

Interesting examples of mail from Signalman C E Starley, Royal Signals attached with 99th Field Regiment Royal Artillery, India

In the early days of the War, Indian Post offices refused to permit the British APO s in India to use British stamps or to function under their system of account (sent to accounts once a week instead of every day as is the practice of Indian post offices) However at the end of 1944 the British Post offices was able too persuade its Indian counterpart to permit British APO to use and sell British Postage stamps

(Brig D S Virk)



The writer has used India KGVI 8as and is tied with British FPO 259 which was attached with 2 DIV and was seen at Ahmednagar, Poona and Kohima between July 1942 to October 1946



Experimenteral P.O B10 datestamp

These datestamps are normally issued to new or temporary post offices

(Brig D S Virk)

8.6 Interesting Address Of The Second World War



This printed Hong Kong and Shanghai Banking, Calcutta cover has been posted from Calcutta GPO on 8th January 1941 to **The Officer Commanding, 3rd Medium Battery, HKSRA (Hong Kong and Singapore Royal Artillery), Hongkong.** It has reached its destination at Kowloon on 1st February 1941. It has a boxed chop which was the type usually seen at Calcutta and a partially visible triangle Field Passed Censor

The Commanding officer of 3rd Medium Battery was Maj Henry Lundie Duncan from RA commanding troops recruited from Undivided India



The **Battle of Hong Kong** (8–25 December 1941), was one of the first battles of the Pacific War in Second World War. On the same morning as the attack on Pearl Harbour, the Japanese forces attacked the British controlled Hong Kong. The attack was in violation of international law as Japan had not declared war against the British. The Hong Kong garrison consisted of British, Indian and Canadian units, also the Auxiliary Defence Units and Hong Kong Voluntary Defence Corps

An Honour Envelope (URDU) used to communicate with the Regimental Paymaster at England.



This was the first Regiment of the Royal Artillery to receive the 'true' 25 pounder gun and when it changed to the 14th Regiment, it was the last Regiment to give the gun up. In July 1945 as part of 19 Division, the 28th Field took part in the battle to prevent the Japanese in the Pegu Yomas, from escaping across the Sittang. This was the last allied success of the war. From July 1943, the 28th Field Regiment Royal Artillery fought in Chas, India: Wabyin, East with the 1st, 3rd, 5th/57th (J) Field Batteries using the 3.7" Howitzer and 3" Mortar.

From 1944, the same Batteries fought in Burma and India in the North Arakan, Buthindaung, Razabil, Mayu Tunnels, Maungdaw, Ngakyeduak Pass, Imphal, Nungshigum, Kanglatongbi, Kohima, Tongzang and Kennedy Peak areas, now using the 25 Pounder Mark I guns.



Spasmodic fighting still continued into 1946 with some of the Japanese troops either being unaware of the surrender or not abiding by it, they were involved in Burma, Assam, Shan States, The Irrawaddy, Rangoon Road, and Pyinmana before moving to Nasik Road Camp, the RA depots at Malir, Deolali and Karachi in India.

Thus ended five years of war for the 28th Field Regiment. They had served with distinction on two continents and fought all three of the Axis powers. The Italians in East Africa, the Germans in the Western Desert and finally the Japanese in Burma. As the Autumn settled over Rangoon, thoughts of home, peace and a new world entered the thoughts of the Officers and men of the regiment, many of whom had fought with the 28th Field from the early days of 1941 and the battle of Keren

