Etymology

Used originally as a term of derision, the derivation of the name *Huguenot* remains uncertain. Various theories have been promoted. The nickname may have been a French corruption of the German word *Eidgenosse*, meaning a *Confederate*, perhaps in combination with a reference to the name Besançon Hugues (d 1532). Geneva was John Calvin’s adopted home and the center of the Calvinist movement. In Geneva, Hugues was the leader of the "Confederate Party," so called because it favored an *alliance* between the city-state of Geneva and the *Swiss Confederation*. This theory of origin has support from the alleged fact that the label *Huguenot* was first applied in France to those conspirators (all of them aristocratic members of the Reformed Church) involved in the *Amboise plot* of 1560: a foiled attempt to transfer *power* in France from the influential *House of Guise*, a move which would have had the side-effect of fostering relations with the Swiss. Thus, Hugues plus *Eidgenosse* becomes *Huguenot*, with the intention of associating the *Protestant* cause with some very unpopular politics.[1]

Like the first hypothesis, several others account for the name as being derived from German as well as French. O.I.A. Roche writes in his book *The Days of the Upright, A History of the Huguenots* that "Huguenot" is

"a combination of a Flemish and a German word. In the Flemish corner of France, Bible students who gathered in each other’s houses to study secretly were called *Huis Genooten*, or 'house fellows,' while on the Swiss and German borders they were termed *Eid Genossen*, or 'oath fellows,' that is, persons bound to each other by an oath. Gallicized into 'Huguenot,' often used deprecatingly, the word became, during two and a half centuries of terror and triumph, a badge of enduring honor and courage.

Some discredit dual linguistic origins, arguing that for the word to have spread into common use in France, it must have originated in the French language. The "Hugues hypothesis" argues that the name can be accounted for by connection with *Hugues Capet king of France,*[2] who reigned long before the Reform times, but was regarded by the Gallicans and Protestants as a noble man who respected people's dignity and lives. Frank Puaux suggests, with similar connotations, a clever pun on the old French word for a *covenanter* (a signatory to a contract).[3] Janet Gray and other supporters of the theory suggest that the name *huguenote* would be roughly equivalent to *little Hugos*, or *those who want Hugo.*[2]

In this last connection, the name could suggest the derogatory inference of superstitious worship; because, ignorant people believed that Hugon, the gate of *King Hugo*, was haunted by the ghost of *Le roi Huguet* (regarded by Catholics as an infamous scoundrel), and other spirits who instead of being in purgatory came back to harm the living at night,[4] and it was in this place in *Tours* that the *prétendus réformés* ("these supposedly reformed") habitually gathered at night, both for political purposes, and for prayer and to sing the *psalms*. With similar scorn, some even suggest that the name is derived from *les guenon de Hus* (the monkeys or apes of Jan Hus).[7] While this and the many other theories offer their own measure of plausibility, attesting at least to the wit of later partisans and historians, if not of the French people at the time of this term's origin, "no one of the several theories advanced has afforded satisfaction".[8]

Since the eighteenth century they have been commonly designated "French Protestants", the title being suggested by their German co-religionists, or "Calvinists".

Early history and beliefs

The availability of the Bible in local language was important to the spread of the Protestant movement and the development of the Reformed church in France, and the country had a long history of struggles with the papacy by the time the Protestant Reformation finally arrived. Around 1294, a French version of the Scriptures was prepared by the Catholic priest, *Guyard de Moulin*. The first known *Provençal* language translation of the Bible had been prepared by the 12th century religious radical, *Peter Waldo* (Pierre de
Vaux). Long after the sect was suppressed by the Roman Catholic Church, the remaining Waldensians sought to join William Farel and the Protestant Reformation, and Olivetan would publish a French Bible for them, but those who emerged from secrecy were eradicated by Francis I in 1545. A two-volume folio version of this translation appeared in Paris, in 1488. [citation needed]

