

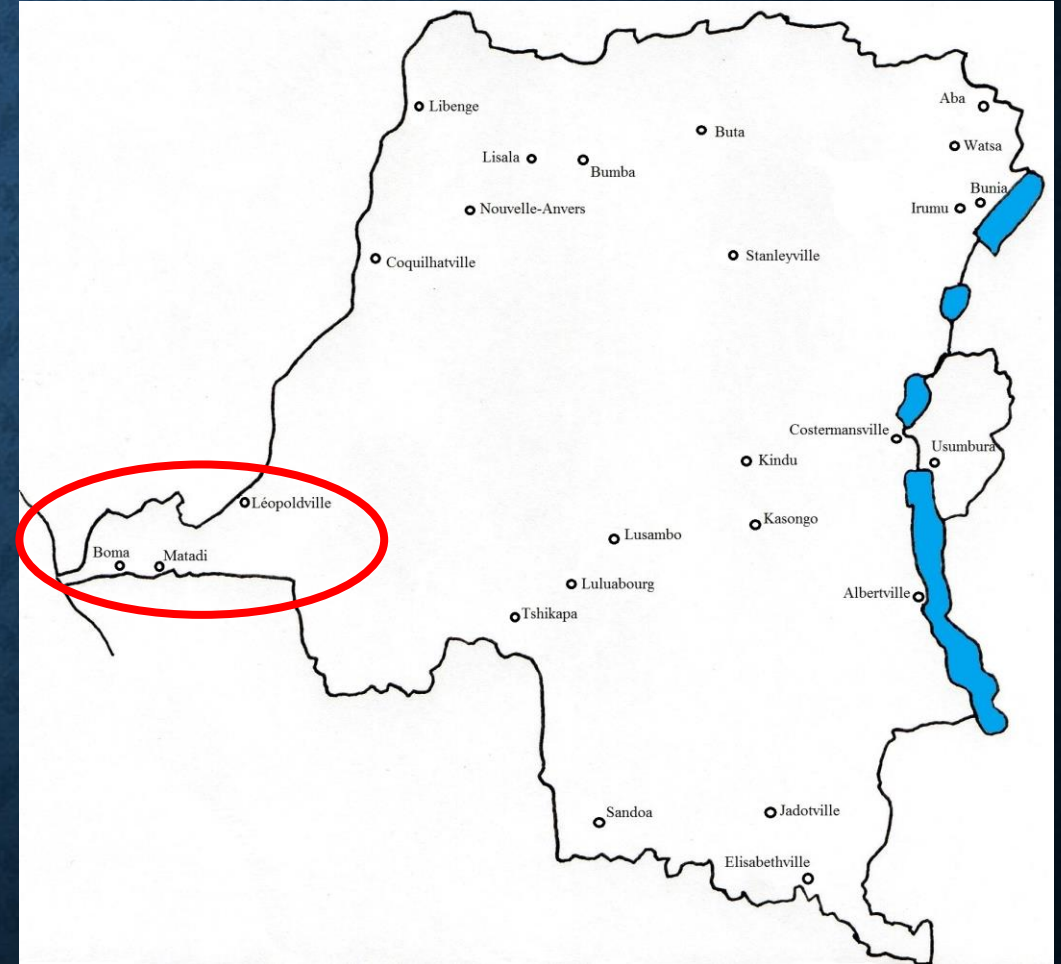
**THE BELGIAN CONGO EXPEDITIONARY
FORCE IN NIGÉRIA
AUGUST 1942 TO MARCH 1943**

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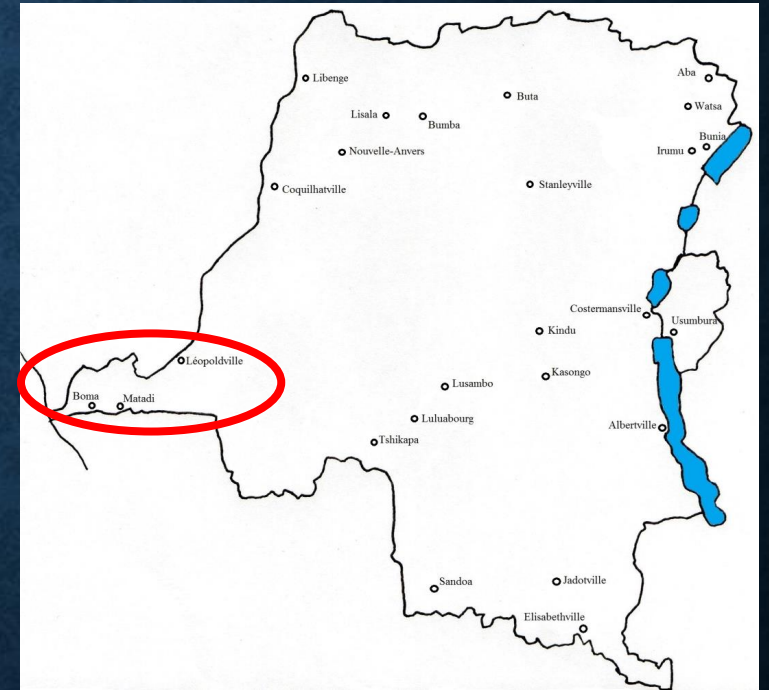
1. CONCENTRATION OF TROOPS IN BAS-CONGO

After the military campaign of Abyssinian, troops were concentrated in the Bas Congo (Leopoldville and the mouth of the Congo River), for the purpose to constitute an Expeditionary Force for Nigeria. This period is called by some philatelists "concentration of troops in the Bas-Congo," it beginning in March 1942 and ended in March 1943 when the expeditionary corps leaves Nigeria.



