

NIGERIA'S MILITARY MARKINGS, 1967 - 1970

D. VAN REKEN

Note: The author is aware of only two listings of the military markings on covers of Nigeria from the period of the Civil War, May 30, 1967 to January 12, 1970. The first, by Mark Isaacs, appeared in the 1970 COMPEX Directory. The second, by the author, appeared in the 1975 COMPEX Directory. The present article includes many new listings along with all previous items.

More than nine years have passed since the close of the Civil War in Nigeria. There were many thousands of men mobilized into the Nigerian military services. Some of these men corresponded with missionaries who provided most of these covers. After the war was over, Nigeria did not demobilize its forces and military covers with later dates are not uncommon. Covers with later dates are marked with an asterisk *. A quick look at the lists will show that there should be many more military units which are not listed. Perhaps they will come to light from an unknown cache.

Covers with military markings are not too abundant since their use was restricted to internal mail and they did not require postage stamps. Soldiers writing to foreign addresses had to affix postage stamps although it is possible that a reduced military postal rate existed. This was true during World War II.

Internal military covers all have the words ON ACTIVE SERVICE on the front. This is often abbreviated to O.A.S. Many covers also have handwritten patriotic slogans and several of these are illustrated in the Isaacs article.

Most covers are marked with the military unit cachet as well as the civilian post office cancellation. Most cachets have spaces for date and signature but these are not included in the listings. These dates make it possible to tell where a military unit was located on a given day.

In the list that follows no distinction has been made in the sizes or types of cachets or of the letters. Oval cachets are the most common and they are indicated by an 'O'. Rectangular cachets, whether boxed or open, are marked 'R', and circular cachets have a 'C'. The alphabetical list is based on the key words in the inscription and it follows the list based on numerical units. Occasional spelling errors in the cachets are noted by "sic". Items which were noted in the earlier Isaac's list are marked 'I'.

O 1 AREA COMD SIGNAL/KADUNA
 O 1 BATTALION NIGERIAN ARMY
 O 1 BRDE SIG. COY/NIGERIAN ARMY SIGNALS
 O 1 BDE TPT COY/NIGERIAN ARMY
 1 O 1 DIV NIGERIAN ARMY/ON ACTIVE SERVICE (3 dif. styles)
 O* CAMP OFFICE/HQ 1 DIV NA
 2 O CAMP OFFICE/QH 1 DIVISION (sic)
 R CAMP OFFICE/DATE/HQ 1 DIVISION NA
 O 1 DIV (ST) BN (REAR)/KADUNA
 O Reinforcement & Training Unit/1 DIVISION NIGERIAN ARMY
 3 O HQ 4 SECTOR/1 DIV. N.A.
 O HQ 1 DIVISION/ON ACTIVE SERVICE/KADUNA
 O HEADQUARTERS 1 DIVISION/NIGERIAN ARMY
 O HQ 1 DIVISION/ON ACTI...../MAKURDI
 C 1 FIELD AMBULANCE OFFICE/ N.A.M.C. (sic)
 R 1 FIELD SQUADRON/NIGERIAN ARMY ENGINEER
 4 No. 1 Maxillo Facial Unit / Kaduna / Forces Medical Services
 along with
 R MAXILLO FACIAL UNIT/ ARMED FORCES HOSPITAL KADUNA
 R 'S' SQUADRON/ 2 RECCE REGT. NARC/ DATE..../ PLACE....
 O 2 BATTALION/NIGERIAN ARMY
 along with
 R ON ACTIVE SERVICE/2BN. N.A.
 5 O U.P.O./2BN NA.
 I 2nd BN FED GUARD/F COMPANY
 O 'F' BATTALION/2 BDE. NA. UKPILLA
 I 2nd DIV
 6 O 2 ND DIV NIGERIAN ARMY/ON ACTIVE SERVICE (2 dif. styles)
 O* ON ACTIVE SERVICE/2 DIV. INF. TRG. SCH. NA. IGUEBEN
 R HQ 2 DIV PRO UNIT/MAIN/N.M.P. NA.
 O* ORDERLEY ROOM/CAMP2 DIV (R) B/-----
 O D BN 2 DIV. GAR. N.A. JATTU/ON ACTIVE SERVICE
 7 O 2 DIV. GAR N.A. UROMI/ON ACTIVE SERVICE

