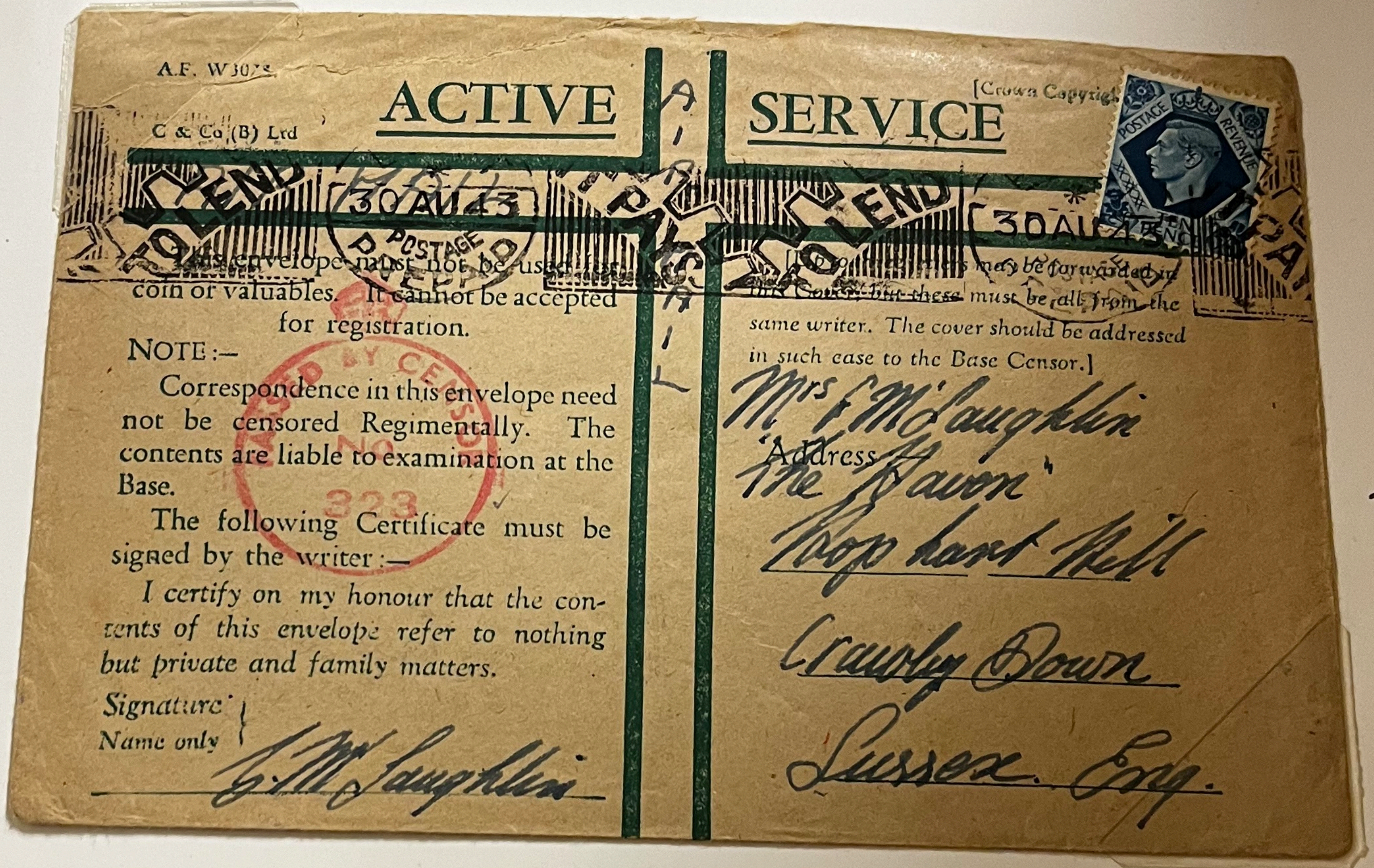


1942-3 Western Desert Campaign - North Africa
 Envelope posted at Coventry on 16 October 1942 addressed to 111 Field Regiment with Royal Artillery, arriving at FPO 136 in Tunisia on 27 January 1943 where it was annotated 'Deceased' by an officer with the Regiment, and returned to sender reaching Liverpool on 25 May 1943

August 1943 Western Desert Campaign - North Africa
 'Cog-Wheel' slogan 'TO LEND / IT PAYS' applied in Egypt to two envelopes, one an Honour Envelope addressed on 30 August 1943 to Crawley Down, Sussex, the other posted on 23 September 1943 addressed to Cardiff.



