

## Who Were The Huguenots?

The Huguenots were French Protestants who were members of the Reformed Church established about 1550. The origin of the word Huguenot is disputed. It was used as a nickname first in Geneva, Switzerland where many had fled from France.

A General Edict urging extermination of the heretics (Huguenots) was issued 29 January 1536. On 01 March 1562, some 1200 Huguenots were slain at Vassy, France. This ignited the French Wars of Religion which would rip apart, devastate and bankrupt France for the next three decades. This was followed on 24 August 1572 by the St. Bartholomew's Day Massacre which began a long and bloody extermination of the Huguenot Protestants, and directly led many to emigrate from France to other lands.

The Edict of Nantes signed by Henry IV on 13 April 1598 ended the French Wars of Religion. The Huguenots were allowed free exercise of their religion in twenty specified towns in France.

The Revocation of the Edict of Nantes, signed by Louis XIV on 22 October 1685, increased persecutions of the Huguenots again. At least 200,000 French Protestants fled France to friendly nations, such as Switzerland, Germany, Holland, and Britain. Between 1618 and 1725, about five thousand to seven thousand Huguenot refugees reached the shores of America. The largest concentrations were in New England, New York, Pennsylvania, Virginia, and South Carolina.

The Promulgation of the Edict of Toleration, 28 November 1787, partially restored the civil and religious rights of the Huguenots in France.



### The Cross of Languedoc

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## The Cross of Languedoc

Insignia of the National Huguenot Society

The gold **Cross of Languedoc** with the official ribbon of the Society, which is white edged with stripes of French blue and gold, has become the official insignia of the National Huguenot Society worn by members. The **Cross of Languedoc** consists of four elements:

The insignia consists of an open four-petal Lily of France – reminiscent of the Mother country of France – in which each petal radiates outward in the shape of a “V” to form a Maltese Cross. The four petals arm, has at its outside periphery two rounded points at the corners. These rounded points are regarded as signifying the Eight Beatitudes.

The four petals are joined together by four fleurs-de-lis, also reminiscent of the Mother country of France. Each fleur-de-lis has three petals. The twelve petals of the four fleurs-de-lis signify the Twelve Apostles.

An open space in the shape of a heart is formed between each fleur-de-lis and arms of the two petals with which it is joined. This shape – a symbol of loyalty – suggests the seal of the great French Reformer, John Calvin.

A descending dove pendant representing the Saint Esprit or “Sainted Spirit” – the guide and counselor of the Church – is suspended from a ring of gold attached to the lower central petal.

## Interested?

If you are interested in more information about the National Huguenot Society, membership, electronic application form, Huguenot ancestors, suggested bibliography, available scholarships, or contacting a state registrar, please visit the NHS web site:

<http://www.huguenot.netnation.com>

or return the following form to the address below:

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State

Zip Code (Nine digit) \_\_\_\_\_

**Huguenot Ancestor:**

\_\_\_\_\_

## Eligibility Requirements

**Regular Members:** Individuals wishing to join the National Huguenot Society shall be: (1) of the Protestant faith, (2) eighteen years of age or older, (3) believers of the Huguenot principles of faith and of liberty, and (4) lineally descended from a qualified Huguenot ancestor.

A qualified Huguenot ancestor meets the following criteria:

1. A Huguenot without regard to ethnic origin or particular sect of the Protestant faith, who subsequent to 10 December 1520, and who, prior to the promulgation of the Edict of Toleration, 28 November 1787, emigrated to America or found refuge in some other country,

**or**

2. A Huguenot who, in spite of religious persecution, remained in France (meaning any territory lying within the Kingdom of France on the date of the promulgation of the Edict of Toleration 28 November 1787).

Membership in the National Huguenot Society is composed of the member Societies organized in a State or Territory of the United States, or in the District of Columbia. Members of such Societies automatically belong to the National Huguenot Society.