8 O 2 DIV. H.Q. (M) CHAPLAIN DEPT /N.A. ON ACTIVE SERVICE
O 2 DIV. RTF/IKEJA CANTT LACOS
I 2nd FIELD AMBULANCE

9 R 2 FIELD SQUADRON/NIGERIAN ARMY ENGINEER
O 2 ND GUARDS BATTALION/NIGERIAN ARMY
O 2 ND GUARDS BATTALION/A COY/NIGERIAN ARMY
O 2 ND GUARDS BATTALION/F COY/NIGERIAN ARMY
(O 2 SIGNAL COY/NIGERIAN ARMY SIGNALS
10 (on the same cover is
(R 2 SIGNAL COMPANY/ON ACTIVE SERVICE/NIGERIAN ARMY
O A SQN 2 RECCE REGIMENT/DESPA CHED /ON ACTIVE SERVICE (sic)
O O SQN 2 RECCE RGT (NARC)/ON ACTIVE SERVICE
O ON ACTIVE SERVICE/3RD BN NA.

11 O Headquarters 3 Brigade/Nigerian Army
O 3 FIELD AMBULANCE/NA. NIGERIA
O* 3 FIELD BATTERY/NIGERIAN ARMY ARTILLERY
R 3 FIELD SQUADRON/NIGERIAN ARMY ENGINEER
O 3 GUARDS BATTALION/NIGERIAN ARMY
OI HEADQUARTERS, 3 MARINE CDO MAIN/NIGERIAN ARMY
O* HQ 3 MCDO REAR/NIGERIAN ARMY APAPA

12 O CHAPLAIN DEPT/H.Q. 3 MCDO/NIGERIAN ARMY
O* OWERRI GAR ORG/3MCDO DIV (M) NA
I SUPPLIES AND TRANSPORT/3 MCDO
O SUPPLIES AND TRANSPORT/3 MCDO NIGERIAN ----P.H.
O HEADQUARTERS 3 REIN...../NIGERIAN ARMY
O A COMPANY 4th IN/NIGERIAN ARMY
O IN. ORDERLY ROOM/4th IN. NIGERIAN ARMY

13 O D COMPANY 4th IN/NIGERIAN ARMY
R ON ACTIVE SERVICE/4TH IN. NA (MAIN)

14 O 'E' COMPANY/4TH IN NIGERIAN ARMY
I CDO X BATTALION/4 CDO SECT COMMANDO
I HEADQUARTERS/4 CDO SECTION CALABAR
R 4 INF WKSP

15 O CAMP HQ. 4 SECTOR/NIGERIAN ARMY

C 5th BN/NIGERIAN ARMY
 R HQ 5 SECTOR ONITSHA/ON ACTIVE SERVICE
 RI 6 INF WKS P NAEME/DATE/PORT HARCOURT
 O RFT TRG UNIT/7 SECTOR NA
 I 12 BDE HEADQUARTERS/3 MCDO DIV (MAIN)
 O ORDERLY ROOM/13 CDO BDE
 I HQ 14 CDO BDE
 O HQ 14 CDO BDE? 3 MARINE CDO/MAIN/NIGERIAN ARMY
 R 14 FIELD PARK SQUADRON/DATE/NIGERIAN ARMY ENGINEERS (sic)
 O 15 TH BDE NIGERIAN ARMY/ON ACTIVE SERVICE
 O* ORDERLY ROOM 3 MCDO (M)/17 BN CDO PHQ NA
 O 17 BN ORDERLY ROOM/15 CDO BDE N.A.
 I HQ 17 CDO BDE
 O HQ 17 CDO BDE/3 MARINE CDO/MAIN/NIGERIAN ARMY
 R ARIARIA COY./17, BDE./3, M.C.D.O./DATE/ABA.
 O* 18 BN NA IK EK GAR/3MCDO DIV (MAIN)
 on the reverse is
 O* CENTRAL REGISTRY/HQ IK GAR ORG. NIG. ARMY
 16 O 18 BN NA 13 CDO BDE/3 MCDO DIV (MAIN)
 C 18 CDO BDE SIGS/NIGERIAN ARMY
 O ORDERLY ROOM/19 BN. 15 CDO BDE. NA.
 R SIGN..../DATE..../20 BN NIGERIAN ARMY
 O UNIT PAY OFFICE/20 BN. NIGERIAN ARMY
 R ON ACTIVE SERVICE/20 BRIGADE N.A.
 O ORDERLY ROOM/21 BATTALION NA.
 O BN ORDERLY ROOM/22 BATTALION NA.
 O* 23 BN NIGERIAN ARMY/ORDERLY ROOM
 R B COY 24 BN. NA/Sign..../DATE....
 R D COY 24 BN. NA/Sign..../DATE....
 O Headquarters 26 BN/NIGERIAN ARMY
 O ORDERLY ROOM/26 BN NA.
 O B COY/27 BN NA.
 O E COY/27 BN NA.