1. CONCENTRATION OF TROOPS IN BAS-CONGO

Since Leopoldville has always had a military camp, letters to and from the military met throughout the war. However, with the arrival of new troops (to be deployed in Nigeria), the Leopoldville camp was renamed BPM No. 1. Moreover, these new troops were not only confined to the Leopoldville camp but in the whole province (Inkisi, Matadi,...).



1A. THE POSTMARKS OF BPM N°1 (LÉOPOLDVILLE)

CACHET

Cachet BPM n°1 – double rings - Diameter: 28.5mm

Period of use:

From March 1942 to March 1943

Always in black



1A. THE POSTMARKS OF BPM N°1 (LÉOPOLDVILLE)

MILITARY CENSORSHIP MARKS (TAPES)



TYPE MAα:

Military censorship tape "TROUPES COLONIALES CENSURE MILITAIRE - A 42 - " coat of arms with motto "TRAVAIL ET PROGRES" – with lions sideways heads – escutcheon « square ».

1A. THE POSTMARKS OF BPM N°1 (LÉOPOLDVILLE)

MILITARY CENSORSHIP MARKS (TAPES)



TYPE MAb:

Military censorship tape « TROUPES COLONIALES CENSURE MILITAIRE – A 42 – coat of arms with motto "L'UNION FAIT LA FORCE" – with lions front face heads – escutcheon « flower ».

1B. MAIL FROM BPM N°1



Airmail cover written by soldier in BPM n°1 and cancelled during the transit at Matdi (where the stamps were blackened and information next to « mil 366 » so that the location of soldiers remains secret) in September the 5th of 1942 to London. Transit by Leopoldville on September the 9th of 1942.

1C. MAIL TO BPM N°1



Cover sent from Elisabethville on April the 17th of 1942 to « Commandant Segall – Force Publique Leopoldville » (BPM n°1) where it arrived on April the 22nd of 192.

1C. MAIL TO BPM N°1



Cover sent from Faradje on July the 31st of 1942 to « Mr Roger Dessy – mil, 75 – B.M. 1 » where it arrived on August the 6th of 1942, Transit by Stanleyville on August the 2nd of 1942 and Léopoldville on August 5th. Censor tape type MAb applied at BPM n°1 (Léopoldville)






2. THE BELGIAN CONGO EXPEDITIONARY FORCE IN NIGERIA

In August 1942, in Matadi, just less than 12,500 soldiers and porters were preparing to embark on two ships to travel to Nigeria. The aim of the task force is to protect the communication line Lagos - Fort Lamy - Egypt. Which was threatened by forces loyal to Petain present in French West Africa. You should know that French Equatorial Africa was under the control of the allies from September 1940. Warning, Gabon shall not be under the control of the Allies only in November 1942. The expeditionary force arrives in August 1942 in Lagos.

