

Tracing Huguenot heritage

Info Guide 3.35

It is estimated that 20-30% of the English population have Huguenot ancestors somewhere in their background. Most people would be unaware of this. Large numbers of migrants from the British Isles came to settle in Australia so there will be many Australians who also have Huguenot ancestry. If you find a French sounding name amongst your English or Irish ancestors there is a chance that you may be one of them.

Identifying Huguenot ancestry

A combination of any of the following factors may indicate a Huguenot connection:

- a) a French sounding name and /or a family tradition of there being a French connection, possibly aristocratic
- b) links to the Anglican Church or non-conformist denominations
- c) an ancestor's association with silk weaving or another recognized Huguenot trade such as clock making, silver smithing, furniture making, ironware, or a textile industry trade
- d) links to known areas of Huguenot settlement, e.g. Spitalfields in the East End of London.

Who were the Huguenots?

The origin of the name is obscure. It does not appear to be the name of any particular individual or family but is a generic term used to describe French-speaking Protestants or Calvinists who, subjected to religious persecution at various periods in France in the 16th to 18th centuries, sought refuge in neighbouring Protestant states, particularly England and the Netherlands.

Major influxes of Huguenot refugees to Britain and Ireland occurred in 1562-63, 1567-68, 1572-1573 and 1681-1687 during periods of brutal persecution in France. Initially the refugees settled in clusters in areas of London and the south-east and south-west of England, setting up their own churches. Large numbers settled in London, Bristol and Canterbury.

There was a marked disparity in wealth amongst the refugees. A minority were very wealthy and able to use their wealth to invest in commerce and industry. The majority were skilled artisans whose contribution to English society was to be enormous. Their skills and industry brought great advantages to England both economically and militarily in future years.

How do I trace my Huguenot ancestry?

Huguenots arrived in sporadic bursts between the mid to late 16th century and the latter part of the 18th century. By the time English civil registration records commenced in 1837 and genealogically significant census records for England were being collated (1841 onwards) most Huguenots had moved out from the recognised areas of Huguenot settlement and been assimilated into the wider English community. This makes the recognition of Huguenot connections and the location of relevant records problematic.

In family history research it is important to work systematically back from information on known ancestors. With Huguenot research it is often necessary to work back through the English records while at the same time working forward from the records of the French Huguenot community in England in an attempt to establish a link between the two. Sometimes it may only be possible to establish circumstantial links rather proven genealogical links.

Where to start?

1. Work back as far as possible through English records using:
 - Civil registration records, 1837-
 - Census records 1841-
 - International Genealogical Index (IGI) - for baptisms and marriages to the late 19th century
 - English parish records.
2. Contact the Huguenot Society for verification that the surname is Huguenot in origin.
3. If the surname is confirmed as Huguenot, start checking English Huguenot records.

The IGI is available online through the LDS Family Search website <https://www.familysearch.org/>

The State Library also holds the IGI for England on CD-ROM and in microfiche editions (1984, 1988 and 1992). Different editions can contain different details so you may need to check more than one edition.

The State Library holds early English parish registers and indexes in a variety of formats, e.g. the Challen Parish Register transcripts on microfilm; Nottinghamshire baptisms, 1533-1900 (CD-ROM)

Check the OneSearch online catalogue for records related to particular areas.

<http://onesearch.slq.qld.gov.au>

What records are available on the Huguenots?

1. **Publications of the Huguenot Society of Great Britain and Ireland** are a major source of Huguenot historical and genealogical information. They include:
 - *Huguenot Society Proceedings*
Published annually these include papers on aspects of Huguenot history presented at the four meetings of The Society held each year.
 - *Huguenot Families* – a magazine published by The Society in response to a growing interest in Huguenot genealogy amongst its members. 20 issues published 1999-2009. Nos. 1-10 are held at the State Library on CD-ROM
 - *Quarto Series*
Translations and transcripts of original source Huguenot records compiled by The Society and published in 61 volumes since 1887. Records include:
 - a) registers of Huguenot churches in England
 - b) naturalization and denization records [1509-1800]
 - c) registers of inmates of the French Hospital, La Providence, 1715-1957
 - d) Huguenot wills and administrations in England and Ireland, 1617-1849

The State Library holds most volumes of the Quarto Series in microfiche, CD-ROM or print formats.

The Quarto Series has been indexed by Cecile Ramsay –Sharp. Her *Huguenot Surname Index, Quarto Series vols. 1-40 and 41-59* indicates volumes where a particular family name appears. Check the indexes of individual volumes for specific page references.

2. Apprenticeship records

Many Huguenots were skilled artisans. Their names may appear in early apprenticeship records as either masters or apprentices. The State Library holds a number of indexes to apprenticeship records such as:

- a) Unpublished finding aids for genealogical research Series two: The Society of Genealogists' apprenticeship index [1710-1774] (microfiche). MFC 929.341 1985
- b) Bristol apprentice book [1566-1593] PAM 929.309 1992
- c) London apprentices series – various titles, e.g. Glaziers' company, 1694-1800.

