



VICHY Postal History in French West Africa

France & Colonies Philatelic Society
February 2023

AGENDA



- **Background**
- **Occupation**
- **Vichy Stamps**
- **Vichy Covers**
- **References**



BACKGROUND

Collaborationist regime under Marshal Philippe Pétain established at Vichy in 1940 (unoccupied territory)

Third Republic ended, Etat Français created

Motto changed from *Liberté Égalité Fraternité* to *Travail Famille et Patrie*

Vichy established autocracy over French colonies until colonies joined Free French

Indochina remained loyal to Vichy, collaborated with Japan



BACKGROUND (2)

Stamps issued by Vichy government for colonies

Distributed by Agence Comptable des Timbres-Poste
Coloniaux, Paris

AOF under Vichy control until Operation Torch, the Allied
invasion, in November 1942

Germany then occupied all of France

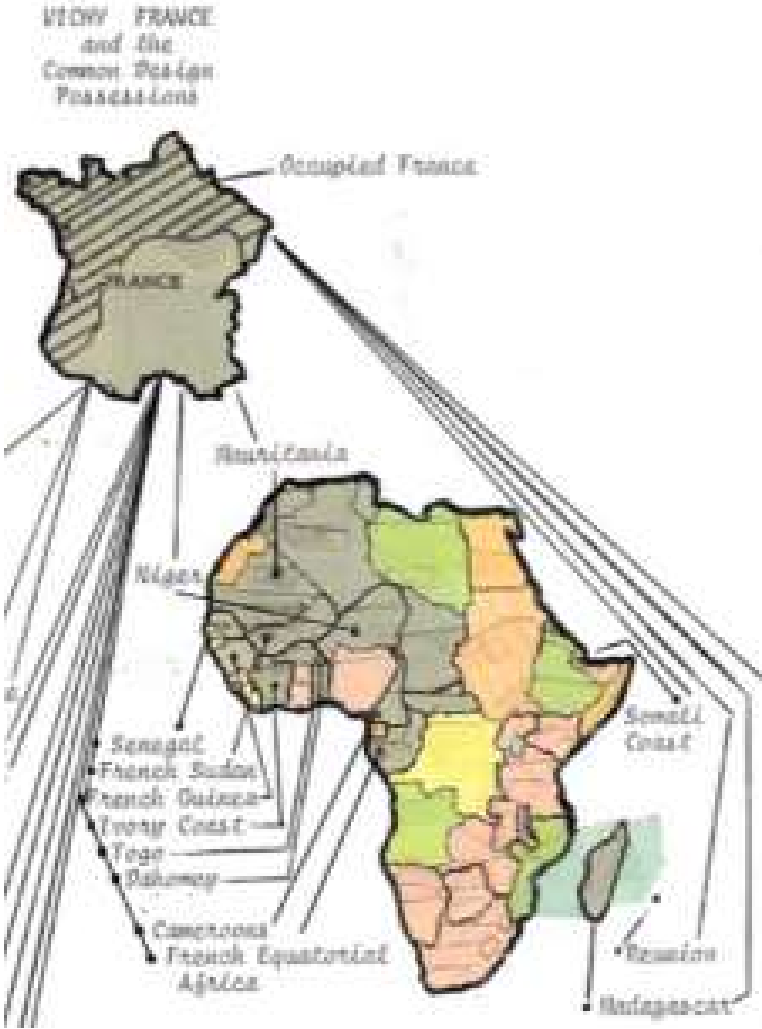
Ended postal communications with all colonies until 1944
liberation



THE OCCUPATION

Germany Invaded France

OCCUPIED FRANCE



Vichy government ran unshaded area of France and established Vichy control over African colonies until Operation Torch liberated North Africa late in 1942

Germany then overran all of France, cut off all mail services with Africa

SWITCH TO FREE FRENCH

Vichy French Overseas Empire in WW II: Its Dissolution and Changes in Postal Administration