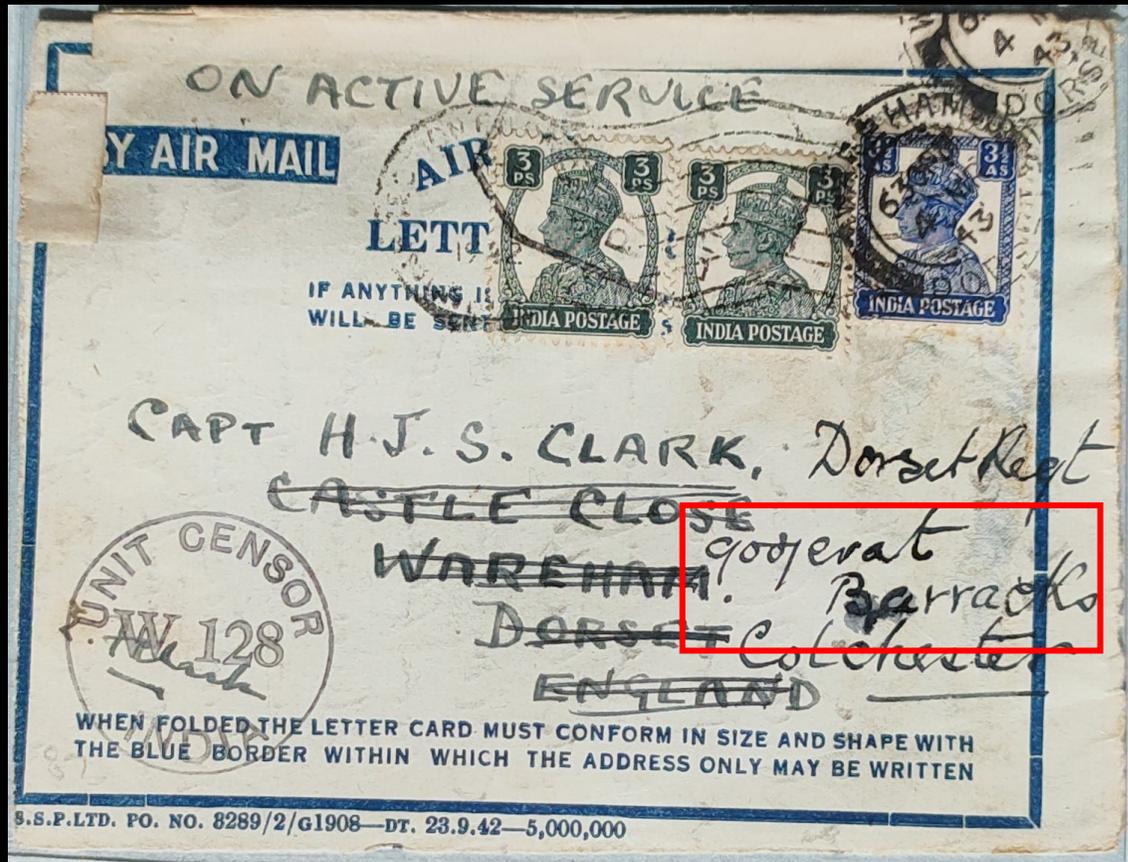
Between 1900 and 1902 Goojerat and Sabraon barracks were built on the southern edge of the camp on part of the land of Barn Hall farm, of which was acquired in 1899. Between 1896 and 1904 the old wooden huts on the Ordnance field were replaced by the brick buildings of Hyderabad and Meeanee barracks.

In 1866 Colchester became the headquarters of the newly created Eastern District; to accommodate the General Officer Commanding Eastern District the government rented Scarletts, an estate abutting the southern edge of the recreation ground, from 1885. In 1904 the government bought Reed Hall and Bee Hive farms, comprising together 785 a. south-west of the garrison.

In 1914, when between 30,000 and 40,000 men were in training in Colchester, wooden huts were put up at Reed Hall. A military airfield was established on several acres of land at Blackheath; after the war it was transferred to Friday Wood.

Between 1926 and 1933 large areas of Berechurch parish, including Berechurch Hall, were bought for the army. During the 1930s Kirkee and McMunn barracks were built at Reed Hall; Roman Way and Cherry Tree camps were established south-east of the main camp.

In 1939 emergency barracks were built on various sites in the garrison area including the Abbey field, at Blackheath, and at Berechurch.

