



# The Huguenot Herald

The Huguenot Society of South Carolina

Volume 19, Number 3  
September, 2009

## UPCOMING EVENTS

- Fall Service, Sunday, October 18, 10:30am
- Society Offices Closed, December 18-January 4

The Huguenot Society of SC  
138 Logan Street  
Charleston, SC 29401

(843) 723-3235  
Fax: (843) 853-8476

[www.huguenotsociety.org](http://www.huguenotsociety.org)  
[archivist@huguenotsociety.org](mailto:archivist@huguenotsociety.org)

## A French Connection

By: Kenneth C. Davis

To commemorate the arrival of the first pilgrims to America's shores, a June date would be far more appropriate, accompanied perhaps by coq au vin and a nice Bordeaux. After all, the first European arrivals seeking religious freedom in the "New World" were French. And they beat their English counterparts by 50 years. That French settlers bested the Mayflower Pilgrims may surprise Americans raised on our foundational myth, but the record is clear.

Long before the Pilgrims sailed in 1620, another group of dissident Christians sought a haven in which to worship freely. These French Calvinists, or Huguenots, hoped to escape the sectarian fighting between Catholics and Protestants that had bloodied France since 1560.

Landing in balmy Florida in June of 1564, at what a French explorer had earlier named the River of May (now the St. Johns River near Jacksonville), the French émigrés promptly held a service of "thanksgiving." Carrying the seeds of a new colony, they also brought cannons to fortify the small, wooden enclosure they named Fort Caroline, in honor of their king, Charles IX.



Fort Caroline

In short order, these French pilgrims built houses, a mill and bakery, and apparently even managed to press some grapes into a few casks of wine. At first, relationships with the local Timucuan were friendly, and some of the French settlers took native wives and soon acquired the habit of smoking a certain local "herb." Food, wine, women – and tobacco by the sea, no less. A veritable Gallic paradise.

Except, that is, to the Spanish, who had other visions for the New World. In 1565, King Phillip II of Spain issued orders to "hang and burn the Lutherans" (then a Spanish catchall term for Protestants) and dispatched Adm. Pedro Menéndez to wipe out these French heretics who had taken up residence on land claimed by the Spanish – and who also had an annoying habit of attacking Spanish treasure ships as they sailed by.

Leading this holy war with a crusader's fervor, Menéndez established St. Augustine and ordered what local boosters claim is the first parish mass celebrated in the future United States. Then he engineered a murderous assault on Fort Caroline, in which most of the French settlers were massacred. Menéndez had many of the survivors strung up under a sign that read, "I do this not as to Frenchmen but as to heretics." A few weeks later, he ordered the execution of more than 300 French shipwreck survivors

(continued on page 3)

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The Huguenot Society of SC  
138 Logan Street  
Charleston, SC 29401

## Have You Moved?

Due to new postal regulations, we are now charged for all mail that is returned. And, since bulk mail (which is a significant savings for the Society) is not forwarded, we have received a large amount of mail from members who have moved or are “Temporarily Away.” This results in a cost per person of more than \$1, since we pay first class for both the return and the second mailing, if a new address was listed. We want you to receive all our announcements, but very much need your help! If you have moved, please let us know – a phone call or e-mail will do. If you are “Temporarily Away” (the post office term), also let us know and we can make alternate arrangements for your mail.

# From the President...

## A PIONEER PAR EXCELLENCE

**Robert, M. Prioleau**



Here is a quick quiz on early American history:

Who was in charge of the first European settlement in North America?

- |                   |                 |
|-------------------|-----------------|
| 1. Roger Williams | 3. John Smith   |
| 2. Myles Standish | 4. Jean Ribault |

Where was this settlement?

- |                   |                    |
|-------------------|--------------------|
| 1. Providence, RI | 3. Jamestown, VA   |
| 2. Plymouth, MA   | 4. Charlesfort, SC |

If you said “Who is Jean Ribault?” or “Where in the world is Charlesfort?” you would be on the right track.