THIS ONE
 ↖



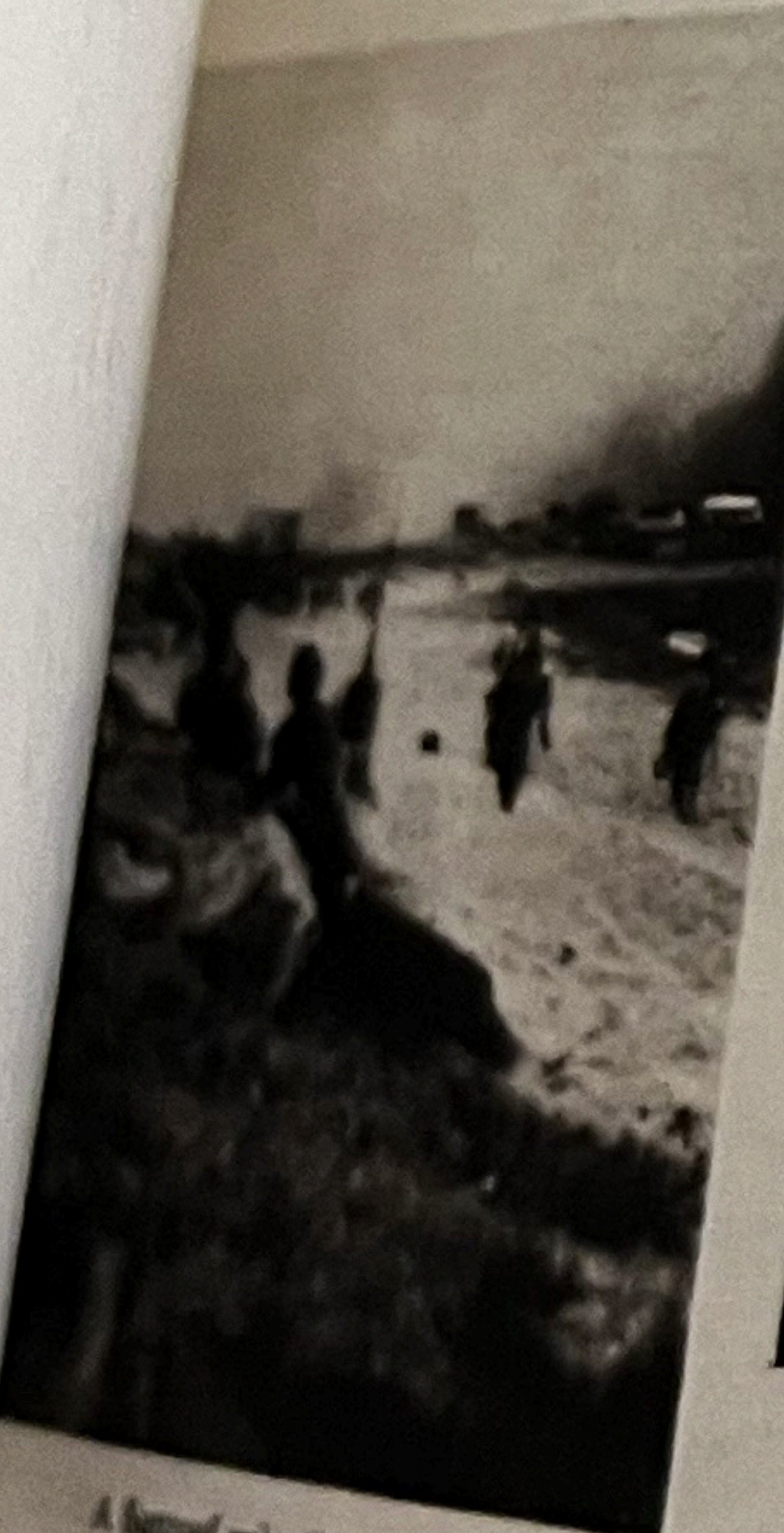
Ⓟ

1942 Western Desert Campaign - North Africa Operation Torch
 Paratroopers Parachuted air-dropped in France by the RAF - La Grande Croisiere.
 On 8 November 1942 Operation Torch opened with 850 boats sailing for the North African coast
 to the offensive against the Axis forces through Algeria, Tunis and Morocco.