	Possession	Date of Switch in Fealty To Free French	Form of change in Government	A1 Short Use of 3rd Republic Stamps	A2 Long Use of 3rd Rep. Stamps	B1 Vichy Issues Printed	B.2. Vichy Issues Used	C Giraud Use of Vichy Issues	D Free French Use of 3rd Rep. or Vichy Issues
1	Cameroun	Aug. 27, 1940	Military - Free.French.	X					
2	Chad	Aug. 26, 1940	Governor	X					
3	Fr. Equat. Af.	Aug.29, 1940	Military - F.F.	X					
4	Fr. India	Sept. 9, 1940	Governor	X					
5	French Oceania	Sept. 9, 1940	Governor	X					
6	Gabon	Nov. 12, 1940	Military - F.F.	X					
7	Lebanon	July 13, 1941	Military Allies		x				
8	Djibouti/Som.	Dec. 26, 1942	Military F.F.		X	x			
9	Fr. Guiana	Nov. 8, 1943	Giraud Resigns		X	x			
10	Kouang Tcheou	March 10, 1945	Japan Takeover		x	x			
11	Guadaloupe	March 9, 1943	Legislative Action		X	x			
12	Fr. Guiana	Nov. 6, 1942 & Nov. 8, 1943	Giraud Resigns		X	x			
13	Inini	Nov. 6, 1942 & Nov. 8, 1943	Giraud Resigns		x	x			
14	Martinique	July 14, 1943	Legislative Action		x	x			?*
15	Fr. Indochina	March 9, 1945	JAPAN		x	x	x		Yes
16	Algeria	Nov. 6, 1942 & Nov. 8, 1943	Giraud Resigns		X	x	X	Yes	Yes
17	Dahomey	Nov. 6, 1942 & Nov. 8, 1943	Giraud Resigns		X	x	X	YES	?
18	Fr. Guinea	Nov. 6, 1942 & Nov. 8, 1943	Giraud Resigns		X	x	X	Yes	?
19	Fr. Sudan	Nov. 6, 1942 & Nov. 8, 1943	Giraud Resigns		X	x	X	Yes	?
20	Ivory Coast	Nov. 6, 1942 & Nov. 8, 1943	Giraud Resigns		X	x	X	Yes	?
21	Lebanon	July 31, 1941	Military - F.F.		X	x			
22	Madagascar	Nov. 5, 1943	Military -Allies		x	x	x	Yes	?
23	Mauritania	Nov. 6, 1942 & Nov. 8, 1943	Giraud Resigns		x	x	x	Yes	?
24	Morocco	Nov. 6, 1942 & Nov. 8, 1943	Giraud Resigns		x	x	x	Yes	?
25	New Caledonia	Sept. 20, 1940	Governor	x					
26	New Hebrides	Unknown, likely adhered to	British partners						
27	Niger	Nov. 6, 1942 & Nov. 8, 1943	Giraud Resigns		x	x		Yes	?
28	Reunion	November 28, 1942	Military - F.F.	x	x				
29	St. Pierre & Miquelon	December 24, 1941	Military - F.F.		x				
30	Senegal	Nov. 6, 1942 & Nov. 8, 1943	Giraud Resigns		x	x	x	Yes	?
31	Syria	June 2, 1941	Military - Allies						
32	Togo	Nov. 6, 1942 & Nov. 8, 1943	Giraud Resigns		x	x	x	Yes	?
33	Tunisia	May 7, 1943	Military-Allies		x	x	x	Yes	
34	Wallis & Futurna Is.	April 27, 1942	Military F.F.		x				



VICHY STAMPS

Questionable Status?



VICHY STAMPS

Available in all colonies except Senegal and maybe Togo

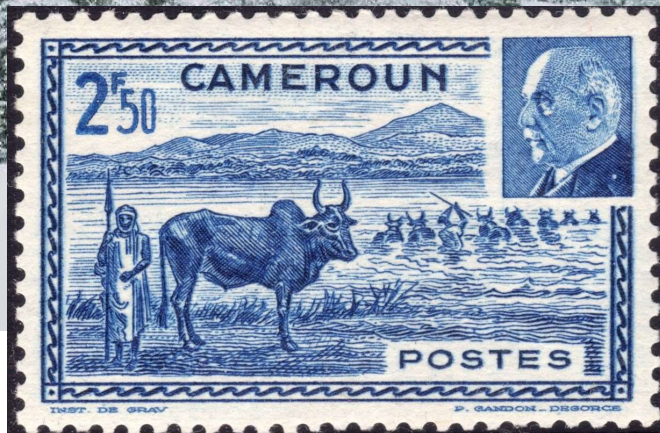
Demonetized probably in 1943

Arreté dated 29 Oct 1943 declared Pétain stamps not acceptable as postage

Stamps could be exchanged for other postage

List of affected stamps not included in Arreté

Free French governments probably wanted to stop using Vichy stamps quickly



VICHY STAMPS

Scott noted but didn't list these stamps until 2004

Added 344 new entries for all colonial Vichy stamps

Edmund Queyroy published 1962 *FCP* article identifying stamps actually issued to the colonies

Researched and published again in COLFRA bulletins in 1979-1982, summarized by Bob Stone in 1982 *FCP*





VICHY COVERS

Used During Period of Validity



FRENCH GUINEA

Ship cancel applied aboard French cruiser *Georges Leygues* in Dakar

Senegal stamps not shipped to colony

Cancel not updated for 1942 (stamps not available until November 1941)