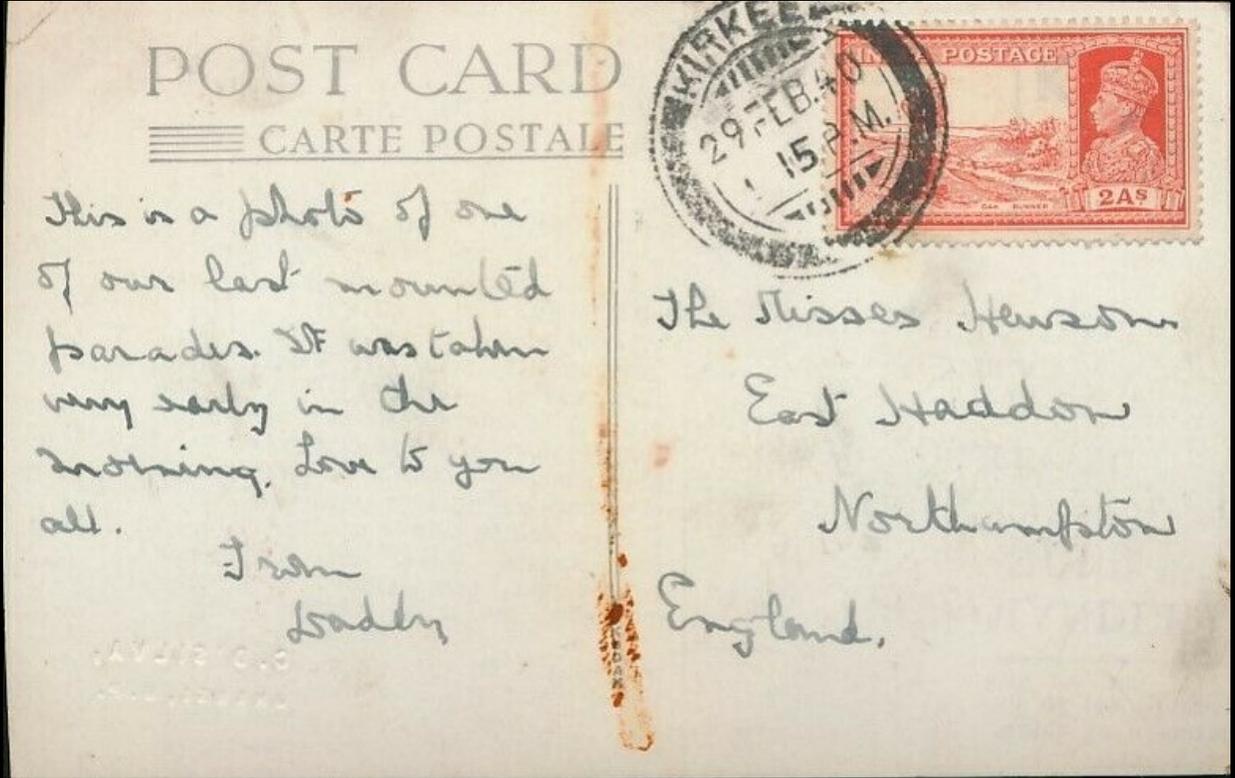




A self printed cover bearing the address of Indian Red Cross Society, Bombay, India and the RED Cross Postal Message Service cachet in red; addressed to Comite International Della Croix Rouge, Geneva, Switzerland

It has travelled from Bombay, India to UK where the two red parallel lines have been stamped on the By Airmail sticker in blue The cover bears a Opened By Examiner censor strip PC90,DHC/162 and the black octagonal “Passed” steel stamp with DHC/30 (Bombay) which was supplied to the stations in India in March 1942.

It bears the Geoffnet strip (Germany),Opened By Censor at Paris as signified by the lowercase x below the eagle perched on the swastika (Reichsadler) and has two violet circular German censor handstamp on the Geoffnet strip



Kirkee Cantonment is one of the oldest Cantonments in India, having its own place in history. On 5th November 1817, the “battle of Kirkee” was fought between the Marathas and the British on the ground covering the present day town. It was established in the year 1817. Kirkee Cantonment covers an area of 3207.3394 acres of land.

In 1939, when the Second World War began, Kirkee was called the Home Of Ordnance since both the Kirkee Arsenal and the I.A.O.C. School was located here.