LA GRANDE CROISIERE



La Marine débarque l'Armée



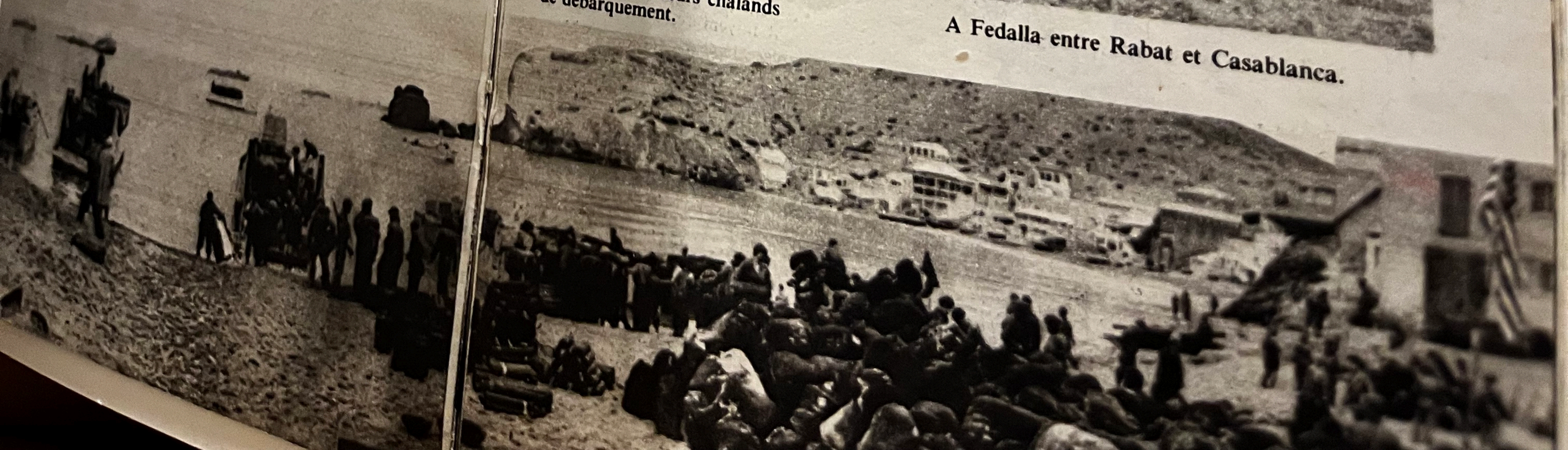
A l'aube près d'Alger.

... en douze points différents de la côte de l'Afrique du Nord... Dans les ténèbres qui précèdent l'aube, puis pendant toute la journée du 8 novembre, les chalands de

débarquement firent la navette. Quittant le seul navire qui fut perdu, les troupes et les marins atteignirent leurs plages, grâce à leurs chalands de débarquement.



A Fedalla entre Rabat et Casablanca.



1940 - 41 Western Desert Campaign - Operation Compass
 11-14 Dec 40 Capture of Sidi Barrani / Italian; Fort Capuzzo, Bardia.
 (1) Envelope printed on 10 Jan 1941 from FPO 242 to Berkhed 'PASSED BY UNIT CENSOR' Type A300/31
 (2) Envelope printed on 10 Jan 1941 from FPO 242 to Berkhed 'PASSED BY UNIT CENSOR' Type A300/106

1940-43 Western Desert Campaign - North Africa

1940 - 41 Western Desert Campaign - Wavell's Opening Offensive

As soon as Italy had declared war on 10 June 1940, Wavell launched his Opening Offensive whereby his force of 36,000 troops in Egypt, known as the Western Desert Force, began a series of raids into Libya leading the Italians to suppose that the size of the Force was much larger. Wavell's Force comprised:
 7 Armoured, 4 Indian and New Zealand Divisions
 In Sep 1940 the Italians invaded Egypt and occupied Sidi Barrani where they built a series of fortified camps south of the town, leaving the two fronts separated by about 70 miles.

12 and 30 Nov 1940
 Honour Envelope inscribed 'In the Field- no stamp available' from FPO 191 as FPO DE1 allocated to 7 Armd Div HQ sent to Preston, 'PASSED BY UNIT CENSOR' Type A300/31 applied in Egypt, and Envelope inscribed 'In The Field' posted from FPO 242 allocated to 7 Armd Div HQ to Northumberland 'PASSED BY UNIT CENSOR' Type A300/106 applied in Egypt.

[Crown Copyright Reserved]

A. P. 97878

ACTIVE SERVICE

In the field, no stamp available.

This envelope must not be used for coin or valuables. It cannot be accepted for registration.

NOTE 1—
Correspondence in this envelope need not be censored Regimentally. The contents are liable to examination at the Base.

The following Certificate must be signed by the writer:—

I certify on my honour that the contents of this envelope but private and family matter.

Signature
Name only

[Up to three letters may be forwarded in this Cover, but these must be all from the same writer. The cover should be addressed in such case to the Base Censor.]