Other predecessors of the Reformed church included the pro-reform and Gallican Roman Catholics, like Jacques Lefevre (c. 1455 – 1536). The Gallicans briefly achieved independence for the French church, on the principle that the religion of France could not be controlled by the Bishop of Rome, a foreign power. [9] In the time of the Protestant Reformation, Lefevre, a professor at the University of Paris, prepared the way for the rapid dissemination of Lutheran ideas in France with the publication of his French translation of the New Testament in 1523, followed by the whole Bible in the French language, in 1528. [citation needed] William Farel was a student of Lefevre who went on to become a leader of the Swiss Reformation, establishing a Protestant government in Geneva. Jean Cauvin (John Calvin), another student at the University of Paris, also converted to Protestantism. The French Confession of 1559 shows a decidedly Calvinistic influence. [10] Sometime between 1550 and 1580, members of the Reformed church in France came to be commonly known as Huguenots.

**Criticisms of Roman Catholic Church**

Above all, Huguenots became known for their violent criticisms of worship as performed in the Catholic Church, in particular the focus on ritual and what they viewed as an obsession with death and the dead. They believed the ritual, images, saints, pilgrimages, prayers, and hierarchy of the Catholic Church did not help anyone toward redemption. They saw Christian faith as something to be expressed in a strict and godly life, in obedience to Biblical laws, out of gratitude for God's mercy.

Like other religious reformers of the time, they felt that the Catholic church needed radical cleansing of its impurities, and that the Pope represented a worldly kingdom, which sat in mocking tyranny over the things of God, and was ultimately doomed. Rhetoric like this became fiercer as events unfolded, and eventually stirred up a reaction in the Catholic establishment.

Fanatically opposed to the Catholic Church, the Huguenots attacked priests, monks, nuns, monasticism, images, and church buildings. Most of the cities in which the Huguenots gained a hold saw iconoclast riots in which altars and images in churches, and sometimes the buildings themselves were torn down. Ancient relics and texts were destroyed; the bodies of saints exhumed and burned. The cities of Bourges, Montauban and Orleans saw substantial activity in this regard.

**Reform and growth**

Huguenots faced periodic persecution from the outset of the Reformation; but Francis I (reigned 1515–1547) initially protected them from Parliamentary measures designed for their extermination. The Affair of the Placards of 1534 changed the king’s posture toward the Huguenots: he stepped away from restraining persecution of the movement.

Huguenot numbers grew rapidly between 1555 and 1561, chiefly amongst nobles and city dwellers. During this time, their opponents first dubbed the Protestants Huguenots; but they called themselves reformés, or "Reformed." They organized their first national synod in 1558, in Paris.

By 1562, the estimated number of Huguenots had passed one million, concentrated mainly in the southern and central parts of the country. The Huguenots in France likely peaked in number at approximately two million, compared to approximately sixteen million Catholics during the same period.

**Wars of religion**
As the Huguenots gained influence and displayed their faith more openly, Catholic hostility to them grew, even though the French crown offered increasingly liberal political concessions and edicts of toleration.

In 1561, the Edict of Orléans declared an end to the persecution, and the Edict of Saint-Germain of January 1562 formally recognized the Huguenots for the first time. However, these measures disguised the growing tensions between Protestants and Catholics.

**Civil wars**

These tensions spurred eight civil wars, interrupted by periods of relative calm, between 1562 and 1598. With each break in peace, the Huguenots' trust in the Catholic throne diminished, and the violence became more severe, and Protestant demands became grander, until a lasting cessation of open hostility finally occurred in 1598.

The wars gradually took on a dynastic character, developing into an extended feud between the Houses of Bourbon and Guise, both of which — in addition to holding rival religious views — staked a claim to the French throne. The crown, occupied by the House of Valois, generally supported the Catholic side, but on occasion switched over to the Protestant cause when politically expedient.

The French Wars of Religion began with a massacre at Vassy on March 1, 1562, when dozens (some sources say hundreds) of Huguenots were killed, and about 200 were wounded.