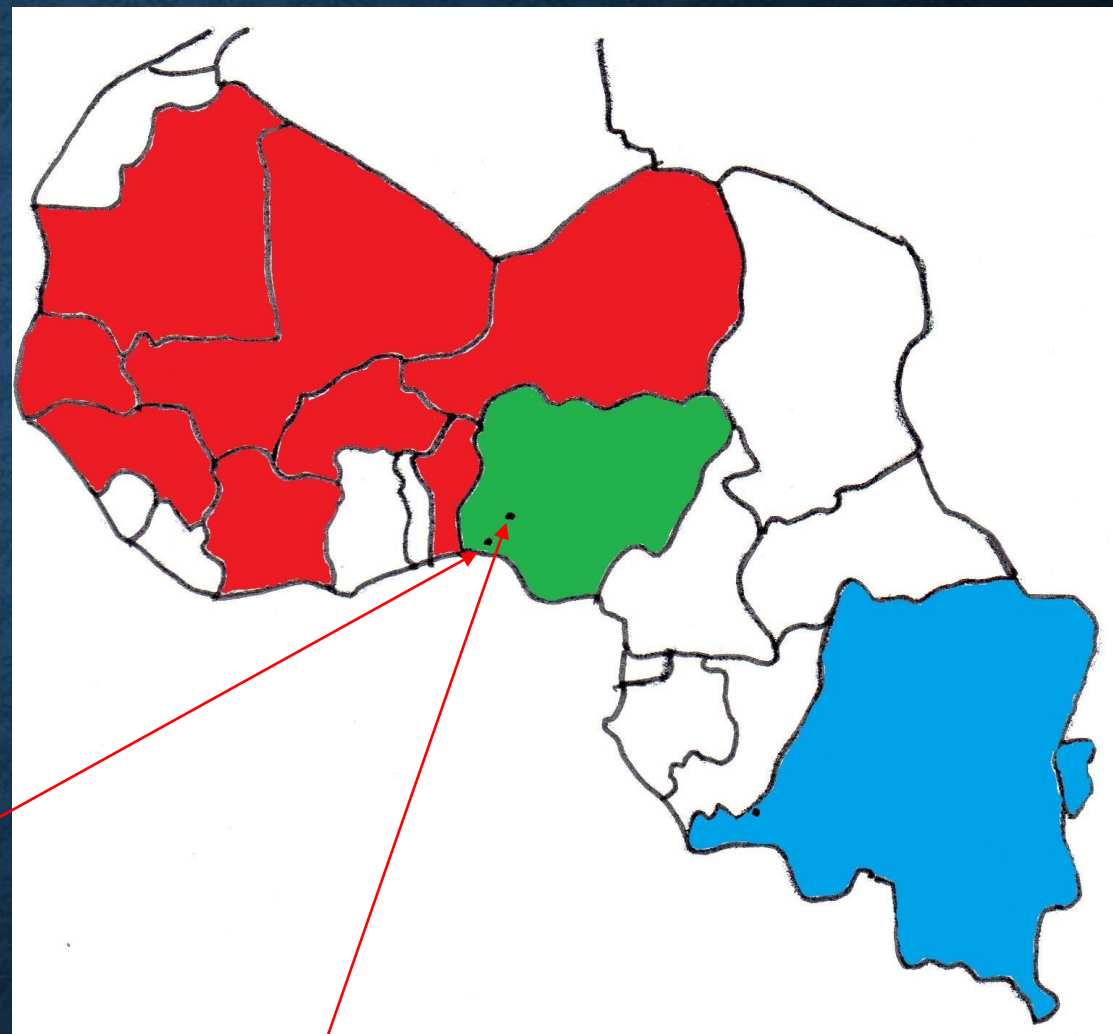
Source: www.congoposte.be

- The first mail of this expeditionary force in Nigeria is dated August 22, 1942.
- A military postal office will be opened in Ibadan from September 1942, the "BELGIAN CONGO MILITARY POST N°4". It was "adjudant" Gaillard (head of the military postal service) who when he embarked for Nigeria decided to take this "N°4" cachet and leave the "N°1" in Leopoldville.
- This office (BPM n°4) was then transferred to Lagos in December 1942.

-  Afrique Occidentale Française
-  Congo Belge & Ruanda Urundi
-  Nigéria

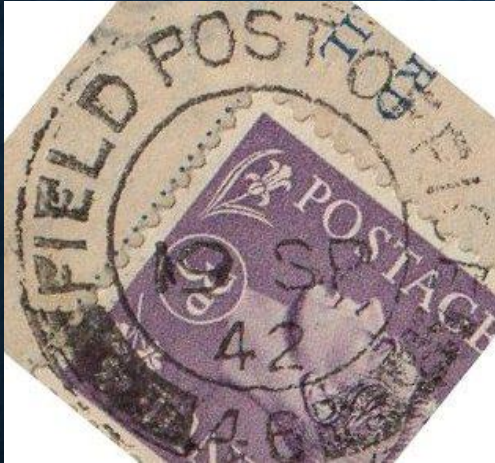
Lagos

Ibadan



2A. POSTMARKS OF THE CONTINGENT

CACHETS



"FIELD POST OFFICE 46" was in Lagos.

Colour: Black



Double ring cachet (Diameter 28,5 mm.)

Period of use:

- Between September and December 1942: Ibadan
- From December 1942 to March 1943 : Lagos

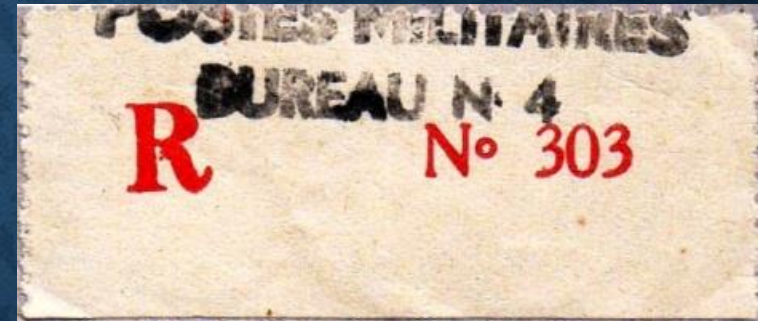
Colour: Black

2A. POSTMARKS OF THE CONTINGENT

REGISTERED LABELS

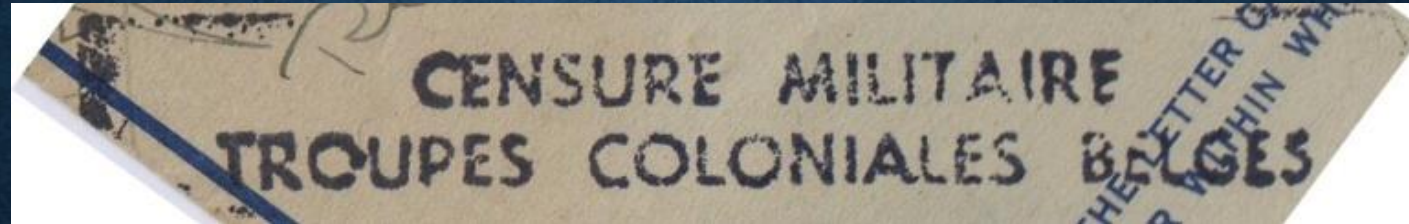
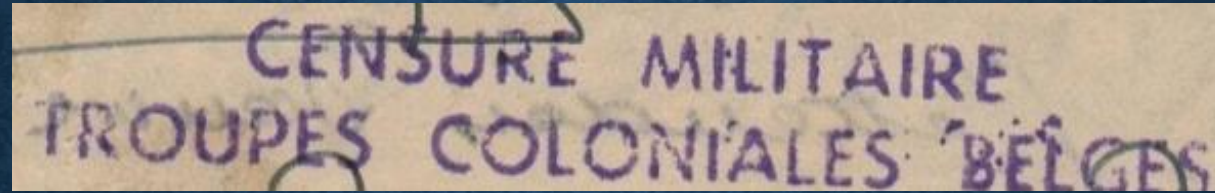


Type 2Ab – the “R” measures 7mm high. The number is in position “middle”. Color: orange-red..