Address:—

Mrs. A. Murray

222 Hawthorn Rd



PASSED BY UNIT CENSOR 106

Mrs G. Murray

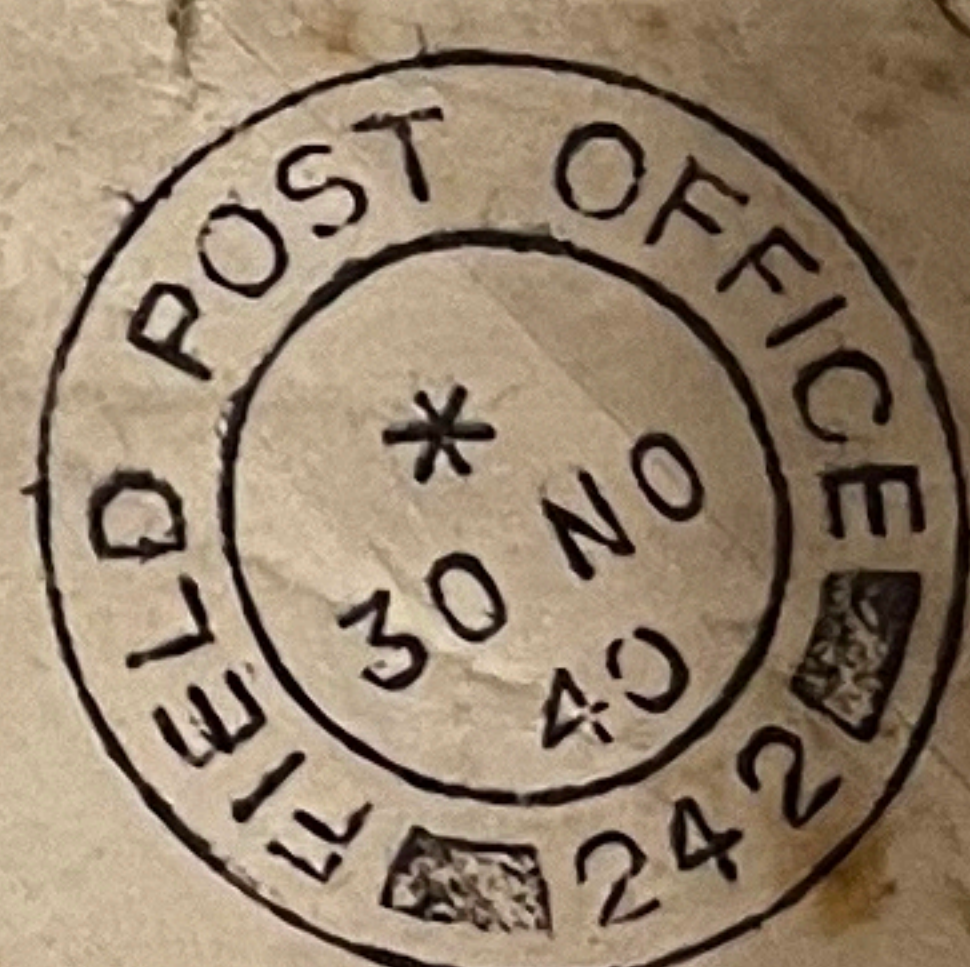
222 Hawthorn Rd

Ashington

Northumberland

England

(U.K.)



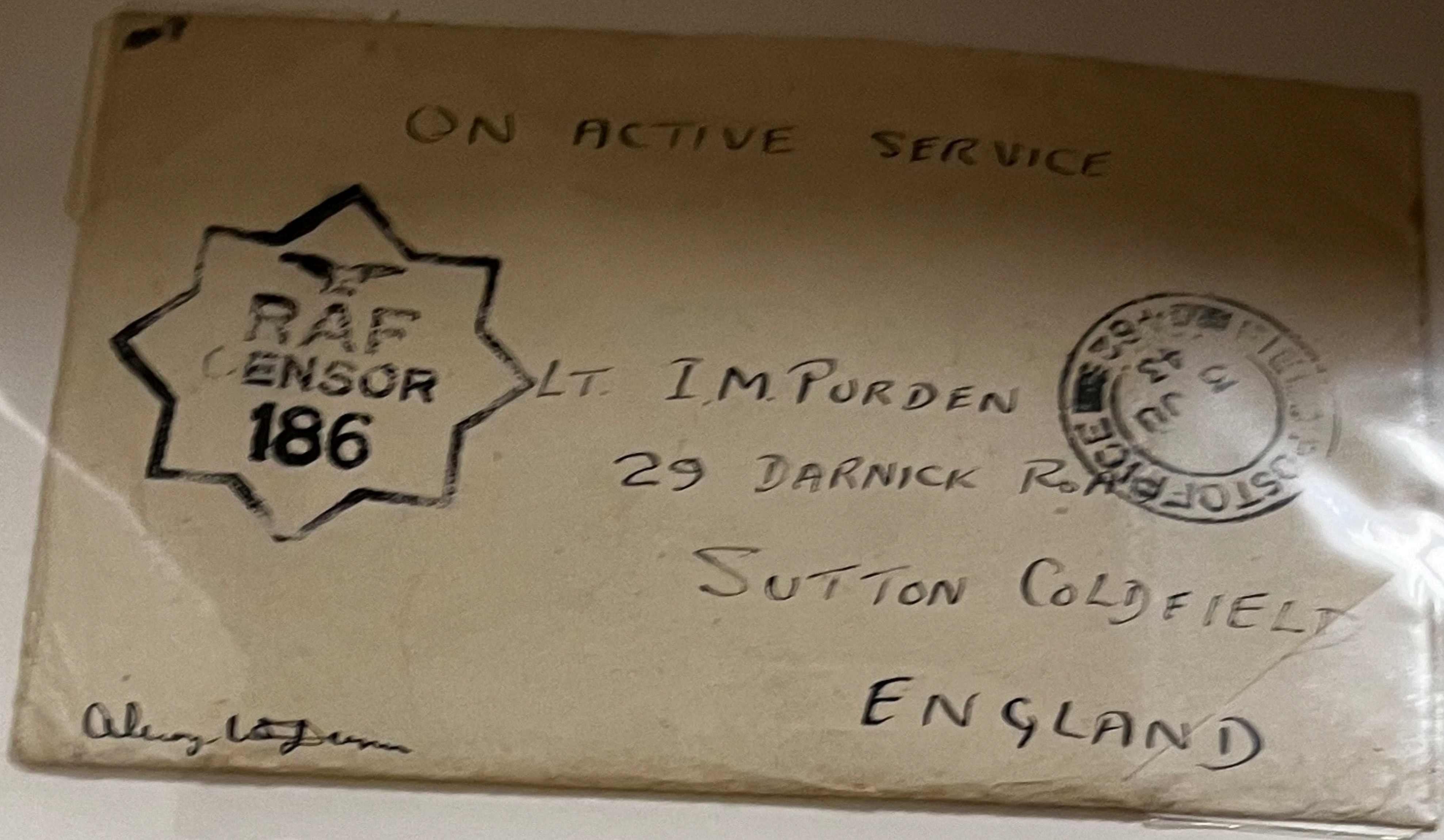
7AD.