The Huguenots transformed themselves into a definitive political movement thereafter. Protestant preachers rallied a considerable army and a formidable cavalry, which came under the leadership of Admiral Gaspard de Coligny, Henry of Navarre and the House of Bourbon allied themselves to the Huguenots, adding wealth and holdings to the Protestant strength, which at its height grew to sixty fortified cities, and posed a serious threat to the Catholic crown and Paris over the next three decades.
St. Bartholomew's Day massacre

An Eyewitness Account of the Saint Bartholomew's Day Massacre by François Dubois (1790 - 1871).

Main article: St. Bartholomew's Day Massacre

In what became known as the St. Bartholomew's Day Massacre of 23 August – 3 October 1572, Catholics killed thousands of Huguenots in Paris. Similar massacres took place in other towns in the weeks following. The main provisional towns and cities experiencing the Massacre were Aix, Bordeaux, Bourges, Lyon, Meaux, Orleans, Rouen, Toulouse, and Troyes. Nearly 3,000 Protestants were slaughtered in Toulouse alone. The exact number of fatalities throughout the country is not known. On the 23 - 24 August, between about 2,000 and 3,000 Protestants were killed in Paris and between 3,000 and 7,000 more in the French provinces. By the 17 September, almost 25,000 Protestants had been massacred in Paris alone. Outside of Paris, the killings continued until the 3 October. In total, Historians Felipe Fernández-Armesto and D. Wilson quoted "a contemporary, non-partisan guestimate" that approximately 30,000 Protestants were killed throughout the country. An amnesty granted in 1573 pardoned the perpetrators.

Edict of Nantes

The pattern of warfare, followed by brief periods of peace, continued for nearly another quarter-century. The warfare was definitively quelled in 1598, when Henry of Navarre, having succeeded to the French throne as Henry IV, and recanted Protestantism in favour of Roman Catholicism, issued the Edict of Nantes. The Edict established Catholicism as the state religion of France, but granted the Protestants equality with Catholics under the throne and a degree of religious and political freedom within their domains. The Edict simultaneously protected Catholic interests by discouraging the founding of new Protestant churches in Catholic-controlled regions.

With the proclamation of the Edict of Nantes, and the subsequent protection of Huguenot rights, pressures to leave France abated. However, enforcement of the Edict grew increasingly irregular over time, and it was increasingly ignored altogether under Louis XIV. Louis imposed dragonnades and other forms of persecution for Protestants, which made life so intolerable that many fled the country. The Huguenot population of France dropped to 856,000 by the mid-1660s, of which a plurality lived in rural areas. The greatest concentrations of Huguenots at this time resided in the regions of Guienne, Saintonge-Aunis-Angoumois and Poitou.

Edict of Fontainebleau

In 1685, Louis revoked the Edict of Nantes and declared Protestantism to be illegal in the Edict of Fontainebleau. After this, Huguenots (with estimates ranging from 200,000 to 1,000,000) fled to surrounding Protestant countries: England, the Netherlands, Switzerland, Norway, Denmark and Prussia — whose Calvinist Great Elector Frederick William welcomed them to help rebuild his war-ravaged and underpopulated country. Following this exodus, Huguenots remained in large numbers in only one region in France: the rugged Cévennes region in the south, from which a group known as the Camisards revolted against the French crown in the early 18th century.
Exodus

Early emigration

Etching of Fort Caroline.
See also: Fort Caroline

The first Huguenots to leave France seeking freedom from persecution went to Switzerland and to the Netherlands. A group of Huguenots under the leadership of Jean Ribault in 1562 ended up establishing the small colony of Fort Caroline in 1564, on the banks of the St. Johns River, in what is today Jacksonville, Florida.

The colony was the first attempt at any permanent European settlement in the present-day continental United States, but the group survived only a short time. In September 1565, an attack against the new Spanish colony at St. Augustine backfired, and the Spanish wiped out the Fort Caroline garrison.

South Africa

Main article: Huguenots in South Africa

On December 31, 1687 a band of Huguenots set sail from France to the Dutch East India Company post at the Cape of Good Hope, South Africa. Individual Huguenots settled at the Cape of Good Hope from as early as 1671 with the arrival of Francois Villion (Viljoen) and an organized, large scale emigration of Huguenots to the Cape of Good Hope took place during 1688 and 1689. A notable example of this is the emigration of Huguenots from La Motte d'Aigues in Provence, France.

