



WWII BRITISH MILITARY AIR MAIL LETTER CARDS AND AIR LETTERS

This exhibit presents Great Britain Air Mail Letter Cards and Air Letters used during WWII from, to and between forces in different theaters of war

Material is presented as it relates to the different regions, as well as sections for naval forces, and items not otherwise categorized.

Quantities of mail to and from forces in different war theaters, led to the introduction by Great Britain in April, 1941, of special forces airmail stationery. Britain introduced the *Air Mail Letter Card* (AMLC) (designated *Army Form W3077*) for British forces for quick, inexpensive contact with home at a concessionary mailing rate of 3d. each. This was possible as the AMLC comprised a single sheet of lightweight paper. The service was later extended to commonwealth and Allied forces.

From 3 December, 1943, the title *Air Mail Letter Card* was discontinued in favor of *Air Letter*. To economize on production and transportation costs, many forms were printed locally; this gave rise to many variants of W3077.

W3077 forms were distributed free of charge at pay parades per the following schedule:

Effective date	W3077 Allowance per man
9 August 1941	1 per 14 days
15 March 1944	3 per 14 days
19 March 1944	6 per 28 days
28 July 1944	2 per 7 days

Forces in most units were able to purchase additional W3077 forms for mailing at their own expense.

Examples are shown of W3077 forms not issued free-of-charge when mailers applied the appropriate adhesive stamps for pre-paid mail (forces concessionary airmail 3d. rate). Examples are shown from some areas where stamps of the local postal authority were permitted.

As a rule, correspondence was subject to military censorship. In the interest of keeping morale high, the authorities permitted one W3077 form per week per man to be free from censorship at the unit level, although it remained subject to Base censorship. These so-called *Privilege* letters required a declaration by the forces of the nature of their content.

Key philatelic items, and those illustrating original research, are displayed on red mattes.