O HEADQUARTERS 28 BATTALION/NIGERIAN ARMY (sic)
 R ON ACTIVE SERVICE/30 BATTALION NIGERIAN ARMY
 O CAMP HQ/30 BDE NA.
 O* HQ 31 BN AGO/3 MCDO DIV (M) NA.
 O ORDERLY ROOM/31 BN/12 MCDO BDE.
 O* D COY 31 BN AGO/3 MCDO M NA.
 O 33 BATTALION/NIGERIAN ARMY
 O* SIGNAL CENTRE/33 BN NA
 O* Hq 34 Brigade Nigerian Army/KANO/Orderley Room
 O* 35 BN. HQ./YK---ORG. N- L.
 OI H.Q. 35 BN 13 CDO BDE/NIGERIAN ARMY
 OI 37 BATTALION/NIGERIAN ARMY
 I 38 BATTALION
 O 39 BATTALION/NIGERIAN ARMY
 O 41 BATTALION 16 CDO BDE/NIGERIAN ARMY
 O 42 BN NIGERIAN ARMY/AWARA (name in manuscript)
 R ON ACTIVE SERVICE/45 BN NA
 O 65 BH HQ/NIGERIAN ARMY
 O 65 BN HQ NA/On Active Service
 O ---/67 BN.
 I 70 BN HQ
 I 70 BATTALION/QUARTERMASTER
 O ON ACTIVE SERVICE/74 BN NIG ARMY
 O ORDERLY ROOM/74 BN NIG ARMY
 O B COY 81 BATTALION/NIGERIAN ARMY
 O HQ 81 BATTALION/NIGERIAN ARMY
 O ORDERLY ROOM/82 BATTALION NA
 O* ON ACTIVE SERVICE/84 BATTALION NA
 R* BATTALION ORDERLY ROOM/94th BATTALION NIGERIAN ARMY
 O 103 BN ORDERLY ROOM/NIGERIAN ARMY
 O HQ 103 BN/1 DIV N.A.
 O UNIT PAY OFFICE/103 BN. NA.
 R* ON ACTIVE SERVICE/105 BATTALION/NIGERIAN ARMY