In 1562, which was about forty six years before Captain John Smith led the English settlers to Jamestown, a French pioneer named Jean Ribault brought a party of Huguenots to what is now Port Royal in South Carolina and founded “Charlesfort.” The colony was not able to sustain itself, and, after two years the French settlers moved to the mouth of the St. John’s River (near Jacksonville, FL) and founded Fort Caroline. But, alas, Fort Caroline was soon attacked by soldiers from a Spanish fleet who killed the settlers and destroyed the fort in September 1565.

So it turns out the first two settlements in North America were both built by Huguenots about four decades before the English settled Jamestown, VA, and almost six decades before the Pilgrims made their famous landing at Plymouth in Massachusetts.

And who was this Jean Ribault who led the Huguenot colonists? He was a native of Dieppe, France, and a very competent ship’s captain. Admiral Gaspard de Coligny selected him to lead this expedition to find a refuge for Huguenots in the recently discovered New World.

In an age of bitter religious conflict, Jean Ribault was a solid Huguenot committed to establishing a refuge for his fellow believers. In an age of exploration, he was a master mariner and navigator. In an age of adventure, he was an inspiring leader and a reliable senior officer.

In an age of new beginnings, he was a pioneer par excellence.

### **Board of Directors:**

Robert M. Prioleau  
*President*

Renee LaHue Marshall  
*1st Vice President*

Helga Preston Wrenn Billings  
*Secretary*

John Bacot Williams  
*Treasurer*

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Barbara Pringle Claypoole

Dianne Watts Ressinger

John E. Huguley, Jr.

John E. Cuttino

Mary Upshaw Pike

Ford Prioleau Menefee

#### *Chaplain:*

Rev. Philip Gendron Porcher

#### **Staff**

Karen Benghauser King, *Exec. Director*

Harriott Cheves Leland, *Archivist/  
Researcher*

Dorothy Mercer Huff, *Registrar*

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### **New Board Member**

We’re delighted to welcome a new member of the Board, Ford Prioleau Menefee, Vice President for French Santee. The son of former Society treasurer Charles E. Menefee and his wife Lisa, Ford was raised on Wadmalaw Island and graduated from Porter-Gaud School and Vanderbilt University.

Following eight years as a Commissioned Officer in the US Navy, he worked for several years in Atlanta and returned to Charleston in 1997. Ford is presently a Vice President with The Bank of South Carolina.

He and his wife, Deidre Powell Menefee have a son, Ford, Jr. (Pri).

*French Connection, (continued from page 1)*

at a site just south of St. Augustine, now marked by an inconspicuous national monument called Fort Matanzas, from the Spanish word for “slaughters.”

With this, America’s first pilgrims disappeared from the pages of history. Casualties of Europe’s murderous religious wars, they fell victim to Anglophile historians who erased their existence as readily as they demoted the Spanish settlement of St. Augustine to second-class status behind the later English colonies in Jamestown and Plymouth.

But the truth cannot be so easily buried. Although overlooked, a brutal first chapter had been written in the most untidy history of a “Christian nation.” And the sectarian violence and hatred that ended with the deaths of a few hundred Huguenots in 1565 would be replayed often in early America, the supposed haven for religious dissent, which in fact tolerated next to none.

Starting with those massacred French pilgrims, the saga of the nation’s birth and growth is often a bloodstained one, filled with religious animosities. In Boston, for instance, The Puritan fathers banned Catholic priests and executed several Quakers between 1659 and 1661. Cotton Mather, the famed Puritan cleric, led the war cries against New England’s Abenaki “savages” who had learned their prayers from the French Jesuits. The colony of Georgia was established in 1732 as a buffer between the Protestant English colonies and the Spanish missions of Florida; its original charter banned Catholics. The bitter rivalry between Catholic France and Protestant England carried on for most of a century, giving rise to anti-Catholic laws, while a mistrust of Canada’s French Catholics helped fire many patriots’ passion for independence. As late as 1844, Philadelphia’s anti-Catholic “Bible riots” took the lives of more than a dozen people.