9. RAF Mail

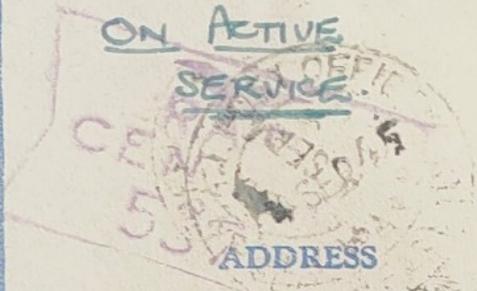
ACTIVE SERVICE R.A.F. PRIVILEGE ENVELOPE

L&Co. 3466/8/G2290-22-12-44-1500000

INSTRUCTIONS

1. Up to 3 letters by the same writer may be forwarded in this cover. Each letter must be individually addressed.
2. If the enclosed letters are all for the same addressee, this cover should be similarly addressed. If they are for various addressees this cover should be addressed to the R.A.F. Base Censor.
3. Except in areas where the free postage concession is in force, postage stamps at the full rate must be affixed to the enclosed letters. If there is only one letter enclosed, the stamp should be affixed to this cover.
4. This cover must not be used for coin or valuables. It cannot be accepted for registration.
5. The certificate on the back of this cover must be completed.

Air Force (India) Form 1645



THE SECRETARY,
COVENTRY NEWSPAPERS
LTD,
50, HERTFORD STREET,
COVENTRY
ENGLAND

CENSORSHIP

Correspondence in this envelope need not be censored by units or on board ship, but is liable to examination by the Postal Censorship Authorities.

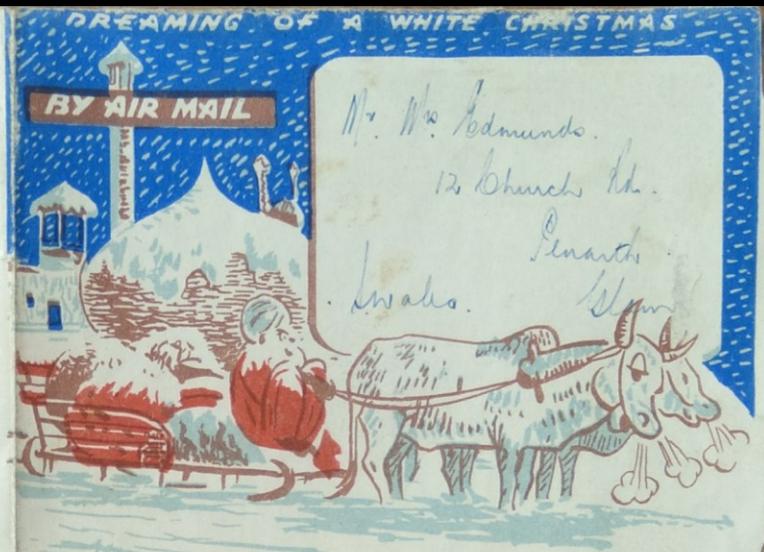
The following certificate must be signed by the writer :

I certify on my honour that the contents of this letter refer to nothing but private and family matters.

Signature } [Handwritten Signature]
Name only }

This is a Honour Envelope-Active Service RAF Privilege Envelope, Air Force (India) Form 1645 posted at RAF Post office on 4th September 1945 to England.

This bears Garrard & Colley/FPHS type R17 marks-RAF Censor 537. There was no separate air force base censorship in India, the Air Force units only used the unit censor stamp.



DREAMING OF A WHITE CHRISTMAS

BY AIR MAIL

Mr. W. Edmunds.
12, Church St.
Penarth
Wales.

16/12/45 R.A.F. SERAAS

XMAS AIR LETTER RAFFPOST

POSTAGE FREE
SOUTH EAST ASIA

Xmas Air Letters may be despatched POSTAGE FREE to U.K., EIRE, B.L.A., U.S.A. and all BRITISH EMPIRE COUNTRIES and FORCES, and will be forwarded by air throughout for delivery as near Xmas as possible.

Xmas Air Letters are subject to Unit Censorship (where in force) before despatch.



R.A.F. Postal Services and Welfare.

Pictorial Greetings Air Letter forms were issued centrally in two designs for 1944 and in three designs for 1945. As the form was a rationed item, units were seldom permitted to print forms of their own pictorial design

The front and the back of the XMAS AIR LETTER

SEASON'S GREETINGS

164 Oct 18 Ac. Roberts Dr.

Bd. O

La. J.