O 107 MM R.R. APUN/2ND DIV NA ON ACTIVE SERVICE
 O* CENTRAL REGISTRY/HQ 1K GAR ORG NIG ARMY
 on the same cover are the ff. two:
 O* B COY 111 BN/1K GAR IKOT UMO ESSIEN
 O* 111 BN HEADQUARTERS/ 1K GARRISON IKOT UMO ESSIEN
 R ORDERLY ROOM/DATE/SIGN/120 BN NA
 O A COY/121 BATTALION NA
 O B COY/121 BATTALION NA
 O* C COY/121 BATTALION NA
 O D COY/121 BATTALION NA
 O HQ COY/121 BATTALION NA
 O QM STORE/121 Battalion NA
 O D COY 122 BATTALION/NIGERIAN ARMY
 O* HQ 122 BN. NA/IKOT EKPENE GARRISON/ODOT EASTERN NSIT UYO
 O SIGNAL OFFICE/122 BN. NA.
 O* 124, BATTALION/NIGERIAN ARMY
 O HQ 124 BN/NIGERIAN ARMY
 O 125 BATTALION/NIGERIAN ARMY
 17 C 'C' COY 126 BN NA/"The Green Jackets"
 O 127 BN SIGNAL CENTRE/NIGERIAN ARMY
 O 128 BATTALION/NIGERIAN ARMY
 O ORDERLY ROOM/129 BATTALION NA.
 O 130 Battalion/NIGERIAN ARMY/ORDERLY ROOM
 O 130 BATTALION HEADQUARTERS/NIGERIAN ARMY
 I 131 BN/MEKO DET
 R 131 BN. N.A./ON ACTIVE SERVICE
 on the same cover is
 O 131 BN NIGERIAN ARMY/MEKO-DET/MEKO
 O* 132 Battalion/NIGERIAN ARMY
 O G.COY. 136 BN./NIGERIAN ARMY, JEBBA
 O "D" Company / 136 Battalion NA. Sokoto
 O* D COMPANY/136 BN NIGERIAN ARMY
 R* ON ACTIVE SERVICE/138 IN NIG. ARMY
 R A COY/SIGN.../DATE..../138 IN N.A.

R* ON ACTIVE SERVICE/139 BATTALION N.A.
on the back is

R* 'B' COY/139 BATTALION N.A.

18 R ORDERLY ROOM/140, BN NIGERIAN ARMY

19 R ORDERLY ROOM/143 BN NIGERIAN ARMY

O* HQ 147 BN/NA

R* ARMED FORCES/MAIL/177 BN 25 BDE NIGERIAN ARMY

O* 179 BN 25 BDE/NA UKPILLA

O* 180 BN./25 BDE NA.

R ARMED FORCES HOSPITAL/CREEK ANNEX

O ARMED FORCES HOSPITAL/KADUNA

together with

R FORCES MAIL/ON ACTIVE SERVICE/ARMED FORCES MEDICAL SERVICES

R FORCES MAIL/ON ACTIVE SERVICE/ARMED FORCES MED. SERVICE

C* ARMY/SIGNALS

R* BASE WORKS NAEME/YABA LAGOS

20 O* CONVALESCENCE TRANSIT BN/DALET BKS/NIGERIAN ARMY

O CONVALESCENT CENTRE ELETU/PORT HARCOURT/NIGERIAN ARMY 3 MCDO
DIV. (MAIN)

O ORDERLY-ROOM/CONV. DEF. COY. N.A. UBIAJA

21 R FIELD ENGINEER REGIMENT/DATE/NIGERIAN ARMY ENGINEER

22 O DEPOT NA/ENUGU

I ORDERLY ROOM/DEPOT NA ZARIA

O HEADQUATERS MKD GAR/NIGERIAN ARMY (sic)

R MAXILLO-FACIAL UNIT/ARMED FORCES HOSPITAL KADUNA

O MEDICAL CONVALESCENT HOSPITAL/ELEME/NIGERIAN ARMY P.H.

R ON ACTIVE SERVICE/Nigerian Air Force

R N.A.F.