29/10/40

WWII Context
 28 Oct 40
 29 Oct 40

Italian ultimatum to Greece was presented and rejected so 500,000 Italian troops crossed the Albanian border into Greece. Gen Sir Archibald Wavell was still planning to attack Italian 10th Army. Such plans were strictly confidential such that Wavell told Eden by word of mouth in Cairo and Eden told Churchill privately in London. British troops sail for Crete; and Nov 40 Australians train in Egypt

3 June 1943 Western Desert Campaign - North Africa - Tunisia
3 June 1943 No. 90 Wireless Unit RAF (per data at heading of enclosed letter) located at Cap Bon
peninsular, Tunisia after German surrender on 13 May, FPO 462 dated 3 June 1943 with first example
of this Unit's own RAF censor handstamp Type R14 / 186. And another letter from the same
serviceman (F/Lt AW Dunn) posted same day at FPO 500 with RAF censor cachet Type R14 / 186.
In fact FPO 462 cover was posted 2/3 days earlier than FPO 500 cover.



1940 - 41 Western Desert Campaign - Operation Compass
11-18 Dec 40 Capture of Sidi Barrani / Sollum; Fort Capuzzo; Bardia;
OAS envelope posted on 10 Jan 1941 from FPO 244 to Birkenhead 'PASSER'
in Egypt, and Italian prisoner taken at Sidi-El-Barrani on 5 Jan

1940-43 Western Desert Campaign - North Africa

Western Desert Campaign
Q.P.O./SP1 env dated 9 FE 41 censor Type A300/219 to Newcastle NSW,
captured Italian stationery.



Sea Mail

BY
219
CENSOR

C. S. Leggett

17 Brunner Rd

Broad meadow

Newcastle

C. S. Watson

Dushak

men of
and USA
and, India,

services,
field of war.
in conjunction
and his
be deployed in

war strategy
individuals.
adhering to

Alexander,
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highly trained for

as 'the Desert
Hitler and OKW
and von Arnim

needed adequate
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with arms and
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1939. Their
can armamen