The list goes on. Our history is littered with bleak tableaux that show what happens when righteous certitude is mixed with fearful ignorance. Which is why this Thanksgiving, as we express our gratitude for America’s bounty and promise, we would do well to reflect on all our histories, including a forgotten French one that began on Florida’s shores so many years ago.

(Kenneth C. Davis is the author of “America’s Hidden History: Untold Tales of the First Pilgrims, Fighting Women and Forgotten Founders Who Shaped a Nation.” We are grateful to him and to HarperCollins Publishers for their gracious permission to reprint this article, first published January 9, 2009)

## Rev. Johnson to Give Sermon

The Reverend John Romig Johnson, Ph.D., will be the guest pastor at the Fall Service at the Huguenot Church, Sunday, October 18, 2009 at 10:30am.

A graduate of Furman University and the General Theological Seminary in New York City, he has served churches in South Carolina and New York. He completed his Ph.D. in Psychiatry and Religion from Union Theological Seminary and also received a diploma in Analytical Psychology from the Jung Institute in Switzerland.

Rev. Johnson has been a member of the faculties of Berkeley Divinity School at Yale University and the General Theological Seminary and served as a psychologist at the Jung Institute in New York City.

He has published a number of monographs and journal articles primarily concerned with issues in psychology and theology. A native of Charleston, he retired here with his wife, Nicole R. Watts of Beckenham Kent, in England. They have two sons and three granddaughters.

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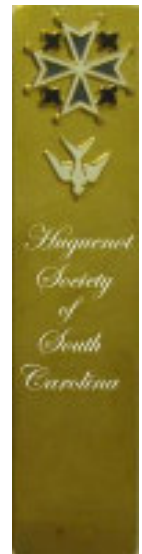
## Huguenot Cross for Gravestones

We have received several requests lately for a design of a Huguenot Cross that could be applied to gravestones. A local stonemason said that a stencil can be made from a drawing; the design is then sand-blasted onto a new or existing gravestone. We have a drawing available upon request; the size can be adjusted by your stonemason.

Please contact the Society if you would like a copy.

### New Bookmark

Do you like to read or give books as gifts? If so, we have just the thing for you. The new HSSC bookmark will be available early November, in time for Christmas. Brass with an enameled cross and the engraved name of the Society, this will be a perfect give for Huguenot book-lovers. Ordering information is on page 6.



## Reflections on My Lifetime Membership

The Rev. Philip G. Porcher  
Chaplain

When I was baptized in 1932, my godmother, Mrs. Fred (Mynie) Horlbeck, gave me a Lifetime Membership in the Huguenot Society. Although it meant nothing to me for many, many years, at some point during my teen age years, probably at Mynie's prompting, my parents' involvement, and receiving notices and publications, I became more aware of my Huguenot Heritage.

During my young adulthood, I received no bills or reminders of paying dues, so the thought of making a contribution never crossed my mind. At some point in time I remember receiving a letter from the Society to Lifetime Members stating that, because of rising costs and expenses, our lifetime fees had long been expended. We were asked to consider making contributions from time to time to help with the operating budget. The letter made very clear, that since we were Lifetime Members, we were not being asked to pay dues, but that our contributions would be very gratefully appreciated. I understood that request and, for a while, made small contributions.

Years went by and I just forgot about it as I concentrated on finding enough money to raise and educate my own family. Also, the last 30 years of my ministry was in the Norfolk, Virginia area, and the work and activity of the Huguenot Society was far away.

