



# Letters and Communication

Letters were the most common form of communication during both the First and Second World Wars. Soldiers wrote letters before sleep, after training or even on the Front Line whilst on duty. Writing letters helped ease the pain of separation between soldiers and their loved ones and a reply from abroad gave some hope to those back home that their soldier was still alive. Communication from family and friends was vital for the morale of soldiers who were away from home for months, especially those stationed in other countries.

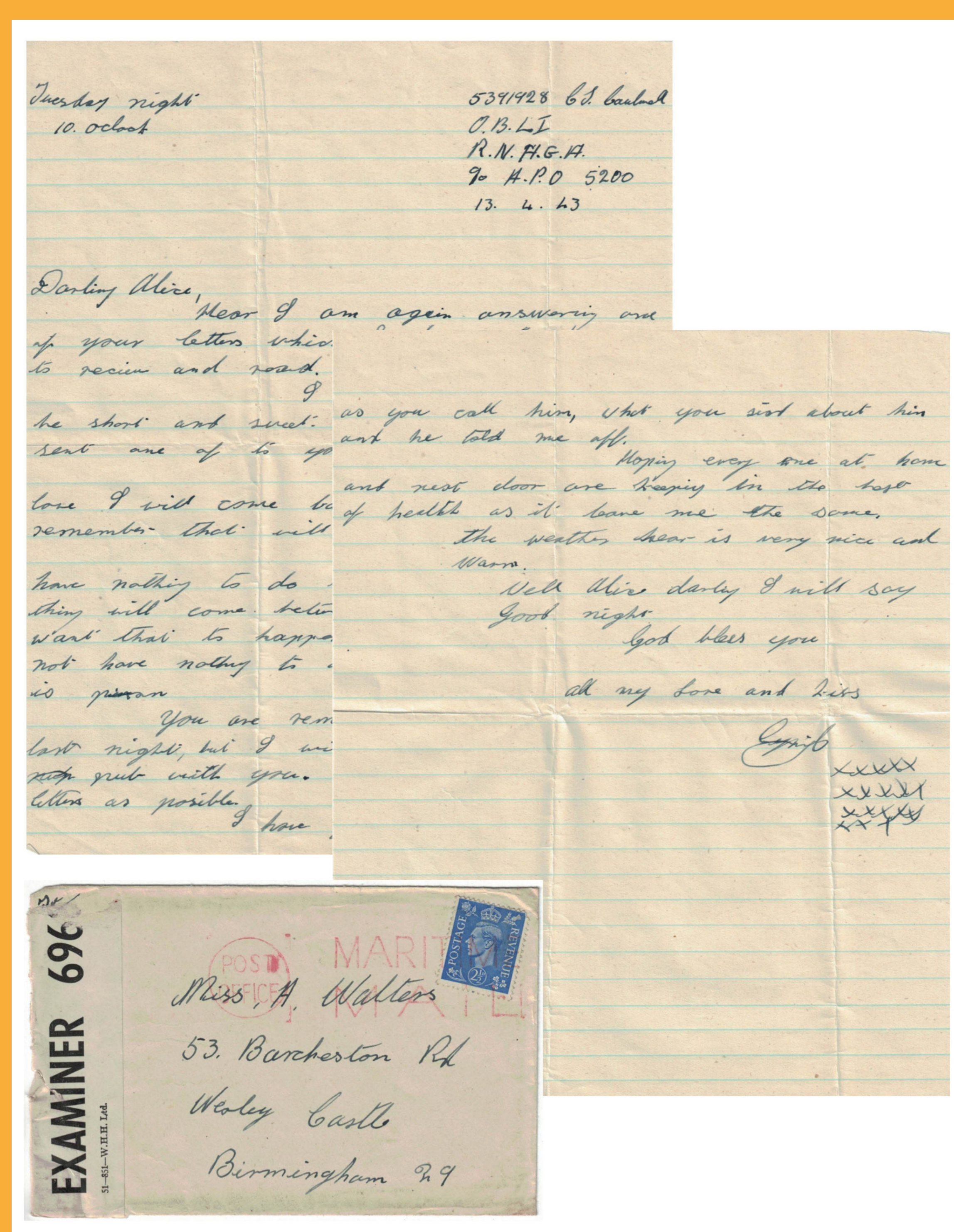
During the First World War, around 2 billion letters were delivered by the British Army Postal Service. To prevent the leaking of secret information, there were restrictions on what soldiers could include in their letters and they were censored before sending. Whilst some soldiers took the chance to reassure their sweethearts and family about their safety and wellbeing, others described the harder sides to war they were experiencing.