SE 441

3. 12. 45.

Dear Mr. Wm. Edmunds.

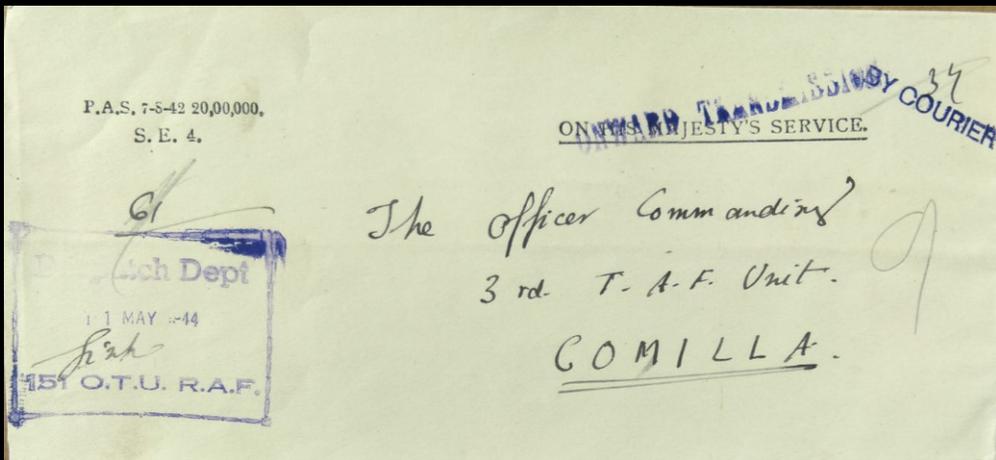
Here's wishing you all the best for Xmas & the New Year.

I am still at Bombay where I am likely to spend my last Xmas in these parts. There is reason to believe that I shall be going on to Bangalore in Feb. however I do not think my stay there will be more than a few months it all depends on our anything but wonderful release schedule at the moment my trade is 8 grants behind the general release so we have a bit to go to catch up.

Don't know if I have written since my father was released from the job. Glad to say he is in good health in spite of everything he was one of the better survivors out of a camp of 650. Trust you are all well. Kind regards
Wahida Begum



The inside of the XMAS AIRLETTER



The Air officer commanding 3 TAF was Air Marshal John Baldwin, KBE, CB, DSO

The cover has been dispatched on 11th May 1944 as shown on the violet handstamp. It has been received at its destination. 3rd TAF Unit on 15th May 1944 as is seen on the violet handstamp bearing –HQ Air Command South East-Asia

No. 151 (Fighter) Operational Training Unit RAF (151 OTU)
Formed in July 1942 at RAF Risalpur as part of No. 227 Group to train pilots out of Indian flying training schools.



The RAF Third Tactical Air Force (Third TAF), which was formed in South Asia in December 1943, was one of three tactical air forces formed by the Royal Air Force (RAF) during the Second World War. It was made up of squadrons and personnel from the RAF, Indian Air Force (IAF) and the air forces of other Commonwealth countries. Third TAF was formed shortly after the establishment of South East Asia Command to provide close air support to the Fourteenth Army.

It was first formed on 19 December 1943 designated the Tactical Air Force (Burma) and renamed as the Third TAF on 28 December 1943. Along with parts of the USAAF Tenth Air Force, it was subordinate to Joint Allied Eastern Air Command which was also formed in December 1943.

