



The Huguenot Society
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Guidance notes for family historians

The Huguenot Society has published transcriptions of most extant Huguenot refugee church registers; these contain few burials. After 1753 all marriages had to take place by law in English parish churches. By the early nineteenth century Huguenot records had become thinner as the descendants of the original refugees became assimilated into local populations and the French churches began to close. Apart from the French Hospital records, which continue until 1957, there is little information for the nineteenth century. Unless therefore you are related to someone who is a past or present resident of the French Hospital, La Providence, it is essential, before using the archives of the Huguenot Library, to work back through this period by searching the following:

- Registration of births, marriages and deaths back to 1837, when civil registration began. (The National Archives, Ruskin Avenue, Kew, Richmond, Surrey TW9 4DU)
- Census returns back to 1841, when the first comprehensive census return was done, and the IGI (International Genealogical Index), both available at The National Archives.
- Parochial records of baptisms, marriages and burials as far back as possible; these can be consulted at the relevant local Record Office.

Huguenot Society publications

Once you have found an early reference to the name(s) you are researching the next step is to search the **Quarto Series** and the *Proceedings*.

Quarto Series (QS)

The QS volumes mainly contain editions of historical sources on the Huguenots. Among the most useful volumes are the church register transcripts mentioned above, the French Hospital records, volumes 52 and 53, and *The case book of 'La Maison de Charité de Spittlefields' 1739-41*, volume 55. Henry Wagner's informative abstracts of Huguenot wills, which includes a complete index of all names mentioned in the wills, was published as QS 60, vols 1-2. A full list of volumes is available at <http://huguenotsociety.org.uk/publications/quarto.html>.

The Huguenots retained French as their language for written records up to about 1840. A leaflet giving a glossary of French terminology and examples of records is available on the Family History page of the website: <https://www.huguenotsociety.org.uk/family-history.html>. There is also a surname index on CD-ROM for QS volumes 1-61. Please contact the Librarian for full details.

Proceedings

These start in 1885 when the Huguenot Society was founded and are published annually. They include reports of Society meetings and events, articles on subjects of Huguenot interest and book reviews. There is a comprehensive index of all names mentioned. In terms of occupations, silk weavers formed by far the

largest group of Huguenot immigrants. Most of them were poor journeymen; therefore, only a few prominent ones, together with master weavers and merchants would receive a mention in *Proceedings*. Huguenots in less common occupations are more likely to receive a mention. Names of pupils attending the Westminster French Protestant School (WFPS), 1747-1924, are listed; also names from the registers of a few Huguenot temples in France. In 2013, the *Proceedings* was renamed the *Huguenot Society Journal*.

Access to Quarto Series and *Proceedings*

All the volumes of the QS and *Proceedings* can be accessed via the dedicated reading room at The National Archives, where the Huguenot Library collections are currently housed. Many QS volumes have been digitized onto CD-ROM and can be searched on the computers there.

The digitized volumes of the QS are also available for purchase from the Huguenot Society: see <https://www.huguenotsociety.org.uk/publications/cd-rom.html>. Members of the Huguenot Society also have access to digitized versions of the *Proceedings* on the website.

Where these publications contain transcriptions of original records, it is advisable to check them against the originals: for instance, the Huguenot Church Registers, which are held at the National Archives Archives (series classmark RG 4: <http://discovery.nationalarchives.gov.uk/details/r/C13329>: search on "Foreign Churches" or a location to find records within this series). Individual entries from these registers have also been scanned and are available online at <http://www.bmdregisters.co.uk/>

Unpublished and Original Primary Sources

The most useful groups are the following, of which numbers 1-4 are held at the Huguenot Library:

1. The French Protestant Hospital archive, catalogued in QS volume 56. This archive contains much more material than the already substantial records published in QS volumes 52 and 53. Interesting items include: details of property left by named deceased inmates; lists of those known as the 'Bread House Pensioners'; Medical Officers' reports listing inmates' illnesses and treatments; names of Coqueau and Basse Charity annuitants; names of apprentices whose indenture fees were paid from various bequests.¹
2. The Normandy Society and the Society of Saintonge and Angoumois archives. QS volume 56 details the surviving archives of these two Huguenot friendly societies. They contain lists of members, names of sick money recipients, names of apprentices sponsored and also names of the society officials.
3. The Royal Bounty archive, catalogued in QS volume 51. This royal charity, originating in 1686, continued to make payments until 1876. Many of the manuscripts give names of recipients, including the poor, along with how much each received and sometimes occupations and addresses.
4. The Burn Donation and the Savoy Church archives, are also catalogued in QS volume 51. The former comprises surviving documents from various Huguenot churches in west London and those of Sandwich and Thorpe-le-Soken.² Some contain lists of contributors to poor funds and the recipients. Others contain consistory minutes.

¹ Further details of French Hospital papers can be found in: M. Harcourt Williams, *Huguenot Archives: A Further Catalogue of Material held in the Huguenot Library*, Huguenot Society Quarto Series, 61^r (2008). This catalogue also has details of some family papers and collections of family notes, lists of pedigrees, coats of arms, and donors to the Westminster French Protestant School.

² Now published as B. Julien (ed.), *The Consistory Minutes and Poor Relief Accounts of the French Church at Thorpe-le-Soken, 1683-1763*, Huguenot Society Quarto Series, 62 (2015).

5. The French Protestant Church of London, Soho Square, London W1, houses the archive of the Threadneedle Street Church, of which it is the linear descendant. Some documents go back to the sixteenth century. QS volume 50 is a handlist for this large archive.³ The original church registers, transcribed in the Quarto Series, were required to be deposited at the National Archives, but the archive contains the following categories of additional church records, giving individual names and sometimes addresses: poor relief; charity school pupil registers; contribution collection books; Coqueau and Basse charity applicants and recipients. Some similar records survive from the following churches, which were eventually absorbed into the Threadneedle Street church: - St John's Spitalfields; La Patente Spitalfields; The Church of the Artillery. Microform copies of some of the FPCL records, but not all, are held at the Huguenot Library. Please contact the Librarian regarding access to these.

Other Huguenot Library records

As well as its copies of the Quarto Series and *Proceedings*, the Library has a wide range of printed material giving information on particular trades and professions, often mentioning prominent Huguenots involved in each field. It holds reference works giving information on prominent Huguenot families, such as *Agnew's Protestant Exiles from France in the Reign of Louis XIV.* and Haag's *La France Protestante*. It also holds unpublished material on family history in the form of the Wagner Pedigrees and the Family Research files.

For more information on the Huguenot Library Collection please see the Library web pages. The Huguenot Library's holdings are incorporated within UCL Library's general catalogue **Explore**, available online at: <https://www.huguenotsociety.org.uk/library-and-archive/library-catalogues.html>.

Access to the Library:

The Huguenot Library is currently housed with the Special Collections of University College London at **The National Archives**. Please see <http://huguenotsociety.org.uk/library-and-archive/visitinglibrary.html> for full details of this temporary relocation.

Opening hours: Tuesday, 9.30 am – 7pm: Wednesday, 9.30 am - 5pm. *Visits are by appointment only.* Please contact the Huguenot Society Librarian at least two weeks in advance, via email: library@huguenotsociety.org.uk or by telephone: 020 7679 2046.

Please note that the Huguenot Society Librarian does not carry out research for readers but can give guidance with catalogues and requests for material at TNA. For details of professional researchers please see our 'Options for researching an ancestor you believe may be Huguenot' leaflet at: <https://www.huguenotsociety.org.uk/family-history.html>.

Other sources:

City of London and Shoreditch parish registers predating 1837 from the Guildhall collection are now housed at the **London Metropolitan Archives**, 40 Northampton Road, EC1R OHB; also housed there are other London parish registers, many rate books and insurance policies, rate books of the Commissioners of Sewers, and a collection of non PCC wills.

The City of Westminster Archives Centre, 10 St Ann's Street, SW1P 2DE, contains some important Westminster and Soho parish registers and rate books which complement these.

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³ To consult records at the FPCL it is necessary to make an appointment with the archivist. Please contact the Church at: 020 7437 5311