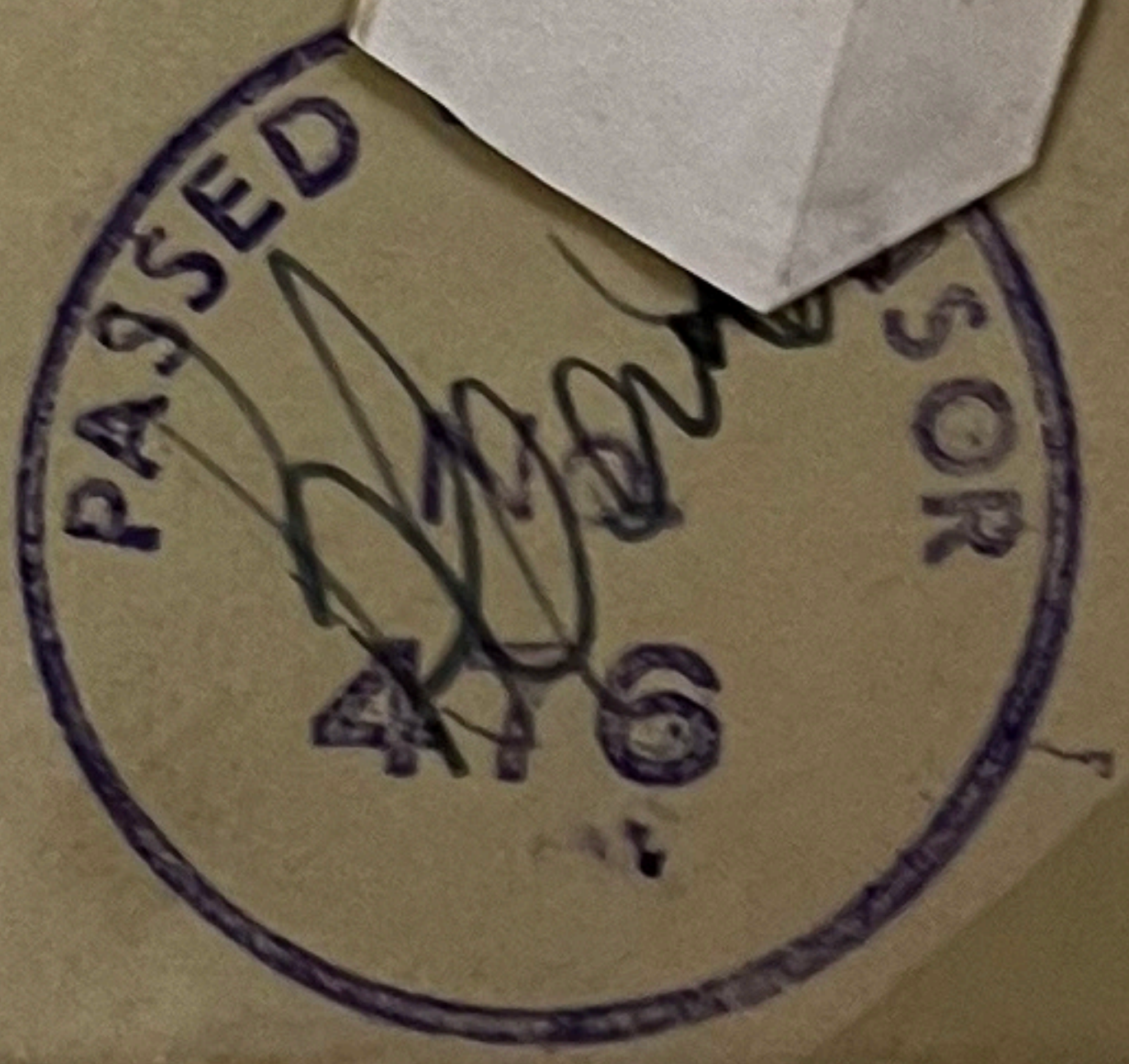
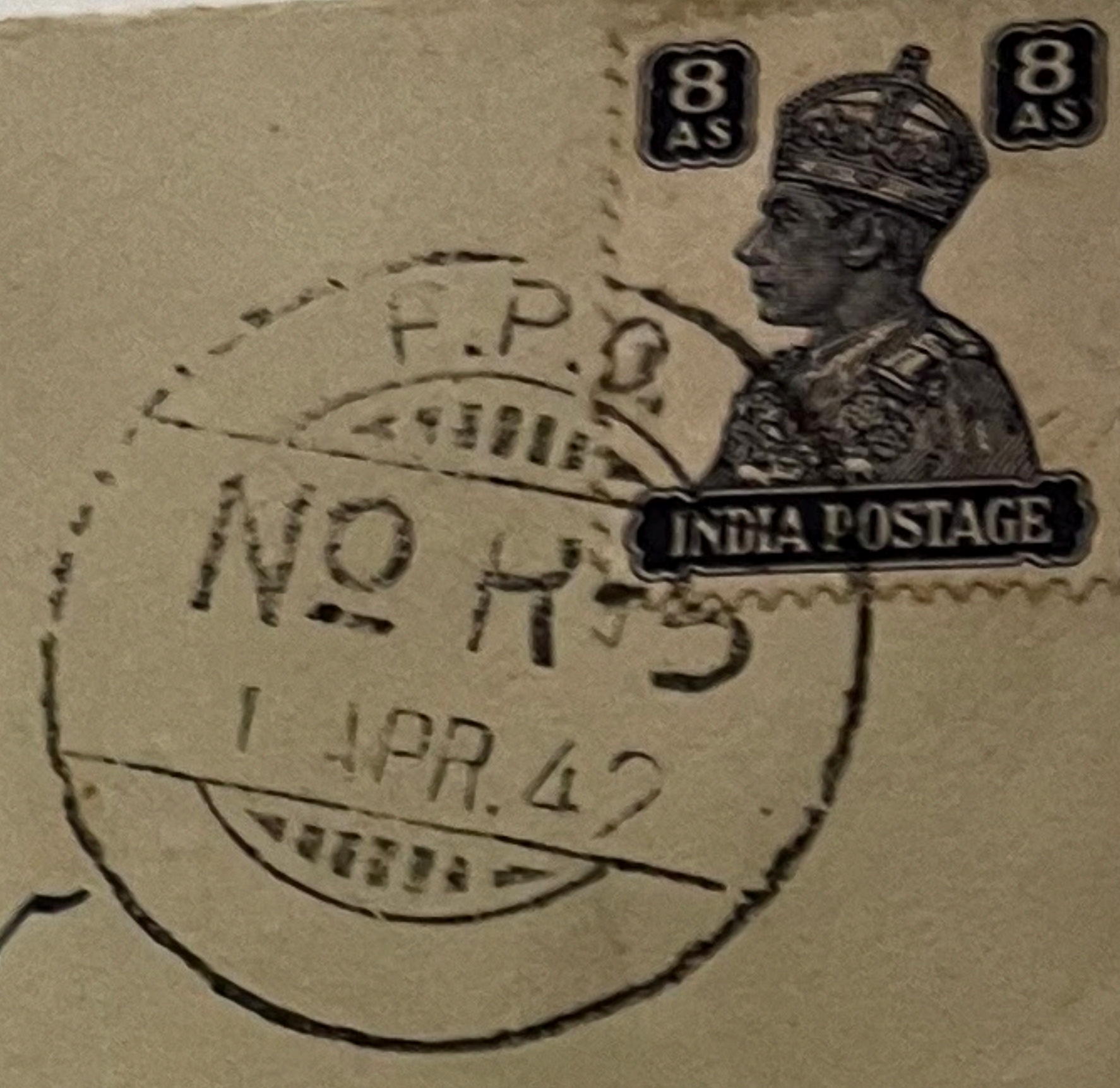
of desert and
the huge qu
ery successf
Without th
uch anxiety

