they lived in the west lodge. Tragically their child died of leukaemia. Kurt Hahn searched everywhere for bananas, which the child craved in her final days.

As a fifteen-year-old I was afflicted with acne of the chin and, attempting to get rid of that by heat, stuck my chin in a basin of hot water, resulting in bandaged few days in the San. This was noticed by the Headmaster who came and announced to me that at Duffus I had been 'treated like a tender plant' and I was to 'be moved to Lossiemouth' where there was an overflow house under Major Downton, ex Indian Army, in a villa called 'Laverock Bank'. Naturally we all referred to it as 'Lavatory Tank.' This was exile indeed and a much longer and more windy bicycle ride to chapel and classes at Gordonstoun. But I enjoyed bicycling. I was made a 'White Striper.' Hahn was of the view that one should 'take responsibility' even without a 'position' to back one up. I felt better having that back-up. However at one evening prep session I failed to prevent a riot and had recourse to calling upon Mr. Kemp, the mild pipe-smoking mathematics teacher who was assistant house master. His authority was immediate, although years later I was astonished when I heard he was chosen as Headmaster. All my life the Gordonstoun Governors were a puzzle.

I remember being asked to take two athletic boys on an expedition to Lochindorb. On arrival I started a fire and went to collect sticks so we could cook supper. But they had laced up their tent and either would not come out or had retired with their sleeping bags to the whinns above. My shouts were ignored, so I made my own dinner and went to bed. They were in their tent in the morning. This I thought curious, but one after the other they left the school prematurely, although one was later allowed back.

Although I was doing well at art, English, French, history and biology, I was atrocious at Latin. In those days this was essential to gain acceptance at Cambridge University where I was expected to follow my father and grandfather. Had I realized that, aged 38 I would learn many Latin plant names while achieving my Masters in Landscape Architecture at the University of California at Berkeley, it might have made more sense. My parents decided that I should spend a term being tutored in Latin at the crammers, Basil-Patersons in Glasgow. It was arranged that I would stay with cousins nearby. The tutoring was done in hot and stuffy cubicles smelling of radiator paint and I regret to say that I made little of any advance.

When I came back to Gordonstoun I believe I had a brief spell in the Round Square, although despite being taught Roman history pontifically by Meisner, I never remember having any conversation with him. Those boys I remember there were De Mautort from Belgium I believe, and whose family had to do with Cinzano I was told, Wilson, Tony Redmond who had a remarkably defined physique with not an ounce of fat, and cheerful Pelton. who went into the Navy.

Bobby Chew had started the grand overflow school at the Gordon-Cumming's house at Altyre near the Findhorn, not far outside Forres and I was sent there. This was a blissful place. In the Edwardian era the head of the family there had been obliged to be a scapegoat for a royal whose game of cards had gone wrong. He had an American wife and so they retired to Altyre and made the place into a 'U' shaped two-storied wander of rooms, hinged on a great staircase and a vast dining room including surviving family portraits including the well-known 'Cock of the North.' There was an Edwardian sense of spaciousness to the place and the exterior facades had been regularized to give a long, low mellow look. The grounds were park-like with mature trees and, in the rustic walled 'American Garden' contained many stately conifers. Down the drive was a stable block containing a Victorian copy in white marble of a crouching Greek beauty which was useful for life drawing.

Twice we were all taken out to view significant events. Once to hear the Lord Lyon announce the birth of Prince Charles from the Merkat Cross in Forres, and once to Kinloss, to see the first US Sabre fighter jets arrive after crossing the Atlantic. Coming via Iceland there was danger they might run out of fuel, so a policeman in Caithness was sent out on his bicycle to move cattle off a long un-used runway there. But in the event they made Kinloss.

The staff at Altyre were largely young Oxford and Cambridge men who had also completed National Service. Latin was taught by Gordon Partington who had served as an officer in the Argylls and whose mother came from Furnace there. He did rather over his best. There was Andy Cleland, last of the line of a Dumfries or Galloway family who sadly died young. Another, Mr. Lawson, I visited years later in his retirement place in Dunfermline and we had great reminiscences. Mr. Snell had come with Chew from Gordonstoun where he had taught physics and chemistry. He had something of an RAF style and would mutter 'Ticketyboo' at times. The art teacher was Mr. Paterson, and very stimulating yet steady he was. He produced a large board and told me to 'paint the 18th century out of my system'. Later he helped me prepare for an RIBA interview and exam, as a fall-back in case I never got through the Latin. Miss Chapman came from Duffus as Matron.

Somehow, I got through enough A levels so that, once Latin was passed, I could be accepted at Cambridge. In later years the effect of nepotism, such as Hahn taking some of my paintings down to Trevelyan, Master of Trinity, to persuade him to let me in, would never be stood for. I believe this kindly action on his part stemmed from Hahn's respect for my father, Keir Campbell, about whom he wrote when he died that, faced with an important decision, he always considered 'What would Keir have done'.

I was made head of my house while Michael Newton was Guardian. The experience of authority stood me in good stead in my National Service. Later, while still a private and training

at Fort George, I was able to revisit the school. About that time in 1953 there was a great storm which felled swaths of conifer plantations, splaying them like spillikins and blocked many roads.

After returning from National Service in what was then British Guiana in South America, my father found me a tutor through his club in Edinburgh and I re-tackled Latin once again. Partington had enticed me with the Arcadian beauty of Virgil, which related well to my enthusiasm for the 18th century, so by then I was more engaged. I suspect that this man in Edinburgh hypnotised me, for I remember our first meeting in his rooms in Dublin Street, and doing homework as a lodger with friends, but have no memory of his teaching. He got me through and I passed with 87%. Hitting the balance between good teaching and evolving character was always delicate for Kurt Hahn, partly because he dealt primarily with people, and might hire a teacher for a short time as much to offer them rehabilitation as for their skills.

Another of Kurt Hahn's international out-reach concepts was that, immediately after the war, he set up a type of college at Dunkinty, a small country house south of Elgin. The purpose was to bring over middle-level people in the bureaucracy of newly liberated Germany and show them how police, fire stations, courts and town and county administrations worked in a democracy, since they had been held down by the Gestapo in a non democratic style. Keir and Olivia Campbell moved to the gate-lodge at Dunkinty to run the scheme and groups were brought over to Scotland for two weeks at a time. Their letters of thanks were heartfelt and numerous. I doubt whether there are any surviving archives about this remarkable initiative. From there Hahn went on to found the NATO colleges.