DEVELOPMENT OF COMILLA AS A CENTRE OF COMMUNICATION AND
H.Q. 14TH ARMY

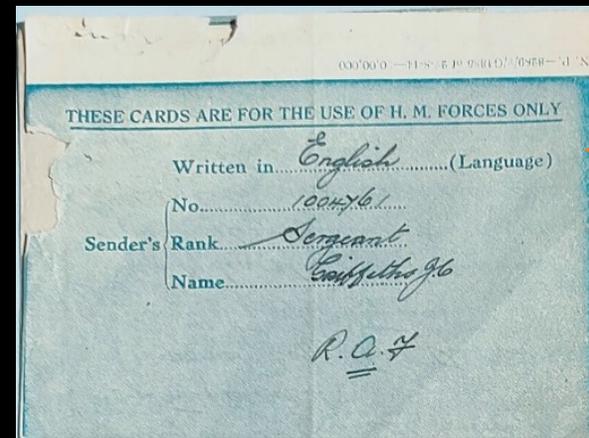
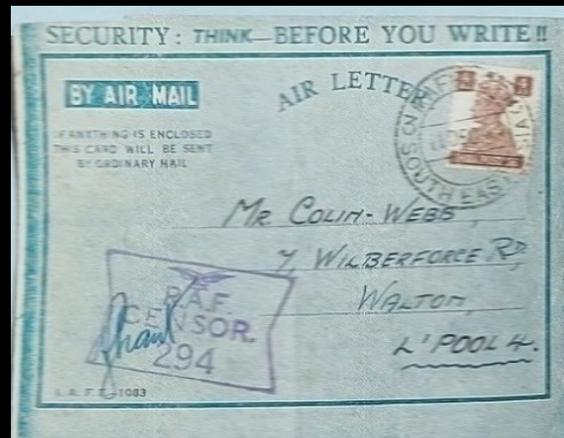
During 1943, COMILLA became an important focal point in Eastern Bengal for operations against the Japanese. Its central position between the Arakan and Assam fronts, its location on the B. & A. railway from Chittagong to Manipur Road and Dacca, its suitability as a centre of signal communications and for airfield construction, were tactical reasons for its selection as H.Q. of the 14th Army and 3rd T.A.F. and for Reinforcement Camps. Hospital cover was made available for the number of troops in the camps and garrison only. Hospital areas were established for the Assam front in Imphal and for the Arakan front mainly at Dacca, with additional cover at Cox's Bazaar, Doapalong and Chittagong. When air evacuation from the Arakan was planned, Comilla was already the base for aircraft which would take supplies in and bring casualties out. Hence Comilla was destined to develop into the forward hospital area for the Arakan front for those patients who could be evacuated by air.

In India, separate Postal Organisation was set up to deal with the mails of RAF personnel.

The mail is forwarded to Bombay in military and civil miscellaneous bags and is handed over to the RAF Base Post office, part of RAF Base Record office. All mail arrived is sorted by means of card index, which captures the updated location of the personnel.

After the mail is sorted in the RAF Base Post Office they are enclosed in bags labelled RAF Mail (name of town) and passed to Bombay GPO. Registered letters are not included. These are transferred to RAF Base Record Office and combined with outgoing official mail to the unit and forwarded as a single unit.

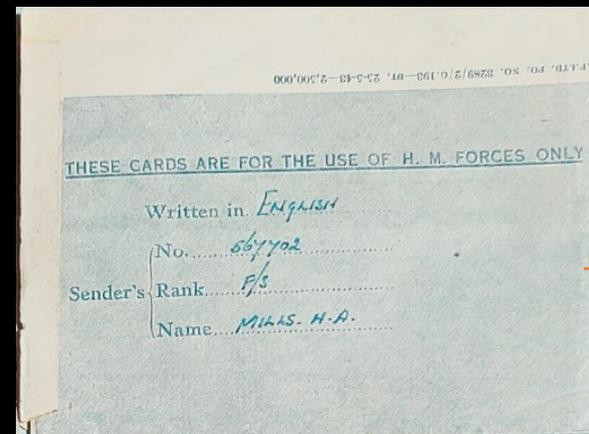
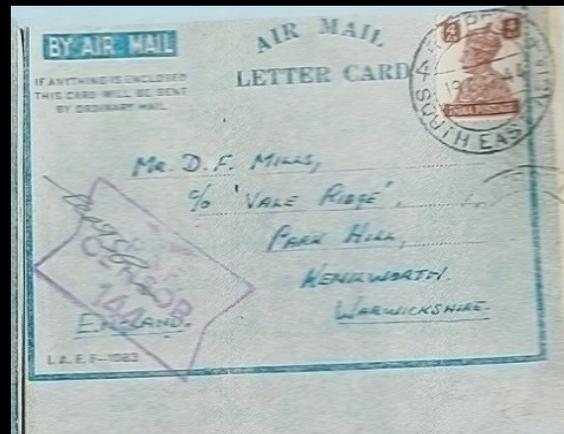
The British Postal Directorate took control of SEAC on 1st May 1944 (Brig D S Virk)