After I retired, my wife and I moved back to my home in Mt. Pleasant. One day, a few years ago, I received a notice in the mail, about the Annual Meeting of the Society. Since I had never been involved and knew almost nothing about the Society, I decided to go to that meeting – just to look and listen! Almost immediately, I was asked if I would consider being the Chaplain of the Society, which included being a member of the board and attending meetings. I said I would accept for one year and, meanwhile, would try to learn more about this organization before considering a long-term commitment.

*Now, all of the above is a preamble for the real message I want to convey to my brothers and sisters who are also Lifetime Members.*

It didn't take but a few Board meetings before my eyes were opened wide in shock, especially regarding

membership categories and budgets. Among many other things, I've learned that the Society has about 1750 members, of whom 470 are Lifetime Members; of those 470, less than 10% are regular contributors. That discovery meant that I was one of those members adding to our budgeted expenses through mailings and administrative duties. By that time I had already been a part of the Board's constant struggle with the annual budget and the ever-present and sometimes unexpected expenses for equipment breakdowns and building maintenance that all organizations must deal with. In light of all that information I decided to renew my efforts to make personal contributions (NOT DUES) to the Society.

I'm writing to share this with other Lifetime Members, especially those of you who made your lifetime payments years ago, and to ask you to reconsider your commitment to the Society. I can assure you that your contributions will be greatly appreciated. THANK YOU!!!

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## Gifts for Computers

For the last two years, we have experienced significant problems with the office computers, which are six years old and fall into the "antique" category. We are grateful to the following Life Members whose contributions will make possible the initial replacement of the server. The entire project will cost \$6,000 and we will continue to accept funds designated for that purpose.

Mary Horlbeck	Louisa Montgomery
Beverly Stony Johnson	Florence Manning Bethea
Peter Gourdin	Margaret G. Brooks
Whaley W. Batson	Ellen Westfall
James A. Grimsley, Jr.	Jane L. Smith
Mary-Locke Simons	Lawton W. Scott
Louise G. Rankin	Nancy M. Proctor
Arthur Mazyck	Katherine F. Bruce
James A. W. Rembert	John G. Morris
Rhoda A. Brooker	Mayrant Simons
Allison Williams	Charles W. Simons
William C. Wilbur, Jr.	Mary Ellen McKee
Dale Pedersen	

## Sketches of our Huguenot Ancestors: Joseph La Far and Catherine Boillat

by Harriott Cheves Leland

Joseph La Far, “gentleman age 21 from London,” is listed as a passenger leaving the port of London in June 1774. He is listed as a Freemason bound for Philadelphia where he planned to settle.<sup>1</sup> However, on 29 Jan 1778 in Charlestown, South Carolina Joseph La Far married Catherine Boillat.<sup>2</sup> According to an undocumented reference, La Far opened a music store in 1786.<sup>3</sup> He was a partner with Mr. Godwin with whom he opened “A New Academy for Dancing” in the same year and a handwritten notation on the page gives the address of his music shop as 119 Tradd Street.<sup>4</sup> His funeral notice states that he “died...after a short, but painful illness...aged 42 years [and has left a helpless widow and five children. He was buried “from his house in Old Church-street, corner of Lynch’s lane” on 12 Feb 1795.<sup>5</sup>

Catherine Boillat, wife of Joseph La Far, was the daughter of Catherine and David Boillat. She is buried in the graveyard of the French Protestant Church in Charleston, SC. Her tombstone gives her death at age 86 on 3 Mar 1849. It reads in part “Being directly descended from the number of those who left France to seek religious toleration elsewhere, she...was at the time of her death, the oldest living member of the French Protestant Church.”<sup>6</sup>

[NOTE: Research to identify the members of the La Far and Boillat families who left France is on-going.]