No receiving mark, almost certainly did not go through mail system



FRENCH GUINEA

Nearly identical cover with postage due

From Robert Stone *FCP* article

FRENCH SUDAN



Airmail to Marseille

Envelope not sealed, no backstamps

Probably favor canceled in Bamako, Sudan

Rate is correct to pay airmail only, otherwise would be free for military sender

IVORY COAST



Local use mailed 23 Dec 1942, day before Darlan was assassinated

Delivered eight days later, Giraud now in charge of AOF

Receipt marking on reverse





FRENCH GUINEA

Cancelled in Conakry, probably 1943

1f50 is correct surface rate within colony

Flammé "UN SEUL BUT LA VICTOIRE" is probably "receipt" marking

Rare commercial use, presumably before 29 Oct 43

Arreté saying Pétain stamps were no longer acceptable

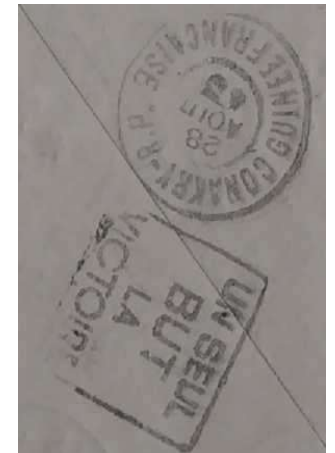
ALGERIA – NAVAL CANCEL



Bureau Navale 71 cancel on Algerian stamps, oversized registered envelope to Conakry

August 1943, also Conakry “UN SEUL BUT LA VICTOIRE” receiving mark on reverse

Darlan/Giraud more tolerant of Pétain stamps



POSTAL CARD USED IN SENEGAL



Dakar to France postal card used in July 1942

Carollis was in occupied France, so interzone postage required

Sender could not use stamps for concern that messages might be under the stamp



DAKAR TO MARSEILLE

French Pétain stamp not authorized for use in colonies

Clerk noted postage due ("T" in triangle) then crossed out – because he was okay with the stamp? Didn't care?

Presumably a 1942 use – stamps wouldn't have arrived in August 1941, no mail allowed into France after November 11, 1942

No receipt marking

MAURITANIA TO SENEGAL



Akjoujt, Mauritania CDS, March 1943

No receipt marking

Rate is correct for airmail

May be military franchise letter but no military markings

MAURITANIA TO SENEGAL



Boghe, Mauritania, to Saint Louis, Senegal, November 1942

November 17 receipt marking in Saint Louis

Stamps available from September 1942 forward

Philatelic, but still very collectible because it went through the mail

DAKAR TO FRANCE



Mailed 7 Oct 1942 from Dakar to unoccupied France

Military franchise would have made this free franked except for airmail upcharge

2 fr (+6fr semi-postal fee) PEIQI stamp underpaid 3f50 airmail rate

Assessed double the 1f50 underpayment

Rare to see PEIQI stamps used on mail

SASSANDRA TO CASABLANCA



19 Oct 42 Vichy prepared “sans RF” airmail stamps for AOF (plus 100f for Senegal)

Only 50f value reached colonies

Stamps used in 1945 to pay higher airmail rates resulting from post-war inflation



PORTO-NOVO TO GENEVA



Since cover traveled through France & Germany, this implies 50f stamp was available before Operation Torch (November 1942)

After November 1942 there was no mail from colonies to France



DAKAR TO BROOKLYN



Post-war philatelic use

50f postally valid stamp paid all fees – airmail and registration

Other stamps favor canceled, never valid for postage

ABIDJAN TO COLORADO SPRINGS



1948 RPO cancel, Bouake-Abidjan

Vichy airmail stamps not accepted for postage, outlined in orange crayon

These are really philatelic curiosities, not valid uses

HAIPHONG TO NEW YORK



1949 registered airmail envelope

NYC registration office receipt marking on reverse

Stamps accepted to pay postage despite being unissued
“sans RF” airmail stamps

Indochina was last pro-Vichy colony lasting until Japanese
occupation on 7 Mar 45 (seven months after liberation in
France)

TIME FOR QUESTIONS

Maybe spring is just around the corner?



REFERENCES

- Miller, R., "Vichy Issued its Colonial Stamps in France," *Linn's Stamp News*, April 29, 2021.
- Queyroy, E., "The Colonial Issues of the Vichy Government and the Free French Forces - 1940-44," *France and Colonies Philatelist*, Whole No. 115 (Vol. 21, No. 3), 1962.
- Stone, R.G., "On the Distribution and Use of the Vichy ('sans RF') Issues in the Colonies, 1941-44," *France and Colonies Philatelist*, Whole No. 188 (Vol. 88, No. 2), 1982.
- Drye, H., Bouerat, C., "Distribution and Use of Vichy Issues in the Colonies 1941-44" (tr.), *Bull. de la Soc. COLFRA*, (No. 6, 7, 8,13,19), 1979-82.
- Bouerat, C., "The Stamps Issued and Non-Issued in AOF 1940-44" (tr.), *Le Monde des Philatelistes*, July-August, 1974.
- Dallay, *Catalogue de cotations de Timbres de l'ex-empire Franqais d'Afrique, Edition 2005-2006*, Paris, 2006.
- Ataire, A., "Emblematique la serie P.E.I.Q.I.est aussi enigmatique: 83 timbres en quete d'identite," *Timbres Magazine*, Oct. 2000, pp. 68-72.
- Jennings, E.J., *Vichy in the Tropics, Petain's National Revolution in Madagascar, Guadeloupe and Indochina, 1940-44*, Stanford University Press, Stanford, Ca, 2001.
- <https://www.histoire-et-philatelie.fr>