Check the OneSearch online catalogue for additional titles. <http://onesearch.slq.qld.gov.au>

3. Charitable records

Wealthy individuals contributed to the support of their poorer fellow Huguenots and collections amongst the English population raised funds to alleviate the sufferings of the French refugees. Records of payments and other assistance provided to individuals are included in the Huguenot Society's Quarto Series.

Payments from the 'Royal Bounty' made 1705-1707 and 1721-March 1724 are indexed on the *French Refugees in Great Britain in the early 1700's* website at <http://freepages.history.rootsweb.ancestry.com/~frpayments/Index.htm>

4. London records

The East End of London, Soho and Whitehall were major areas of Huguenot settlement. The following records may be helpful in tracing Huguenot ancestors from the London area:

- a) *City of London Burials, 1813-1853* (microfiche)
Part 1: Burials in parish of St Sepulchre, 1813-1857; Part 2: burials in 75 City of London parishes

The index is designed to complement the IGI (which excludes burials). Huguenot churches did not perform burial rites and there are no Huguenot cemeteries. Most Huguenots were interred in Church of England graveyards and may be listed in this index. The majority of entries include the age at death.

- b) *London Lives, 1690-1800 crime, poverty and social policy in the Metropolis*
<http://www.londonlives.org/>

The website indexes some 3.35 million names contained in records of workhouses, pauper apprentices, criminal sessions, coroners' records, hospitals, guilds, English wills extracts, etc.

- c) London parish registers available via Ancestry.com include
- London, England, Marriages and Bans, 1754-1921
 - London, England, Births and Baptisms, 1813-1906
 - London, England, Deaths and Burials, 1813-1980
 - London, England, Baptisms, Marriages and Burials, 1538-1812

Digitized images from these registers on Ancestry.com can be viewed at any public access terminal in the State Library.

Name variants

Prior to about 1755 there was no standardized English spelling. In a situation where French scribes were recording unfamiliar English place names while their English counterparts were dealing with unfamiliar French family names it is inevitable that most names in Huguenot records appear in a number of variant forms.

Example: the family name Jonquay also appears as Junquay, John Quay, Quay, Janquay, Jounquay, Jonquet, Junkaway and Junkway in various records.

Names may also be listed with or without the prefixes 'De', 'De La', 'Du', 'Le' or 'La'.

Be sure to check all possible variants of a name when searching indexes to records.

A select bibliography of resources held at the State Library

The Hidden Thread: Huguenot families in Australia / Robert Nash. 929.20994 2009.
Contains chapters on individual Huguenot families that settled in each of the six Australian states plus a table of almost 500 Huguenot families known to have come to Australia. Sources of information for each family are indicated.

The Huguenots: their settlements, churches, and industries in England and Ireland / Samuel Smiles. 284.5 1889

The Huguenots and Ireland: anatomy of an emigration / ed. C.E.J. Caldicott, H. Gough, J.P. Pittion. 941.506 1897

Huguenot families, numbers one to ten / Huguenot Society of Great Britain. QCFS 305.6845 2005

A serial published between September 1999 and March 2004 which focuses specifically on Huguenot genealogy. It includes some family trees and family histories contributed by fellows of the Society.

Huguenot heritage; the history and contribution of the Huguenots in Britain / Robin Gwynn. 941.008824 2001

Includes an appendix on Tracing Huguenot ancestors

Huguenot hints: a beginner's guide to Huguenot research in England and France / N.J. Hall QCFS 919.107208 2005

Huguenot pedigrees / Charles E. Lart. G 929.2 1989. 2 vols. in 1. Originally published 1924-1928.

Huguenot surname index Quarto series / Cecile Ramsay-Sharp MFC 284.5 1996
Extracted from the Quarto series of the Publications of the Huguenot Society of Great Britain and Ireland. In two parts: (i) index to vols. 1-41; (ii) index to vols. 42-59

Huguenot Society quarto series QCFS 284.5 2004
Facsimile reproductions of the original books in a 12 CD-ROM set

Publications of the Huguenot Society of London (Microfiche) MFCS 284.5
Vols. 1-47. Later title: Huguenot Society Quarto series.

Silver, sails, and silk: Huguenots in Cork, 1685-1850 / by Alicia St. Leger. PAM 941.956 1991

Tracing Your Huguenot Ancestry / Michael Gandy (in ***Family history - the access revolution***: Darwin 2006, pp. 63-65) 929.1072 2006

Websites

- ***Huguenot Society of Australia*** <http://members.optushome.com.au/ozhug/>
Robert Nash, Secretary of the Huguenot Society of Australia, has indicated that he is willing to verify whether a particular surname is Huguenot. However, he is unable to undertake family history research. You will need to do your own research of the records
- ***Huguenot Society of Great Britain and Ireland***
<http://www.huguenotsociety.org.uk/history.html>
The website provides links to nine downloadable documents providing guidance on Huguenot family history research. From 8 October, 2010, the *Proceedings* from 1885 to 2007 will be available to registered Huguenot Society members in electronic journal form

Need further information?

State Library of Queensland, Queensland Cultural Centre, Stanley Place, South Bank,
Reference Services. t. +61 7 3840 7810, w. www.slq.qld.gov.au/enquiry
Visit http://www.slq.qld.gov.au/about/pub/info_guides/collections/fh to access all family history Info Guides