<sup>1</sup> Tepper, Michael: *Passengers to America* 304

<sup>2</sup> *SC Historical Magazine* 11: 165

<sup>3</sup> Molloy, Robert and E. H. Suydam: *Charleston A Gracious Heritage*: 275

<sup>4</sup> Willis: *The Charleston Stage in the 17th Century*: 113

<sup>5</sup> *SC Historical Magazine* 23: 27-28

<sup>6</sup> *Transactions of the Huguenot Society of South Carolina* 57:44-45

## Volunteers Needed and Wanted

There are several projects in the library which we would like to complete, but for which we need volunteer help. Tasks include photocopying newspaper articles; cataloguing Bible records and wills in the files, compiling a database of photographs in the files and entering genealogical information on *The Master Genealogist*. Benefits include learning more about the Society, working with Dot or Cheves and a nearby place to park. Spend as little or as much time as you like. No experience needed. Call Cheves (723-3235) to set up an appointment to find out more.

## Carolina Day Parade



Society members celebrate Carolina Day

### Aspire to Leave a Lasting Legacy

Making a will is an important step in wise stewardship.

Consider making a bequest to the Huguenot Society of South Carolina, to strengthen the legacy you will leave to your family. It could be an outright amount, or a percentage of your residual estate. Any amount is important, and any amount helps build this heritage.



Contact us at (843) 723-3235 if you'd like more information. Let us know if you decide to include the Huguenot Society of South Carolina in your will or estate plans, and we will include you as a member of the **1685 Society** as our way of saying, “Thank you very much.”

# GIFTS FROM THE HUGUENOT SOCIETY OF SOUTH CAROLINA

138 Logan Street  
Charleston, SC 29401  
(843)723-3235 (843)853-8476 (fax)



## PENDANTS

Petite 14 kt. gold cross (7/16" x 1") .....	\$ 100.00
Small 14 kt. gold cross (5/8" x 1 1/8") .....	120.00
Medium 14 kt. gold cross (7/8" x 1 1/2") .....	190.00
Large 14 kt. gold cross (1" x 1 3/4") .....	240.00
Petite sterling silver cross (7/8") .....	40.00
Small sterling silver cross (1 1/8") .....	45.00
Medium sterling silver cross (1 1/2") .....	70.00
Large sterling silver cross (1 3/4") .....	85.00
Blue/White enamel gold-plated cross .....	35.00
Replacement doves	
Large gold .....	60.00
Small gold .....	25.00
Large silver .....	20.00
Small silver .....	10.00



## PINS/LAPEL PINS/TIE TACS/EARRINGS

Sterling silver open-work cross pin .....	37.00
Blue/White enamel gold-plated cross pin (1 1/8") .....	35.00
"Huguenot Society of SC" blue & silver lapel pin .....	30.00
Sterling silver tie tac .....	50.00
Huguenot Rosette, blue and gold .....	12.00
Sterling silver dove earrings (for pierced ears) .....	45.00
14 kt. gold dove earrings (for pierced ears) .....	145.00
Sterling silver cufflinks .....	85.00
14 kt. gold cufflinks (special order only) .....	375.00
Gentleman's sterling silver ring (special order only) .....	190.00
Gentleman's 14 kt. gold ring (special order only) .....	725.00



## ORNAMENTS

1992 Cross/Faith .....	15.00
1993 Mereau/Honor .....	15.00
1994 Church/Worship .....	15.00
1993 Mereau/Honor (sterling silver) .....	25.00
1994 Church/Worship (sterling silver) .....	25.00

## CLOTHING

100% silk tie (navy or red with Huguenot cross pattern) .....	34.50
Tote bag (blue with white cross or black with embroidered cross) .....	12.50
Apron (blue with white cross) .....	12.50
Ladies Silk Scarf (navy, cream, gold) .....	49.50
Blazer emblems (Huguenot cross) .....	29.50

(continued next page)

