

I was then sent to the school of Special Flying at Gosport for 4 weeks training in flying refinements which I hated chiefly because of an unpleasant instructor.

After that I became a flying instructor myself at Old Sarum but was there only 6 or so weeks when I was offered a post in Cornwall near Padstow to convoy Merchant Ships between Lands End and Hartland Point where submarines were active. This was in my opinion the best and cushiest flying job to be had. There was not much risk unless you were unlucky enough to come down in the sea. We carried only boyant waist-coats.

I shall always remember going to or coming back from a patrol, just skimming the waves and zooming over the headlands. We carried one depth charge in case a U Boat was spotted and I have many times practised dummy bomb dropping on the island just off Pentire Point.

The Officer's Mess was in a stone cottage at Crugmeer and all the fellows extremely nice and good fun.

When I left Old Sarum, Abell remained on as instructor and almost immediately after I left he collided in mid air and was burnt to death. I had been paired with him ever since joining the R.F.C. at Reading. So many of my colleagues had died that I can hardly bear to think of it. When in Flanders I had slept part of the time in a Nissen Hut with 5 other pilots. One by one 4 of the original 5 were killed or missing being replaced one by one as their cot became vacant. Abell and I were the only survivors of the six, - that added to my sadness about poor Abell.

I look back upon the War with horror and still have occasional bad dreams about having to fly in the war knowing full well that the lot of others was far worse.

Towards the end of the war discipline became slacker and I 'borrowed' aircraft to fly along the coast and landed in tiny fields and visited friends in Polperro and Newquay - without mishap, I am glad to say.