Type 2Ca – the “R” measures 6mm high. The number is in position “middle”. Color: red

2A. POSTMARKS OF THE CONTINGENT CENSORSHIP (STRAIGHT LINEAR MARKS)



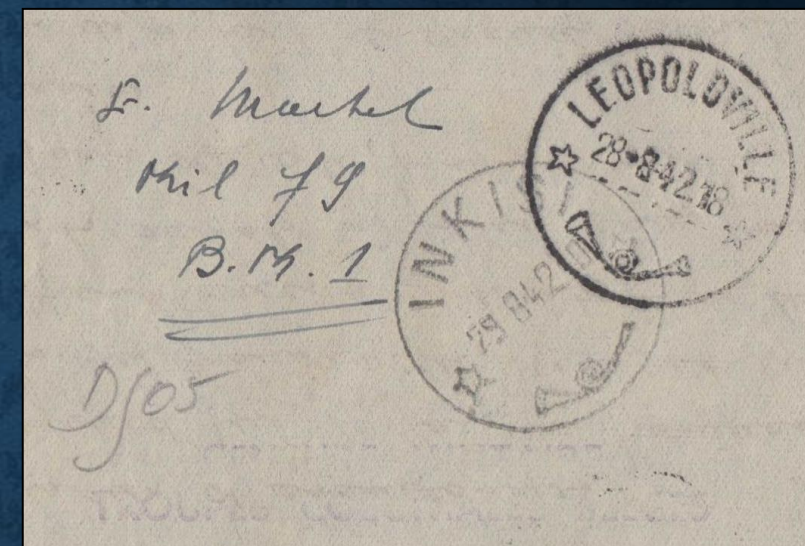
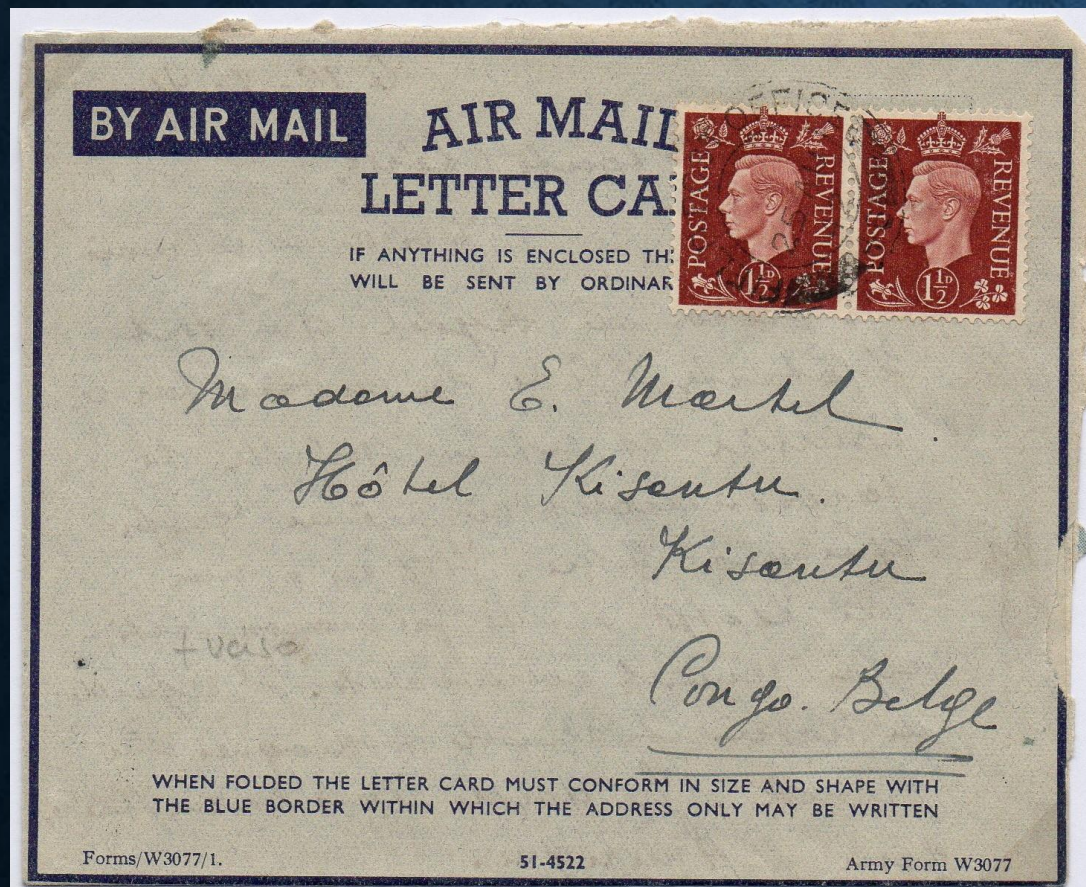
Straight linear mark « COENSURE MILITAIRE – TROUPES COLONIALES BELGES ». They are probably affixed either from Ibadan or Lagos based on the date or transit. They are usually accompanied by the signature of the sender.

Seen in Black, in red and in violet.

2A. POSTMARKS OF THE CONTINGENT

- Mail for the expeditionary force in Nigeria will be gathered in Leopoldville and placed in a mail bag to the Army Base Post Office in Lagos. It is this office that will distribute the mail to the soldiers.
- Mail from the expeditionary force will be gathered in Lagos and sent to Leopoldville where the mail is redirected to the recipients.
- Note: Some soldiers write their address as BPM 1 instead of 4 BPM likely to facilitate the delivery of mail through Leopoldville (BPM 1).

