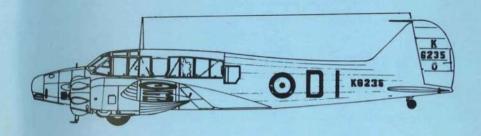


# PRELUDE TO WAR

**KENT AVIATION 1938-39** 





**Kent Aviation Historical Research Society** 

## PRELUDE TO WAR

### **CONTENTS**

Biggin Hill 1938 – 1939 — Len Pilkington	3
No.20 Elementary & Reserve Flying Training School: Gravesend — Ray Munday	11
The Royal Visit to Short Brothers — Robin J. Brooks	15
'A Host of Ansons': Royal Air Force, Manston, 1938–39 — David G. Collyer	20
Thanet's Civil Air Guard: Ramsgate Municipal Airport, 1938 – 39 — David G. Collyer	27
The Observer Corps: Its Formative Years in Kent — A.J. Moor	33
East Kent's Searchlight Volunteers — David G. Collyer	43
The Order of Battle of the RAF in Kent, 1938–39 —  Geof Baxter	
Aircraft Casualties in Kent, January 1938 to August 1939 — Ken Owen	53
Gravesend Airport 1938–39 and the Record Breakers — Ray Munday	57

## **INTRODUCTION**

This year sees the 50th anniversary of the outbreak of World War Two. The preceding months were a period of hurried preparation for the coming onslaught and the airfield personnel in Kent knew that they would bear the brunt of any attacks and attempted landings by the enemy. Kent became known as Hell Fire Corner during 1940 but much of the early preparation during 1938 and 1939 gave the county a fighting chance. The contents of this book give a description of just some of that preparation.

Robin J. Brooks

#### OTHER BOOKS BY MEMBERS OF THE KENT AVIATION HISTORICAL RESEARCH SOCIETY

## AIRCRAFT CASUALTIES IN KENT Part One 1939-40 compiled by G.G. Baxter, K.A. Owen and P. Baldock.

A listing of all known aircraft crashes in Kent (about 1,750) between July 1939 and December 1940 with details of aircraft and personnel involved. Fully indexed. Hardback £10.95, due November 1989.

#### TARGET FOLKESTONE by Roy Humphreys.

During the Second World War Folkestone was very much in the front line, being in range of shelling from across the Channel as well as an obvious target for enemy bombers. This thoroughly researched book is in diary form, detailing all recorded incidents with details of casualties and personal memories of those involved. Very well illustrated. Paperback. £6.95, due November 1989.

#### FLIGHT IN KENT by KAHRS.

A collection of articles by members of the Society. Paperback. £1.95.

#### KENT AIRFIELDS IN THE BATTLE OF BRITAIN.

The story of nine airfields during the Battle, told by members of the Society. Well illustrated. Paperback. £4.95.

#### KENT'S OWN by Robin J. Brooks.

The history of 500 (County of Kent) Squadron of the Royal Auxiliary Air Force, 1931-1957. Well illustrated. Hardback. £5.95.

#### **AVIATION IN KENT by Robin J. Brooks.**

A large format pictorial history from 19th century ballooning to 1939. Paperback £2.95.

#### HAWKINGE 1912-1961 by Roy Humphreys.

This history of the former RAF Station at Hawkinge is currently out of print. A paperback reprint at £5.95 is planned for spring 1990.

#### THE BLITZ OF CANTERBURY by Paul Crampton (not a member of KAHRS).

A pictorial record. Large format paperback. £3.50.

All these books are available from most bookshops throughout Kent, including the Rainham Bookshop, 17 Station Road, Rainham, Kent.

They are also available by post from Meresborough Books, 17 Station Road, Rainham, Kent. ME8 7RS. Telephone Medway (0634) 388812. Please add 10% towards cost of p&p. Orders over £20.00 sent post free. Telephone orders accepted for charge to Access or Visa.