**"Hello, my darling. I hope this card finds you well, as it leaves me fit"**  
**Private A. J. Gregory to his fiancée Ivy Bendell**

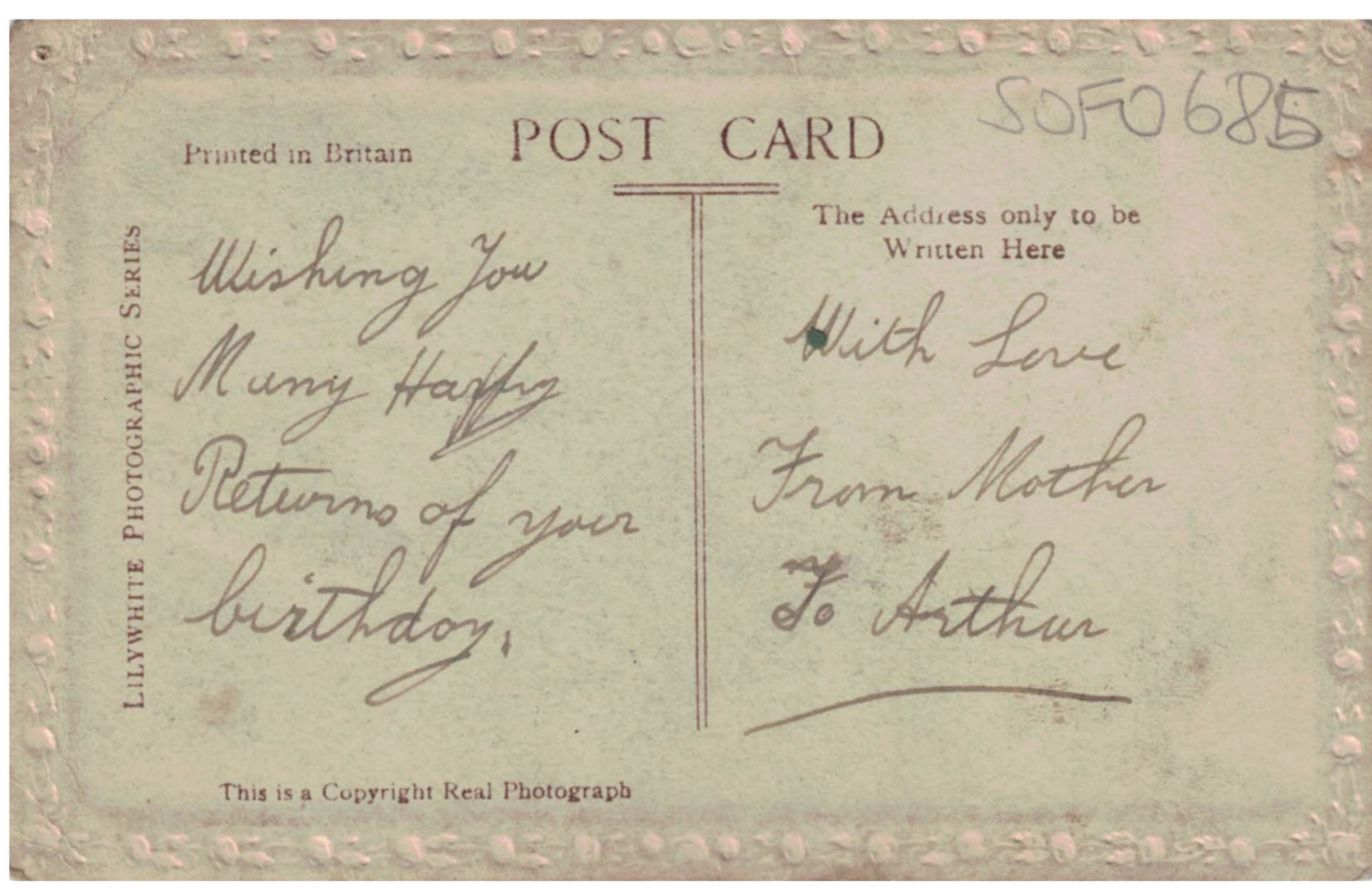
**"Well dear mum, there's nothing of any importance to say out here. I am still doing my same old job in the cookhouse and I am getting alright with it now by the time I get home I ought to be an expert at cooking so you will be able to have a rest mum. Tell pop I will cook him an army meal of course the quickest would be one of his old stews tell him"**  
**Private Tom Quanton to his mom**

As well as letters, postcards and greeting cards were sent between soldiers and their families on special days to celebrate Christmas or birthdays. These letters and cards are a personal memento from a son, a father or a husband who hoped to return home as soon as possible.

**"Wishing you Many Happy returns of the day"**  
**Birthday card to Cyril Cauldwell from his wife Alice**



This letter was written from Private Cyril Caulwell from the Oxfordshire and Buckinghamshire Light Infantry to his wife Alice Walters on 13 April 1943.



A postcard sent from mother to her son Arthur with the message "Wishing you many happy returns of your birthday."