The Huguenot Monument of Franschhoek.

Many of these settlers chose as their home an area called Franschhoek, in the present day Western Cape province of South Africa. A large monument to commemorate the arrival of the Huguenots in South Africa was inaugurated on 7 April 1948 at Franschhoek.

Many of the farms in the Western Cape province in South Africa still bear French names and there are many families, today mostly Afrikaans-speaking, whose surnames bear witness to their French Huguenot ancestry. Examples of these are: Blignaut, de Klerk (Le Clercq), de Villiers, Visagie (Visage), du Plessis, du Toit, TerBlanche, Franck, Foure, Fouche, Giliomee (Guilliaume), Hugo, Joubert, Labuschagne (la Buscagne), le Roux, Lombard, Nel (Nell), Malan, Malherbe, Marais, Theron, Jordaan (Jurdan) and Viljoen (Villon), Du Preez (Des Pres), Taljard (Taillard) amongst others, which are all common surnames in present day South Africa. The wine industry in South Africa owed a significant debt to the Huguenots, many of whom had vineyards in France.

North America

Main article: The Huguenot Society of America

Barred from settling in New France, many Huguenots nevertheless moved to North America, settling instead to the Dutch colony of New Netherland (later incorporated into New York and New Jersey), as well as to the Thirteen Colonies of Great Britain and Nova Scotia. A significant number of New Amsterdam's
families were of Huguenot origin, often having emigrated to the Netherlands in the previous century. The Huguenot congregation was formally established in 1628 as L'Église française à la Nouvelle-Amsterdam. This parish continues today as L'Eglise du Saint-Esprit part of the Episcopal (Anglican) communion still welcoming Francophone New Yorkers from all over the world. Services are still conducted in French for a Francophone parish community, and members of the Huguenot Society of America.

Jean Hasbrouck House (1721) in New Paltz.

Huguenot immigrants founded New Paltz, New York, where is now located the oldest street in the current United States of America with the original stone houses, and New Rochelle, New York (named after La Rochelle in France). Louis DuBois, son of Chretien DuBois was one of the original Huguenot settlers in this area. A Huguenot settlement on the south shore of Staten Island, New York was founded by Daniel Perrine in 1692. The present day neighborhood of Huguenot was named after Perrin and these early settlers.

Some Huguenot immigrants settled in Central Pennsylvania. There, they assimilated with the predominately Pennsylvania German settlers. Surnames of Huguenot origin found in the area include Forry, Free, Laucks, Lorah, Motter, Rank, Ronk, Ranck, and Zeller.

Some of the settlers chose the Virginia Colony (John Broache is one on record), and formed communities in present-day Chesterfield County and at Manakintown, an abandoned Monacan village now located in Powhatan County about 20 miles (32 km) west of downtown Richmond, Virginia, where their descendants continue to reside. On May 12, 1705, the Virginia General Assembly passed an act to naturalize the 148 Huguenots resident at Manakintown.

The Huguenot Memorial Bridge across the James River and Huguenot Road was named in their honor, as were many local features including several schools, including Huguenot High School.

Many Huguenots also settled in the area around the current site of Charleston, South Carolina. In 1685, Rev. Elie Prioleau from the town of Pons in France settled in what was then called Charles town. He became pastor of the first Huguenot church in North America in that city. The French Huguenot Church of Charleston, which remains independent, is the oldest continuously active Huguenot congregation in the United States today. L'Eglise du Saint-Esprit in NY is older, founded in 1628, but left the French Reformed movement in 1804 to become part of the Episcopal Church in America.

Most of the Huguenot congregations (or individuals) in North America eventually affiliated with other Protestant denominations, such the Presbyterian Church (USA), Episcopal Church, United Church of Christ, Reformed Churches, the Reformed Baptists and the Mennonite Church.

