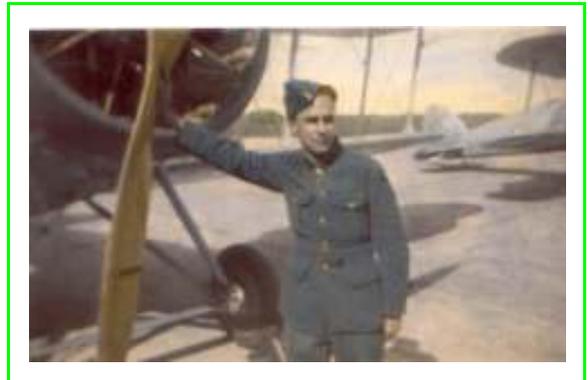


Chapter 20

Air Navigation School Andover

The Air Navigation School was a pleasant and friendly set up although I am not sure that the Flight Sergeant thought much about me. I was by far the youngest and probably thought I knew it all. One day I crossed him about something, I've forgotten what, and he got hold of me and said "What you are is a Confidential Bullshitter". I



LAC Turner with Avro Cadet

I didn't think it fair but he seemed alright later on. The CO was a hockey player and he had found a new one in me so I finally settled in. Now, what was I to do about Perle? I hadn't given up entirely. The first thing I did was to buy a decent racing cycle with drop handlebars. I put down 2/6d and agreed to pay 2/6d per week. The first available Wednesday, I set off for Southall, about 60 miles, but got a puncture. A week later I set off again with exactly 1/10d in my pocket. I bought a few apples to eat on the way, stopped en route and got tea and two buns. I reached Southall where Perle and her landlady gave me tea. I had a little money left and again stopped for tea and buns at the same place as before. That left me with 1d so on I went. About ten miles from Andover, I tried to buy a cup of tea for a penny but as it was 1½d, he wouldn't give me any. I trudged on dead tired and although I felt like lying down at the side of the road, I eventually arrived back at camp. I had not been able to get Perle to change her mind so the following day I sold the bike and cleared it with the dealer. I was miserable and unhappy and I think my Mum thought that I would never get over it, however life was soon to change when the Air Navigation School moved to Manston. It was a rotten camp with terrible food - a typical training camp. I forget what they were training for. However, there was a bright side as I was in Kent and Aunt Alice, Aunt Rose and Aunt Molly all lived in Canterbury so St Edmund's School was open house to me. I was also welcome at Aunt Alice's house (Mr & Mrs Philpotts). I persuaded my Mum to go with me to Naylor & Roots in London to buy me another motor cycle - another BSA 350cc

Blue Star. She also lent me the money. This gave me the freedom to go to Canterbury every night and home to Gillingham at weekends.



Mr & Mrs Philpott

I also went to see Granddad Ward at Willesborough. At the time he was living with Jesse Owens' wife and they gave me tea

etc. I also took the driver's test in Canterbury and passed. For a short time I was involved with one of the maids at the school. Her name was Jean and she was Welsh, her home being Swansea. The episode did not last very long but did include a visit to Swansea to see her when she was off work ill. However, she went back to an old boyfriend and finished with me. She was a friend of Aunt Alice but after that, Aunt Alice, who was really upset, did not talk to her again. Nothing much happened at Manston. I was put on a charge for having a dirty hairbrush. I was up in front of the CO with whom I played

hockey. I explained that prior to Christmas 1935, I had made a rug for my Mother and had used the hairbrush, which I normally never used, to brush the rug. We were not used to kit inspections but Manston was an awkward place for full-blown Regulars. The CO admonished me and that was that although I think that he was amused. Later our team played hockey against RAF Henlow at Manston in a round of the RAF Cup and drew 1-1. We had to replay at Henlow and I went by motor cycle the day before and stayed in the best hotel in St Albans.



1936 - Manston

10/6d Bed and Breakfast! We lost the match but whilst there I came across one of the chaps who had been lent to 43 Squadron at Tangmere. In turn, he introduced me to his friends who included George Ritchie. They were on a conversion course to Fitter 1. On 12 March 1936 I too was posted to the conversion course. The innocent was still abroad.