2B. MAIL FROM THE TROOPS



Straight linear mark of military censorship on two lines. « CENSURE MILITAIRE TROUPES COLONIALES BELGES» (in violet),

Airmail letter card sent from Field Post Office 46 (Lagos) on August 22nd of 1942 to Kisantu/Belgian Congo. Transit by Léopoldville on August the 28th and Inkisi on August the 29th of 1942.

2B. MAIL FROM THE TROOPS



Airmail letter card sent from Field Post Office 46 (Lagos) on September the 19th of 1942 to Kisantu/Congo Belge. Transit by BPM n°1 (Leopoldville) on September the 30th of 1942 and Leopoldville the same day.

Military censor tape type MAa and straight linear mark « CENSURE MILITAIRE TROUPES COLONIALES BELGES » (in violet),

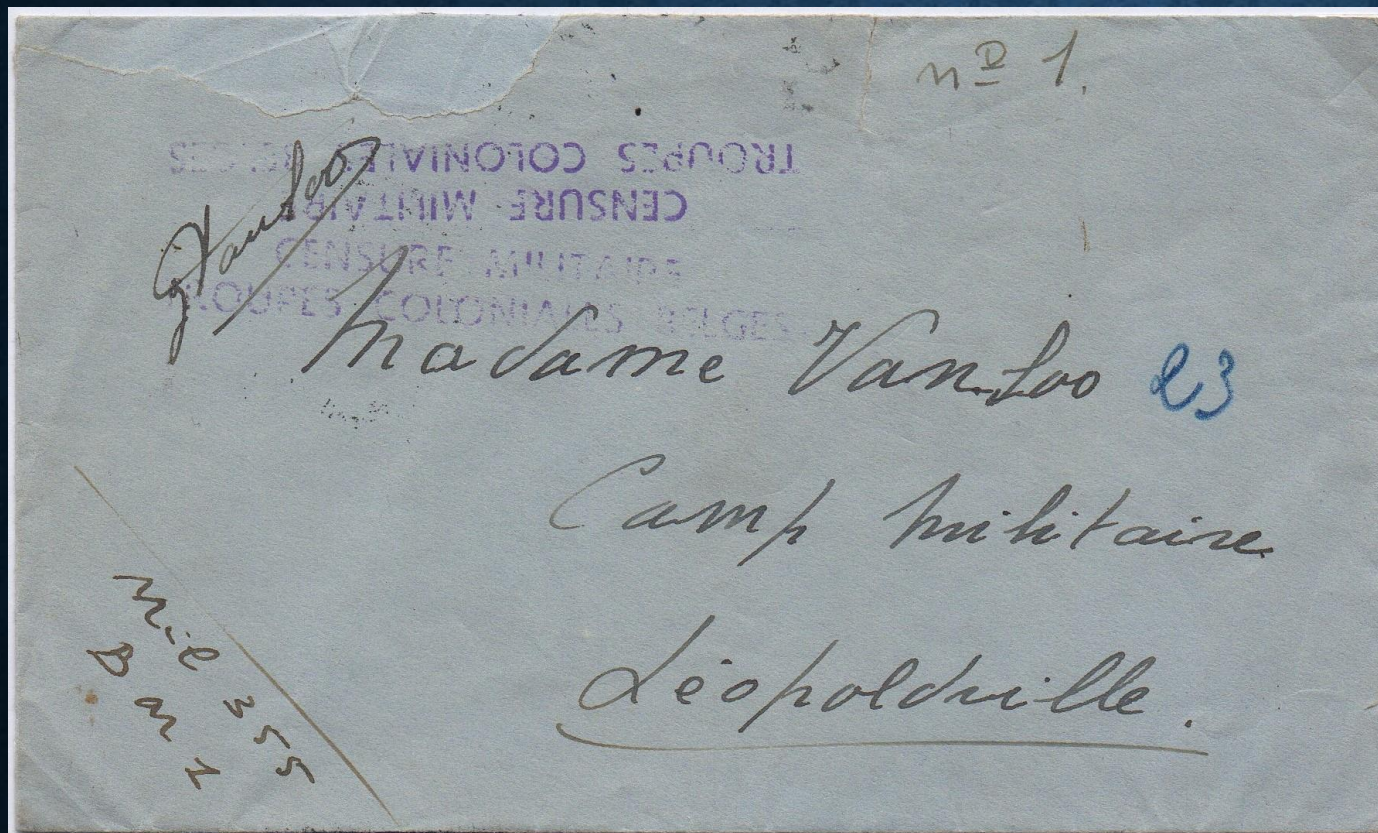
2B. MAIL FROM THE TROOPS



Straight linear mark of military censorship on two lines. « CENSURE MILITAIRE TROUPES COLONIALES BELGES» (in violet),

Cover sent by airmail from BPM n°4 (Ibadan) on October the 22nd of 1942 to Kinshasa/Belgian Congo. Transit by BPM n°1 (Leopoldville) on December the 15th and Leopoldville 1 on Decemeber the 16th of 1942.