nt Erwin Rommel lands at Tripoli, part of Operation *Sonnenblume* (Sunflower)
backbone into the Italian defence of Tripolitania. Rommel's three tactical principles: shock action,
eed.
mans were preparing to reinforce the poorly equipped Italians, the British,
insistence, transferred troops and equipment away from North Africa in
d as a hopeless attempt to defeat the German invasion of Greece and
or replaced Wilson as Commander British Troops in Egypt, Wilson having been sent to
reverted to its original title, Western Desert F
of Lieutenant

1 April 1942
Air Mail envelope posted at Indian FPO No. R-5 on 1 April 1945 addressed to Bombay, India.
One of the 'Reserve' handstamps held at Moascar, Egypt October 1941 to August 1943.

AIR MAIL.

The Manager
Messrs Grundy & Co
Bombay.
India.

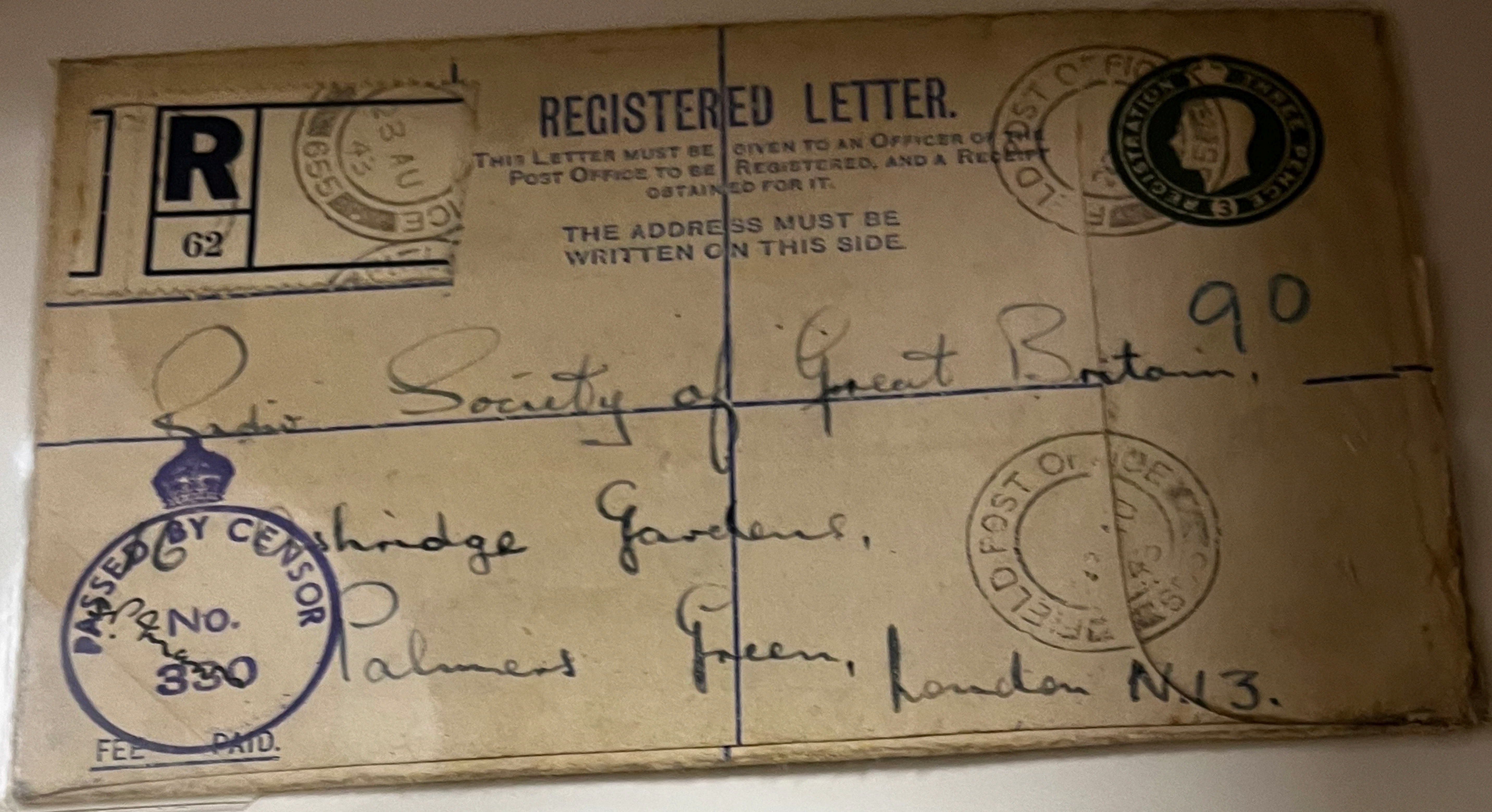


1. 4. 42

Nº R-5

Moascar. Egypt

August 1943 Western Desert Campaign - North Africa - Egypt and Algeria
Registered envelope posted at FPO 655 at Abbassia, Egypt, addressed to Palmers Green, London N
13. Also an OAS envelope posted at BAPO 5 in Algiers on 31 August 1943, bearing the Base
censor's cachet 'RELEASED / BY BASE / CENSOR 5', addressed to Streatham, London SW



Louise collect. x.t.t. E.O. Towell.

Envelope posted at Coventry on 15 December 1942
...ery, arriving at FPO 136 in Tunisia on 27 January 1943 where it was annotated 'Deceased'
...officer with the Regiment, and returned to sender reaching Liverpool on 25 May 1943.

Western Desert Campaign - North Africa

On Active Service' envelopes one posted on 14 December 1942 at FPO 515 Derna, Libya,
December 1942 addressed to Ipswich, Suffolk, GB. The other was posted from FPO 481
Tunisia on 15 December 1942 addressed to Banffshire, Scotland.



1943 Western Desert Campaign - North Africa - Tunisia
Labels bearing Honour Statement in green print on orange paper A.F.W. 3078 a
Posted on 10.04.43 from FPO 582 located at Algeria addressed to Wade.



continuous Fighting near El Guettar for 28 March to 1 April 43. On 29 March Allies took Gabes.
On 29 March the battle for Wadi Akarit was preceded by the heaviest bombing of enemy tanks and gun positions
for nearly three hours and Axis traffic along the coast, resulting in German resistance at El Hamma being finally