American Huguenots readily married outside their immediate French Huguenot communities, leading to rapid assimilation. They made an enormous contribution to American economic life, especially as merchants and artisans in the late Colonial and early Federal periods. One outstanding contribution was the establishment of the Brandywine powder mills by E.I. du Pont, a former student of Lavoisier.

Paul Revere was descended from Huguenot refugees, as were Henry Laurens who signed the Declaration of Independence for South Carolina, Alexander Hamilton, and a number of other leaders of the American Revolution.
The Netherlands

Some Huguenots fought in the Low Countries alongside the Dutch against Spain during the first years of the Dutch Revolt. The Dutch Republic rapidly became a haven of choice for Huguenot exiles. Early ties were already visible in the Apologie of William the Silent, condemning the Spanish Inquisition and written by his court reverend Huguenot Pierre L'Oiyeleur, lord of Villiers.

Louise de Coligny, daughter of the murdered Huguenot leader Gaspard de Coligny, had married William the Silent, leader of the Dutch (Calvinist) revolt against Spanish (Catholic) rule. And as both spoke French in everyday life, their court church in the Prinsenhof in Delft held services in French, a practice still continued to today. The Prinsenhof is now one of the remaining 14 active Walloon churches of the Dutch Reformed Church.

The ties between Huguenots and the Dutch Republic's military and political leadership, the House of Orange-Nassau, existing since the early days of the Dutch Revolt explains the many early settlements of Huguenots in the Dutch Republic's colonies around Cape of Good Hope in South-Africa and the New Netherland colony in North America.

Stadtholder William III of Orange, who later became King of England, emerged as the strongest opponent of Louis XIV, after Louis' attack on the Dutch Republic in 1672. He formed the League of Augsburg as a coalition in opposition to Louis. Consequently many Huguenots saw the wealthy and Calvinist Dutch Republic, leading the opposition against Louis XIV, as the most attractive country for exile after the revocation of the Edict of Nantes. They also found established many more French speaking Calvinist churches there.

The Dutch Republic received the largest group of Huguenot refugees with an estimated 75,000 to 100,000 Huguenots after the revocation of the Edict. Amongst them were 200 clergy. This was a huge influx, the entire population of the Dutch Republic amounted to ca. 2 million at that time. Around 1700 it is estimated that near 25% of the Amsterdam population was Huguenot. Amsterdam and the area of West-Frisia were the first areas providing full citizens rights to Huguenots in 1705, followed by the entire Dutch Republic in 1715. Huguenots married with Dutch from the outset.

One of the most prominent Huguenots refugees to the Netherlands was Pierre Bayle, who started teaching in Rotterdam, while publishing his multi-volume masterpiece Historical and Critical Dictionary, which became one of the one hundred foundational texts that formed the first collection of the US Library of Congress.

Most Huguenot descendants in the Netherlands today are recognisable by French family names with typical Dutch given names. Due to their early ties with the Dutch Revolt's leadership and even participation in the revolt, parts of the Dutch patriciate are of Huguenot descent.
Britain and Ireland

Huguenot weavers' houses at Canterbury

An estimated 50,000 Protestant Walloons and Huguenots fled to England, about 10,000 of whom moved on to Ireland. In relative terms, this could be the largest wave of immigration of a single community into Britain ever. A leading Huguenot theologian and writer who led the exiled community in London, Andrew Lortie (born André Lortie), became known for articulating Huguenot criticism of the Holy See and transubstantiation.

Of these refugees, upon landing on the Kent coast, many gravitated towards Canterbury, then the county's Calvinist hub, where many Walloon & Huguenot families were granted asylum. Edward VI granted them the whole of the Western crypt of Canterbury Cathedral for worship. This privilege in 1825 shrank to the south aisle and in 1895 to the former chantry chapel of the Black Prince, where services are still held in French according to the reformed tradition every Sunday at 3pm. Other evidence of the Walloons and Huguenots in Canterbury includes a block of houses in Turnagain Lane where weavers' windows survive on the top floor, and 'the Weavers', a half-timbered house by the river (now a restaurant - see illustration above). The house derives its name from a weaving school which was moved there in the last years of the 19th century, resurrecting the use to which it had been put between the 16th century and about 1830. Many of the refugee community were weavers, but naturally some practised other occupations necessary to sustain the community distinct from the indigenous population, this separation being a condition of their initial acceptance in the City. They also settled elsewhere in Kent, particularly Sandwich, Faversham and Maidstone - towns in which there used to be refugee churches.