## GIFTS FROM THE HUGUENOT SOCIETY OF SOUTH CAROLINA

### BOOKS, STATIONERY, ETC.

<i>Baynard: An Ancient Family Bearing Arms</i> by Annie Baynard Simons Hasell .....	\$10.00
<i>Escape Across the Wide Sea</i> by Katherine Kirkpatrick .....	\$17.95
<i>The French Huguenots</i> by Janet Gray .....	\$20.00
<i>From New Babylon to Eden</i> by Bertrand Van Ruymbeke .....	\$49.95
<i>A Golden Christmas</i> by William Gilmore Simms .....	\$16.95
<i>History of the Cuttino Family</i> by G.P. Cuttino .....	\$10.00
<i>The Huguenot Crosses of South Carolina</i> , compiled by Dr. & Mrs. J. Sanders Pike .....	\$2.00
<i>Huguenot Garden</i> by Douglas M. Jones, III .....	\$10.00
<i>Memoirs of Isaac Dumont de Bostaquet</i> by Dianne W. Reisinger .....	\$43.50
<i>Memoirs of the Reverend Jaques Fontaine 1658-1728</i> , ed. by Dianne W. Reisinger .....	\$30.00
<i>Memory and Identity: The Huguenots in France and the Atlantic Diaspora</i> , edited by Bertrand Ruymbeke and Randy Sparks .....	\$34.95
<i>Painter in a Savage Land</i> by Miles Harvey .....	\$27.00
<i>Pierre Gibert, Esq., The Devoted Huguenot</i> by Ann C. Gibert .....	\$15.00
<i>Plantations, Pineland Villages, Pinopolis and Its People</i> by Dr. Norma Sinkler Walsh .....	\$45.00
<i>St. James Santee Plantation Parish</i> by Ann Leland Bridges & Roy Williams .....	\$37.50
<i>Transactions of The Huguenot Society of South Carolina</i> , Vol. 1-21* .....	\$20.00
<i>Transactions of The Huguenot Society of South Carolina</i> , Vol. 22-present* .....	\$10.00
(*There are no copies of Volumes 1, 3-9, 13-23, 34, 44, 50, 51, 68, 70, 72, 74-75, 77-79, 81, 82, 110.)	
<i>Transactions #110 Supplement: The Jean Boyd Map and Letters</i> , Charles Towne .....	\$10.00
Index to the Transactions of The Huguenot Society of South Carolina (Vols. 1-96) .....	\$25.00
<i>Vol. I Records of the Secretary of the Provence, 1675-95</i> , by Susan Bates & Cheves Leland .....	\$24.99
<i>Vol II Records of the Register of the Province, 1675-96</i> , by Susan Bates & Cheves Leland	\$24.99
<i>Vol. III Records of the Surveyor General of the Province, 1678-98</i> , by Susan Bates & Cheves Leland ...	\$26.99
<i>A World Turned Upside Down-The Palmers of South Santee</i> by Louis P. Towles .....	\$20.00
Huguenot Church Organ Music CD .....	\$16.00
HSSC Bookmark (brass with enameled cross) .....	\$12.00
Map of Charles Towne, 1678-1698 by Bates & Leland .....	\$20.00
Map of Charles Towne, 1686 (from Vol. III) by Bates & Leland .....	\$20.00
Huguenot Cross note cards (10 cards and envelopes, specify blue or gold) .....	\$8.00
Cocktail Napkins, white w/blue Huguenot cross (25) .....	\$4.00
Decals, gold cross with blue border (3" x 3 1/2") .....	\$2.00
Cross-Stitch kit (Huguenot cross, includes chart, instructions, DMC floss) .....	\$20.00
"Richmond" commemorative medal .....	\$3.00
1885-By-Laws .....	\$3.00

Please use the order form below and make check payable to **The Huguenot Society of South Carolina**  
The Huguenot Society of South Carolina, 138 Logan Street, Charleston, SC 29401

<b>Name</b> _____				
<b>Address</b> _____				
<b>Description of item(s)</b>	<b>Size (if applicable)</b>	<b>Price</b>	<b>Quantity</b>	<b>Total</b>
<b>Subtotal</b>			_____	
<b>Postage</b>			_____	\$5.00
<b>Total Remitted</b>			_____	