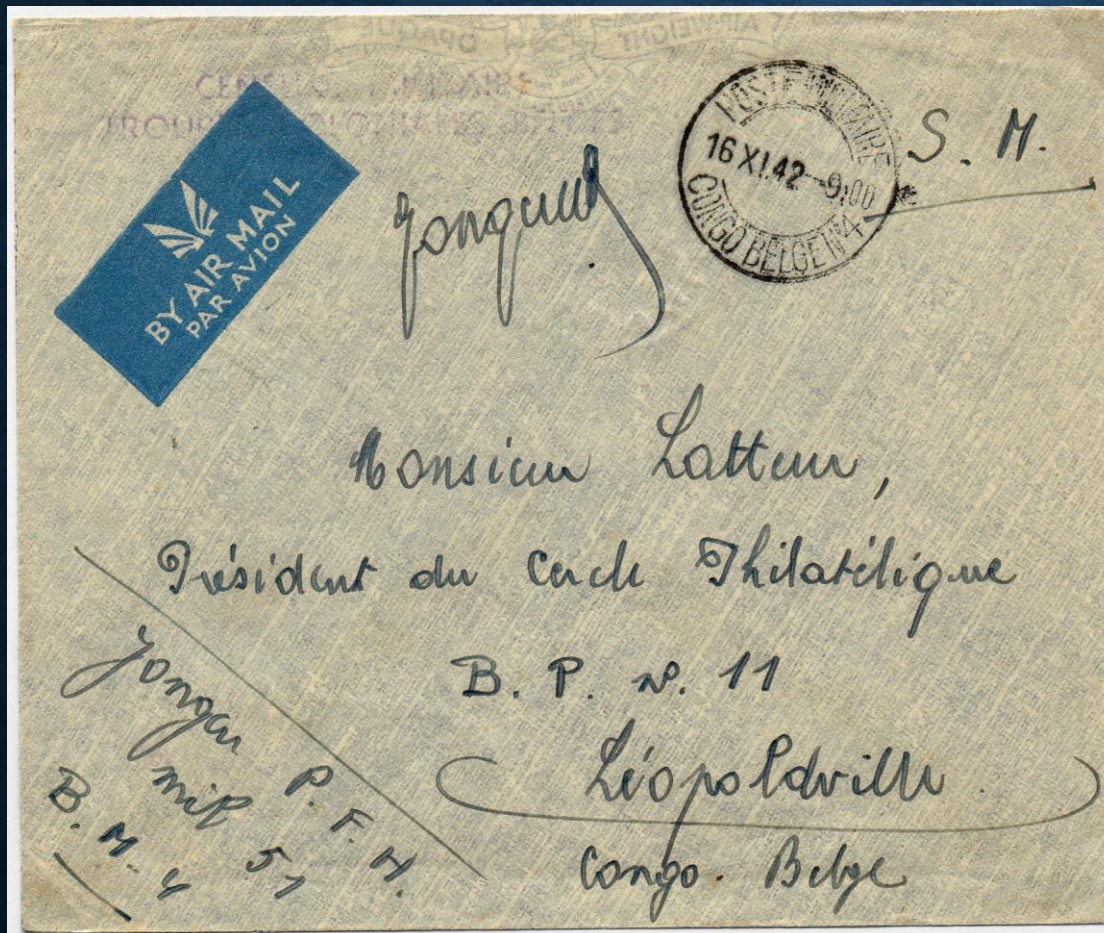
2B. MAIL FROM THE TROOPS



Straight linear mark of military censorship on two lines. « CENSURE MILITAIRE TROUPES COLONIALES BELGES» (in violet), 2x.

Cover sent from BPM n°4 (Ibadan) to the military camp of Leopoldville (Léopoldville-Kalina) where it arrived on October the 12th of 1942. Transit by BPM n°1 (Leopoldville) on October the 11th of 1942 and by Leopoldville on October the 12th of 1942.

2B. MAIL FROM THE TROOPS



Straight linear mark of military censorship on two lines. « CENSURE MILITAIRE TROUPES COLONIALES BELGES» (in violet).

Airmail cover sent in SM (= on active service) from BPM n°4 (Ibadan) on November the 16th of 1942 to Leopoldville where it arrived on November the 26th of 1942. Transit by BPM n°1 (Leopoldville) on November the 26th of 1942.