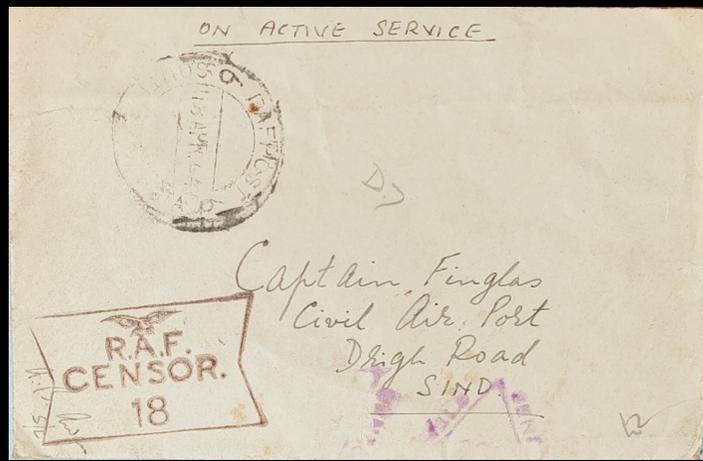
This Air Letter has been posted from 3 RAF POST SOUTH EAST ASIA on 11th December 1944 to England, India 4s India KGVI stamp affixed; It bears RAF Censor 294



This cover has been posted from 3 RAF POST OFFICE on 2nd July 1944 to Ootacamund, India, transit datestamp of Bangalore on 3rd July 1944 is seen and then the datestamp of Ootacamund, India 2s India KGVI stamp affixed



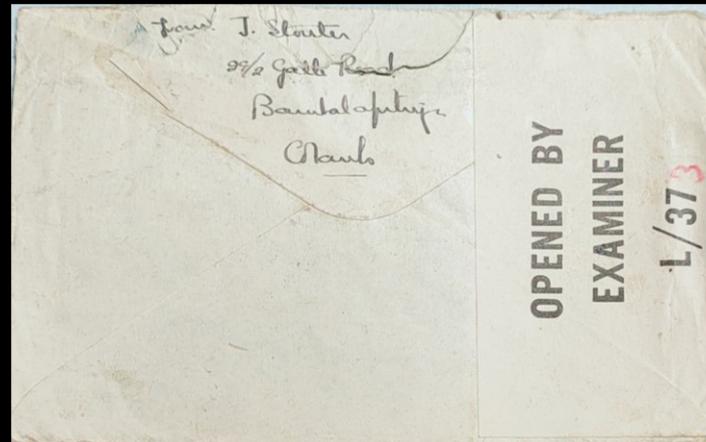
This Air Mail Letter Card has been posted from 4 RAF POST SOUTH EAST ASIA OFFICE on 19th October 1944 to England, India 4s India KGVI stamp affixed; It bears RAF Censor 144



This stampless cover has been posted from 6 RAF POST OFFICE on 18th April 1944 to Captain Finglas, Civil Airport, Drigh Road, Karachi, Undivided India. It has been received at Drigh Road, Karachi on 26th April 1944 with a delivery cachet Careless Talk Cost Lives



This stampless cover has been posted from 3 RAF POST OFFICE on 22nd February 1944 to Ootacamund, India. It has been received at Ootacamund on 24th February 1944 with a delivery cachet Careless Talk Cost Lives



This cover has been posted from Ceylon on 20th October 1944 to F/O PN Ewing, 45 Sqn, RAF, India Command; 4*coconut palms Ceylon KGVI stamps
It bears a Opened By Examiner L/37;3 hand written in Red and small octagonal D2 handstamp (Madras)



This is a cover posted from Detroit, USA on 29th March 1944, 1*10 cents, 2*30 cents US stamps tied with a cachet Give Red Cross War Fund to **Flight Officer J Gardner, RAF under India Command**