R N.A.F./FIGHTER BOMBER SQUADRON/ONE/ENUGU

R NIGERIAN AIR FORCE/LAGOS AIR FORCE BASE/IKEJA

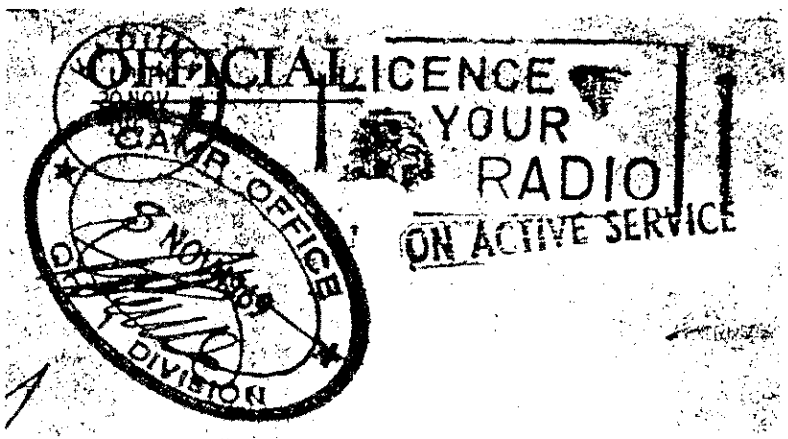
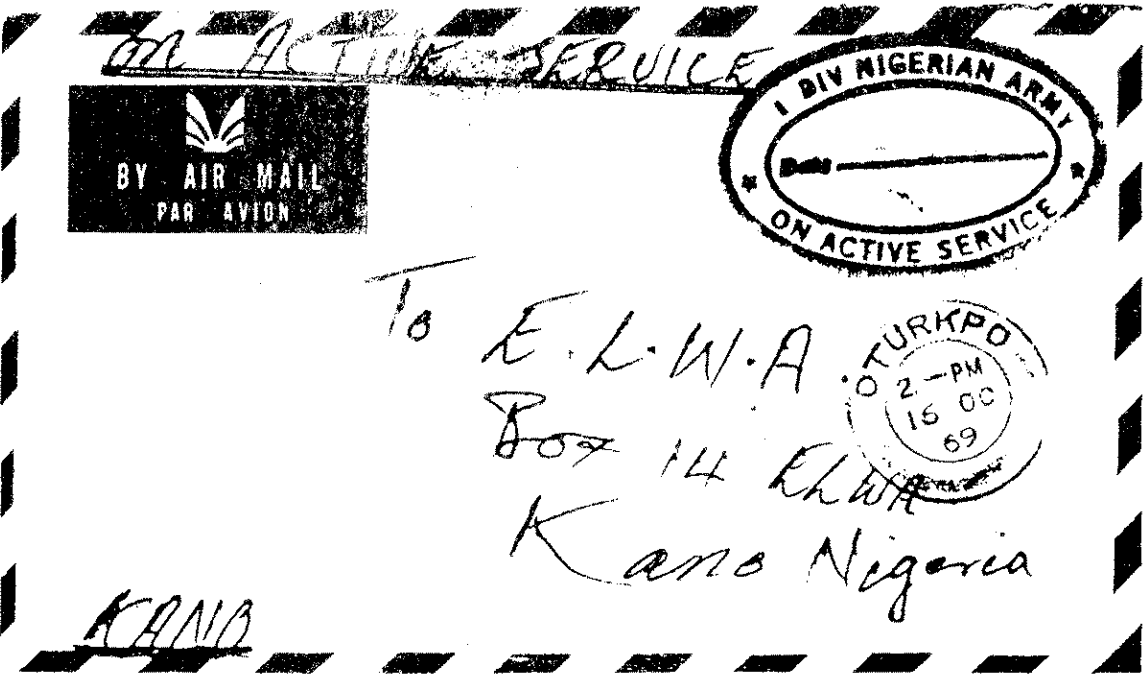
R* ON ACTIVE SERVICE/ O Nigerian Army

O ON ACTIVE SERVICE/NIGERIAN ARMY SIGNALS

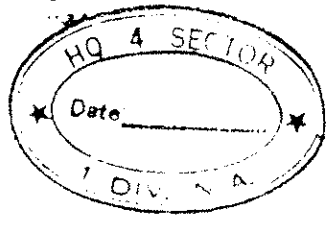
I NIGERIAN ARMY TRAINING DEPOT/BORI CAMP DISPATCHED

O* ON ACTIVE SERVICE/NIGERIAN DEFENCE A-----

0 THE NIGERIA POLICE/ADURU/BORDER PATROL BASE
0 ORDINANCE DEPOT/NIGERIAN ARMY KADUNA
23 R CERTIFIED OFFICIAL/PAY & RECORDS OFFICE/——NIGERIAN ARMY/
LACOS NIGERIA
i QM OFFICE
0* SIGNAL TRAINING SCHOOL/NIG. ARMY SIGNAL DET
0 ON ACTIVE SERVICE/TRG. DEPOT NA. IGUEBEN
0 ORDERLY ROOM/TRANSIT CAMP/NA OSHODI/ON ACTIVE SERVICE