broken. Von Arnim reported that he had fuel and ammunition for 1-2 days such that large-scale movements were
no longer possible.
5-6 April Battle of Wadi Akarit begins. 8th Army closed up to the Wadi Akarit position on 29 March preparing
for another Montgomery set-piece attack by 30th Corps with 10th Corps held in readiness. The 4th Indian Div was
expected they would capture Fatnassa so 50th and 51st Divs

1 July 1943 Western Desert Campaign – North Africa – Tunisia

Registered envelope posted at FPO 658 in Tunisia on 25 July 1943 franked by five rates of 10d for 4s 2d postage plus 3d registration fee addressed to Post Office Savings Bank in Harrogate where it was received on 2 August censored by RAF type R11 / 911. One can presume that this contained bank notes for deposit.



November 1942 Western Desert Campaign – North Africa Libya and Egypt
 Registered envelopes originating at FPO 325 serving 51 Division in Libya posted on
 9 November 1942 to Alexandria, 'Certified Official', and Registered envelope from
 FPO 173 in Egypt posted on 21 November 1942 via BAPO 4 on 22 Nov, addressed to
 the *Universe* at Breams Buildings off Fleet Street, London EC4



WWII Context

- Nov 1942 Axis reaction was swift: on 9 Nov they took El Aouina airfield outside Tunis
- Nov 1942 Vichy government placed their Tunisian bases at the disposal of the Axis forces. The French government had earlier asked for Axis occupation. On 10 November **Hitler** directed that a bridgehead was to be gained and held in Tunisia in a race with the Allied forces. **Kesselring** was to subordinate all other activities in the Mediterranean to this task. Its primary aim was to slow down the Allied advance, and to safeguard Axis supplies
- Nov Gen **Anderson** took command of 1st Army principally 78th Div, 6th Armoured Div, US 1st Armoured Div (incl the 1st Armoured Regt) and directed the Blade force comprising 17th/21st Lancers in tank armour and a company of the Rifle Bde and other supporting units
- Nov 1942 Axis took Bizerte airfield
- The Germans brought a flood of reinforcements to Tunis and Bizerta first by air and soon after by sea. They had control of airfields near Tunis and brought their forces from Sicily, Sardinia and Italy. These