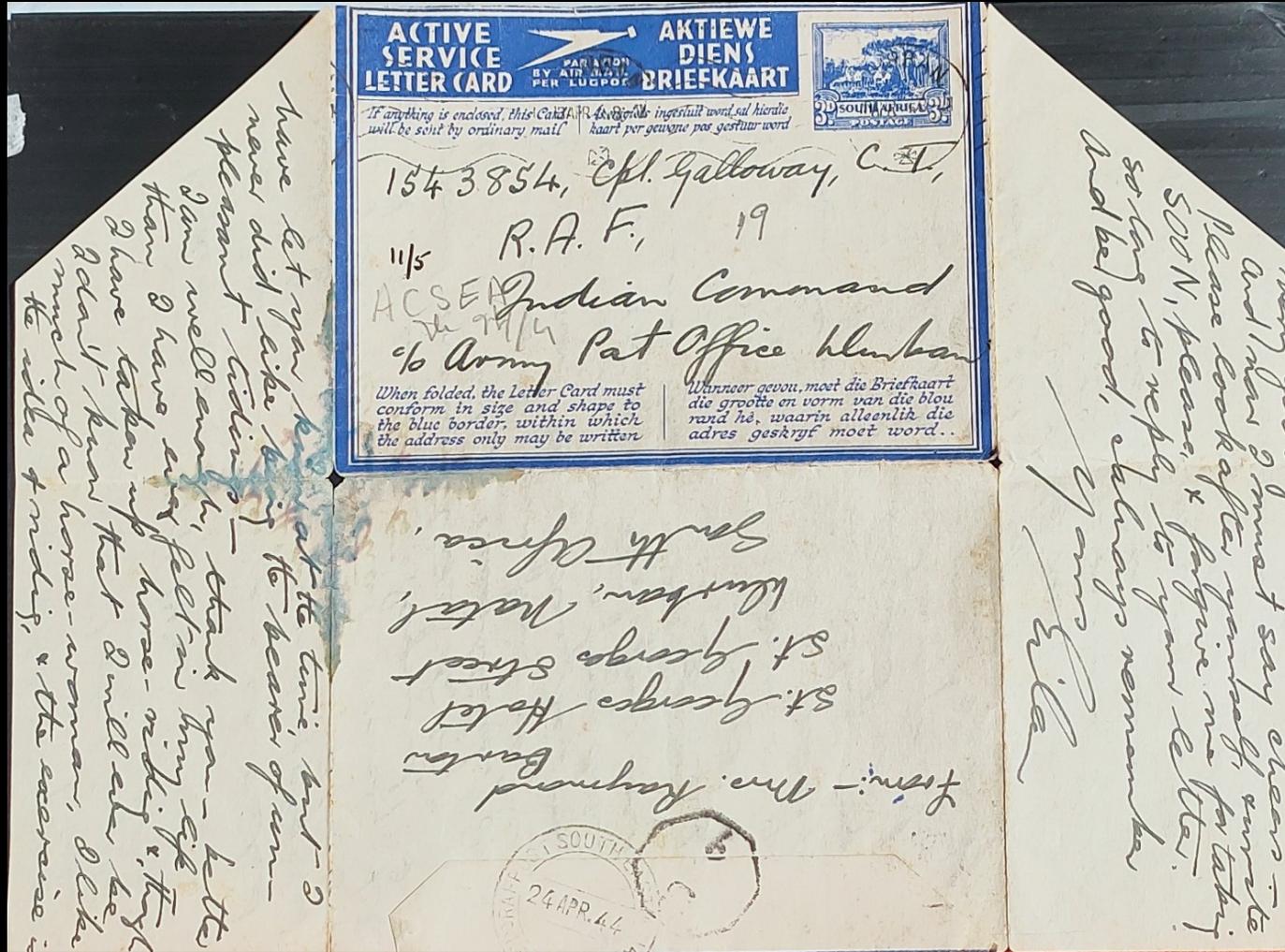
It bears a strip Opened By Examiner and a black octagonal Passed DHB (Karachi), this is unopened mail, received at RAFPOST Office, South East Asia on 30th April 1944

On this cover, the Advanced Base Post Office has updated the location where the letter needs to be forwarded



.....

Front facing



Inside of the Lettercard