ON ACTIVE SERVICE

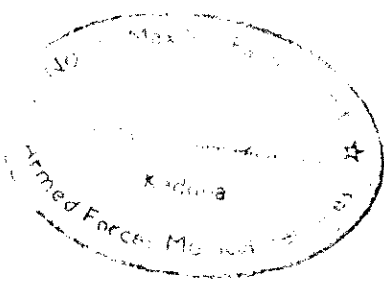


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10 31

TO: ~~F. L. W. A.~~
ARMED FORCES MAIL
BOX 111
ON ACTIVE SERVICE

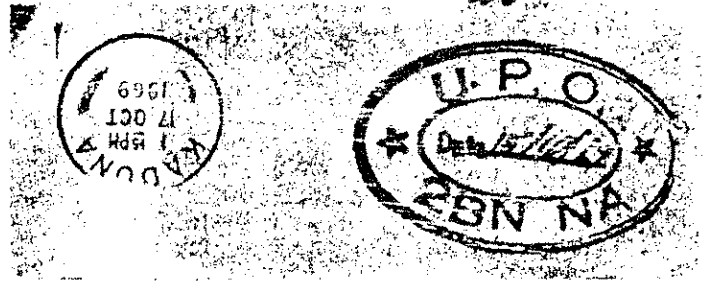
4



KANO

NIGERIA

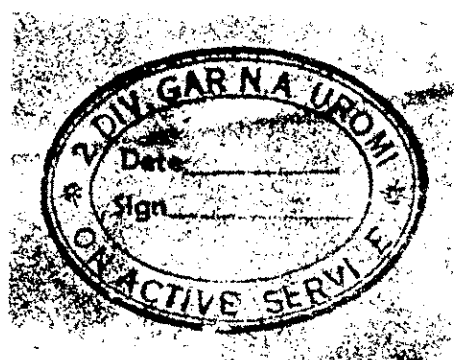
KANO



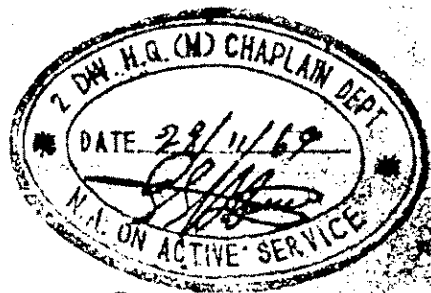
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6



7



8



2 FIELD SQUADRON
10 NOV 1969
NIGERIAN ARMY ENGINEER

REGIMENTAL STAFF
JAN 1969
NIGERIAN ARMY

2-0-

11

ANO
LICENCE YOUR RADIO

6961
ADNOZ
1 15PM
KADUNA

CHAPLAIN DEPT
H. 3 MCDG
DATE 12/1/69
NIGERIAN ARMY

12

SIGNAL COY
Date 14/11/1969
NIGERIAN ARMY SIGNALS

2 SIGNAL COMPANY
ON ACTIVE SERVICE
NIGERIAN ARMY
19 NOV
1969

To, Pastor ELWA P.O. Box 14

Kano Nigeria

K ANI O

10

SIGNAL COMPANY
24 NOV 1969
NIGERIAN ARMY

CAMP HQ. 4 SECTOR
- 3 NOV 1969
NIGERIAN ARMY

11

25

W K/P/E COMPANY
KURDI
ATE 2/1/69
NIGERIAN ARMY

13

20
UYO
* 10 NO
69
13 BN NA 13 CDO BDE
Date 2/1/69
3MCDO DIV (MAIN)

16

17
C COY 126 BN NA
Date 2/1/69
* The Green Jackals *

ORDERLY ROOM

18

Date 26/11/69
140, BN NIGERIAN ARMY

ORDERLY ROOM

Date _____
143 BN NIGERIAN ARMY

19

CONVALESCENCE TRANSIT BN
DALET BKS.
LOC KAVP-KADUNA
DATE 4-7-70
NIGERIAN ARMY

20

PRIVATE AND CONFIDENTIAL

4 SEP
8 DEC

LICENCE
YOUR
RADIO

21

ZUWA GA, E .L .W . A,
BOX 14 kano

KANO STATE.

FIELD ENGINEER REGIMENT
2-DEC 1969
NIGERIAN ARMY ENGINEER