Huguenot refugees flocked to Shoreditch, London in large numbers. They established a major weaving industry in and around Spitalfields (see Petticoat Lane and the Tenterground), and in Wandsworth. The Old Truman Brewery, then known as the Black Eagle Brewery, appeared in 1724. The fleeing of Huguenot refugees from Tours, France had virtually wiped out the great silk mills they had built.

At the same time other Huguenots arriving in England settled in Bedfordshire, which was (at the time) the main centre of England's Lace industry. Huguenots greatly contributed to the development of lace-making in Bedfordshire, with many families settling in Cranfield, Bedford and Luton.

Some of these immigrants moved to Norwich which had accommodated an earlier settlement of Walloon weavers; they added to the existing immigrant population which made up about a third of the population of the city.

Many Huguenots settled in Ireland during the Plantations of Ireland. Huguenot regiments fought for William of Orange in the Williamite war in Ireland, for which they were rewarded with land grants and titles, many settling in Dublin. Some of them took their skills to Ulster and assisted in the founding of the Irish linen industry, particularly in the Lisburn area. Numerous signs of Huguenot presence can still be seen with names still in use, and with areas of the main towns and cities named after the people who settled there, for instance the Huguenot District in Cork City. There is also a French Church in Portarlington, County Laois which dates back to 1696, and was built to serve the new Huguenot community.
Germany and Scandinavia

Obelisk commemorating the Huguenots in Fredericia, Denmark

Huguenots refugees found a safe haven in the Lutheran and Reformed states in Germany and Scandinavia. Nearly 44,000 Huguenots established themselves in Germany, particularly in Prussia where many of their descendents rose to positions of prominence. Several congregations were founded, such as the Fredericia (Denmark), Berlin, Stockholm, Hamburg, Frankfurt, Emden.

Around 1700, a significant proportion of Berlin's population was French-speaking, and the Berlin Huguenots preserved the French language in their church services for nearly a century. They ultimately decided to switch to German in protest against the occupation of Prussia by Napoleon in 1806-07.

Prince Louis de Condé, along with his sons Daniel and Osias, arranged with Count Ludwig von Nassau-Saarbrucken to establish a Huguenot community in present-day Saarland in 1604. The Count was a supporter of mercantilism and welcomed technically-skilled immigrants into his lands regardless of their religious persuasions. The Condés established a thriving glass-making works which provided wealth to the principality for many years, and other founding families created enterprises including textiles and other traditional Huguenot occupations in France. The community and its congregation remain active to this day, with many of the founding families still present in the region. Members of this community emigrated to the United States in the 1890s.

In Bad Karlshafen, Hessen, Germany is the Huguenot Museum and Huguenot archive. The collection includes family histories, a library, and a picture archive.

Effects

The exodus of Huguenots from France created a brain drain, as many Huguenots had occupied important places in society, from which the kingdom did not fully recover for years. The French crown's refusal to allow non-Catholics to settle in New France may help to explain that colony's slow rate of population growth compared to that of the neighboring British colonies, which opened settlement to religious dissenters. By the time of the French and Indian War, there was a sizeable population of Huguenot descent living in the British colonies, many of whom participated in the British conquest of New France in 1759-60.[30]

Frederick William, Elector of Brandenburg invited Huguenots to settle in his realms, and a number of their descendants rose to positions of prominence in Prussia. Several prominent German military, cultural, and political figures in subsequent history, including poet Theodor Fontane[31], General Hermann von François[32], the hero of the First World War Battle of Tannenberg, and famed U-boat captain Lothar von Arnauld de la Perrière[33], trace their ancestry to the Huguenot refugees from France. The last Prime Minister of the (East) German Democratic Republic, Lothar de Maizière[34], is also a scion of a Huguenot family.