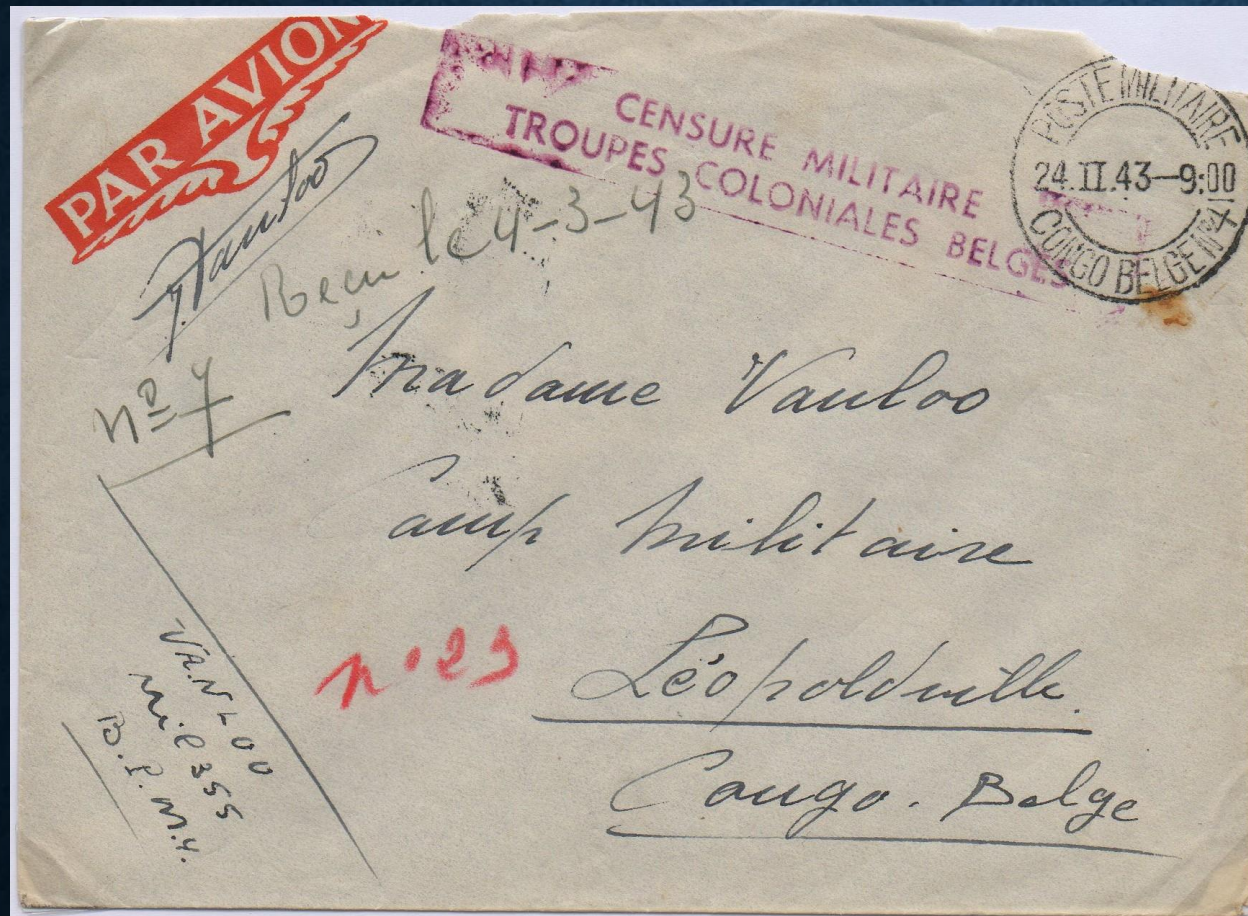
2B. MAIL FROM THE TROOPS



Straight linear mark of military censorship on two lines. «
CENSURE MILITAIRE TROUPES
COLONIALES BELGES» (in violet).

Airmail letter card written from BPM n°4 (Lagos) on December the 14th of 1942 to the military camp of Leopoldville where it arrived on December the 22nd of 1942 (BPM n°1).

2B. MAIL FROM THE TROOPS



Straight linear mark of military censorship on two lines. « CENSURE MILITAIRE TROUPES COLONIALES BELGES» (in RED).

Airmail cover sent from BPM n°4 (Lagos) on February the 24th of 1943 to the military camp of Leopoldville (Léopoldville-Kalina) where it arrived on March the 4th of 1943.

2B. MAIL FROM THE TROOPS

Registered label –
type 2Ca':

Large straight linear
mark on two lines
"POSTES
MILITAIRES
BUREAU N°4" in
black.



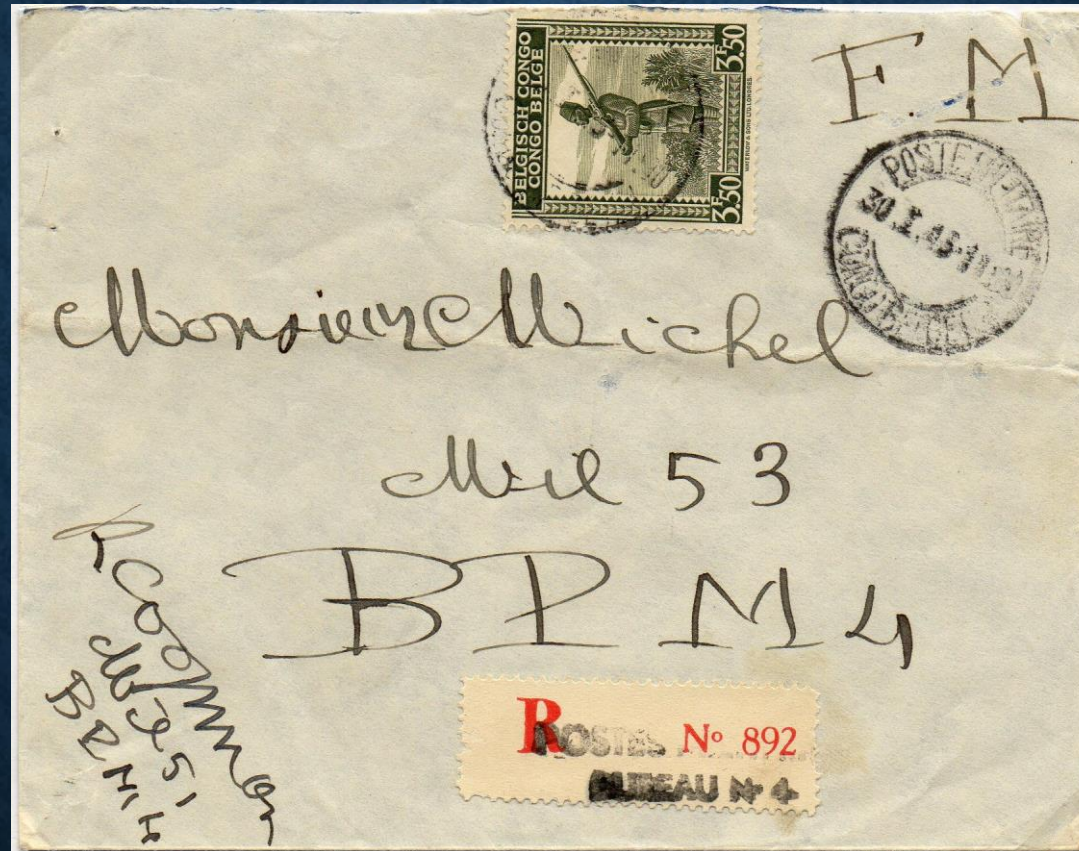
Straight linear mark of
military censorship on two
lines. « CENSURE MILITAIRE
TROUPES COLONIALES
BELGES» (in violet).

