

## The Transvaal Volunteers: 1902



Circa 1903. Postcard. 'Headquarters Transvaal Volunteers - Johanaessburg'. (P. S. & Cape Town). Unused.

Following the end of the South African War, the British Army concluded that the South African Constabulary was too weak to police the countryside by itself despite their valiant and aggressive efforts in taking the war to the enemy. It was therefore decided that a powerful Imperial Garrison capable of suppressing any future rebellion would remain in South Africa. In order to strengthen the British Army's hand, it was decided to raise a new South African unit from the existing Loyalist colonial forces that already served the British Army. This resulted in the proclamation and formation of the Transvaal Volunteers in December 1902.

A comprehensive article by Jim Findlay, '*Klip River Camp 1903*' (SA Philatelist, page 11, February 2010), describes how the Transvaal Volunteers participated in a military exercise at Klip River "from approximately 15th to 20th September 1903", the first time that South African forces combined with Imperial Forces on an post-war exercise in South Africa. The Transvaal Post Office provided a temporary post office open from 12th August to 1st October for this 49-day exercise which involved some "6,000 troops", says Findlay who knows of only three covers with the KLIP RIVER CAMP postmark. "The scarcity of this datestamp can only be explained by the few letters having been posted together with a low 'retention' rate," he says.



While Reisener list various military manoeuvres he does not list this one. Putzel lists it but shows no postmark example. Visser displays a pair of postmarks. His hand-drawn datestamp has a stop only after the Month. Russell Inggs example on BidorBuy very clearly has a stop after both Day and Month. Visser also shows a surprising KLIP RIVER CAMP cachet, probably for use on Registered letters.

[View KLIP RIVER CAMP COVER](#)

Hasso Reisener: 'The Special & Commemorative Postmarks, Cachets & Cover of South Africa' (1978).

Ralph Putzel: 'The Postmarks of South Africa', (Volume 5. 1996).

Jim Findlay: 'The SA Philatelist' (page 11, February 2010).

Alex Visser: Addendum to 'The Postmarks of South Africa' - <http://linus.up.ac.za/academic/civil/books/>

Russell Inggs: Bid or Buy Item - 556573196