The persecution and flight of the Huguenots greatly damaged the reputation of Louis XIV abroad, particularly in England; the two kingdoms, which had enjoyed peaceful relations prior to 1685, became bitter enemies and fought against each other in a series of wars (called the "Second Hundred Years' War" by some historians) from 1689 onward.
End of persecution and restoration of French citizenship

See also: Persecution of Huguenots under Louis XV

Persecution of Protestants continued in France after 1724, but ended in 1787 with the Edict of Toleration. Three years later, during the French Revolution, Protestants were finally granted full citizenship.

The December 15, 1790 Law stated: "All persons born in a foreign country and descending in any degree of a French man or woman expatriated for religious reason are declared French nationals (naturels français) and will benefit from rights attached to that quality if they come back to France, establish their domicile there and take the civic oath." This might have been, historically, the first law recognising a right of return.

Article 4 of the June 26, 1889 Nationality Law stated: "Descendants of families proscribed by the revocation of the Edict of Nantes will continue to benefit from the benefit of the December 15, 1790 Law, but on the condition that a nominal decree should be issued for every petitioner. That decree will only produce its effects for the future."

Foreign descendants of Huguenots lost the automatic right to French citizenship in 1945 (by force of the ordonnance du 19 octobre 1945, revoking the 1889 Nationality Law).

In the 1920s and 1930s, members of the extreme-right Action Française movement expressed strong animus against Protestants, as well as against Jews, and freemasons - all three being regarded as groups supporting the French Republic, which Action Française sought to overthrow.

During the occupation of France in the Second World War, a significant number of Protestants - not persecuted themselves - were active in hiding and saving Jews. Up to the present, many French Protestants, due to their history, feel a special sympathy for and tendency to support the "underdog" in various situations and conflicts.

Protestants in France today number about one million, or about 2% of the population [2] [3]. They are most concentrated in the Cévennes region in the south.

Legacy

French

A number of French churches are descended from the Huguenots, including:

- Reformed Church of France

American

- Eight American Presidents (George Washington, Ulysses S. Grant, Franklin D. Roosevelt, Theodore Roosevelt, William Taft, Harry Truman, Gerald Ford and Lyndon Johnson) had significant proven Huguenot ancestry, as did founding fathers Alexander Hamilton, John Jay, and Paul Revere. Twelve other U.S. Presidents had credible but unproven claims to Huguenot ancestors. [13]
- Davy Crockett, celebrated 19th-century American folk hero, frontiersman, soldier and politician was of Huguenot stock. The Crockett's were the descendants of Huguenots who fled France in the 17th Century and migrated to Ireland. Crockett is an Anglicized version of the name "de Crocketagne".
Brief Huguenot History

- Francis Marion, American Revolutionary War guerilla fighter, was of predominantly Huguenot heritage.
- In 1924 a commemorative half dollar, known as the Huguenot-Walloon Half Dollar[^16], was coined in the United States to celebrate the 300th anniversary of their initial settlement in what is now the United States. One Huguenot colonist was a silversmith named Apollos Rivoire, who would later anglicize his name to Paul Revere. He would, still later, give his name and his profession to his son, Paul Revere, the famous United States revolutionary.
- A neighborhood in New York City’s borough of Staten Island is named Huguenot, and the city of New Rochelle, New York, is named after La Rochelle, a former Huguenot stronghold in France.

Other

- Huguenot refugees in Prussia are thought to have contributed significantly to the development of the textile industry in that state.

Symbol

The Huguenot Cross

The Huguenot cross is the distinctive emblem of the Huguenots (croix huguenote). It is now an official symbol of the Eglise des Protestants reformé (French Protestant church) and Huguenot descendants are proud to display this symbol as a sign of reconnaissance (recognition) between them.

See also

- List of Huguenots
- Huguenot, New York
- Huguenot Street Historic District

Notes

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