Registered airmail cover in F.M. (= on active service) sent from BPM n°4 (Lagos) on February the 19th of 1943 to Elisabethville where it arrived on March the 1st of 1943. Transit by Leopoldville1 on February the 23rd of 1943.

2B. MAIL FROM THE TROOPS

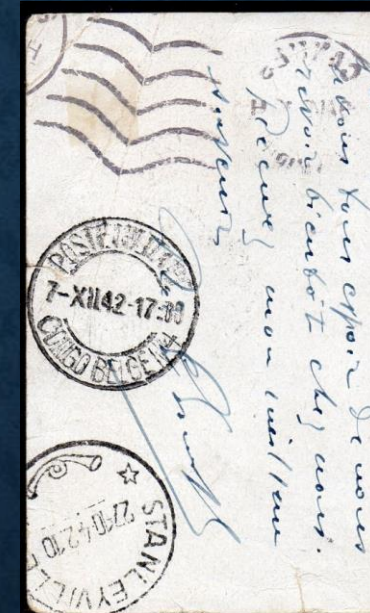
Registered label –
type 2Ab:

Large straight linear
mark on two lines
"POSTES
MILITAIRES
BUREAU N°4" in
black.



Registered cover in F.M. (= on active service) sent from BPM n°4 (Lagos) by a soldier on January the 30th of 1943 to another soldier in BPM n°4.

2C. MAIL TO THE TROOPS



Postal stationery from Cannes/ Free France on July the 9th of 1942 to Stanleyville where it arrived on October the 27th of 1942. It was redirected to BPM n°1 (Leopoldville) where it arrived on November the 20th via Leopoldville on November the 18th of 1942. It was ultimately redirected to BPM n°4 (Lagos) where it arrived on December the 7th of 1942.

2C. MAIL TO THE TROOPS



Registered letter sent from Johannesburg / South Africa on October the 9th of 1942 to BPM n°1 (Léopoldville) / Belgian Congo. Transits by Elisabethville on October the 16th of 1942 and Leopoldville on October the 21st of 1942. it was redirected from the BPM n°1 to the BPM n°4 (Lagos).

2C. MAIL TO THE TROOPS

Belgian Red Cross (RC) form (request) sent from Liège / Belgium on April 14, 1942 to a soldier in Boende. Via RC Liège, RC Brussels, RC Belgium and RC Geneve / Zwitserland (May 22, 1942) and RC Leopoldville. The form was redirected from Coquilhatville to Mil 51 at the B.P.M. n ° 1 (Léopoldville) where it arrived on October 15, 1942, to be once again redirected to Mil 78 at B.P.M. n ° 4 (Ibadan).

8382

CROIX ROUGE DE BELGIQUE
98, Chaussée de Vleurgat
BRUXELLES
ROOD KRUIS VAN BELGIË
BRUSSEL
BELGISCHES ROTES KREUZ
BRUSSEL

Par l'intermédiaire
de la Croix Rouge allemande
Door tussenkomst
van het Duitse Rode Kruis
Durch Vermittlung
des Deutschen Roten Kreuzes

REQUÊTE du Comité International de la Croix-Rouge à Genève
REQUEST aan het Internationale Comité van het Rode Kruis te Geneve
ANTRAG an das Internationale Komitee des Roten Kreuzes in Genf

DEMANDEUR — AANVRAGER — ANFRAGESTELLER

Nom - Naam - Name *Van de Walle*
Prénom - Voornaam - Vorname *Joseph*
Rue - Straat - Strasse *des Chénouas n°46*
Localité - Plaats - Ortschaft *Liège*
Province - Provincie - Provinz *Liège*
Pays - Land - Land *Belgique*

Message à transmettre - Mededeeling - Mitteilung
(25 mots au plus pour des nouvelles strictement personnelles et familiales.)
(hoogstens 25 woorden voor streng persoonlijke en familieaangelegenheden.)
(höchstzahl 25 Worte für persönliche und Familiennachrichten.)

*Quous parvi. L'été. Paques. Selon du 3 au 7 avril. Tout le monde
na. Lien. espérance de unanimité avec toi. Espérance de recevoir
nouvelles de toi. te renvoie cette amorce. Garde et
poursuive. Affectueux. Amicaux.*

Date - Datum *14 avril 1942*

DESTINATAIRE — BESTEMMELING — EMPFÄNGER

COQUILHATVILLE

*voir Mil 51 Mil. 78
B.M. 4*

22 MAI 1942

On November 24, 1942, the Governor General of French West Africa, Mr. Boisson joined the French National Liberation Committee. Which means that the French colonies are no longer a threat to the allies. So the Belgian troops are redirected to Egypt in March 1943, 9000 men by boat and the vehicles will cross Africa by land (850 vehicles and 2000 men).

In March 1943, there were no longer any Belgian troops in Nigeria (Nigeria).

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