



# Cricket's over after Junkers flies overhead

♦♦ I READ your account in Bristol Times (March 3), with great interest, of the book which has recently been published celebrating the founding of QEH. I was a pupil there during the War Years from 1939 to 1945.

With regard to Edgar Gill, the cricket match and the Ju 88, I was the boy involved.

It was a perfect summer's day and we were at the School Playing Fields at Eastfield which was next to an anti-aircraft gun battery manned by ATS girls.

That afternoon we were involved in a tense inter-house cricket match where Edgar was the umpire and I was in the Bird's team. There was great rivalry and much depended on the outcome.

Edgar Gill, besides being our maths teacher was also Commander of the QEH Flight of 1495 Squadron of the Air Training Corps in which I was a Cadet having achieved Advanced Proficiency and was Aircrew selected.

I was also a whizz-kid as an aeroplane spotter.

My introduction to the Luftwaffe had been in early 1940 when a German Heinkel 111 had flown along Kellaway Avenue and Coldharbour Road at about 200 feet machine gunning whomever it could see. Sheila Troll, not expecting it to be German, waved to the pilot. (BT Letters, Jan 20)

Later I saw Bristol burning in the Blitz.

As I was fielding in the cricket match I happened to look up and saw a Ju 88 flitting between two clouds directly above us obviously on photographic reconnaissance visiting the Bristol Aeroplane Company.

We were on a green field in our cricket 'whites', a perfect target for a German machine gunner.

My first thought was to warn Edgar Gill, who was totally focused into the cricket match.

"Sir," I said.

"Be quiet, Stewart," he said.

"But Sir," I persisted.

"Wait until the end of the over."

So I did. There were three or four balls left.

"Now Stewart, what is it?"

"Sir, there is a Ju 88 above us."

He knew I was good at aircraft recognition but seemed loath to believe me and take his mind off the cricket match.

Then the air raid sirens sounded, the barrage balloons went up and the AA battery came to readiness.

"Now boys, hurry up and take cover under the school pavilion."

Certainly a German Bomber was less important than the result of our cricket match. That was how we felt at the time.

Peter Stewart

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