



The Virginia Huguenot Society

An organization of descendants of French Protestants who,
due to religious persecution, fled France.

frenchhuguenots-virginiasociety.org

Fall/Winter 2021 Newsletter

Restoration and Framing of the Painting *Attack on the Huguenots Complete!* *Now on display at the Prescott Library at VMI*

Huzzah! The conservation and framing of the William D. Washington painting "Attack on the Huguenots," has been completed and the work is on public display at the Preston Library at VMI in Lexington, VA. The painting depicts the March 1, 1562, massacre of over 60 Huguenots while attending services in Wassy, France.

This project has been in the works for over three years, from the time Col. Gibson first came to make a presentation to our Society in Gordonsville to a wrap up meeting with Col. Gibson giving a presentation at our Fall meeting on Oct. 30. He gave an informative presentation, complete with slides, outlining the history of the painting with previous owners, the background of the artist, his training and work, and his time at Virginia Military Institute. Col Gibson went on to discuss the excellent composition of the picture showing how Washington used triangulation

and lighting to emphasize the subjects and the theme of the work. Before and after pictures were shown, the difference is amazing.



Be proud of our Society for picking up this project and supplying the necessary funding to see it to this excellent conclusion. Still to be done: Improved lighting, a security barrier, a new plaque as the current one is too small for the size of the frame, and an interpretive sign to explain the context of the painting

& the artist. These final touches should be completed by the end of the year.

We hope to be able to hold our Spring meeting at VMI and to view the work in location. Please hold Saturday March 26, 2022 open and be planning to attend

this exciting meeting. Spend the weekend in Lexington & surrounds, there are many interesting places to visit & sights to see. More on this as it develops.



Dear Fellow Huguenots!

Our Fall Meeting at Tanglewood Ordinary in Maidens, VA, was a great success.

VMI's Col. Keith Gibson was our speaker and he gave a comprehensive report, with slides, regarding the conservation of William Washington's famous painting, "Attack on the Huguenots."

Many facts about the history of the painting were brought to light, and the project is now fully completed, with a period-compatible frame on which is mounted a plaque acknowledging the Virginia Huguenot Society's participation in this most worthwhile endeavor.

The painting is now displayed in a position of prominence at VMI's Preston Library in Lexington, Virginia. We may organize a future meeting in the area for members to have a firsthand look.

Many thanks to Gerald Runyan for his able assistance on the Year Book, and maximum kudos to Constance Paradiso for her diligent and conscientious efforts in putting together our Fall Meeting. David LeGrande has expanded the VHS Library, Ann Darst has kept our accounts straight, and Nancy Agee enables us to keep track of what goes on in Council and Gen-

eral Meetings. These are all important functions for which VHS is most grateful. We now have well over fifty members.

Also, on October 2, I presented the VHS wreath at the opening of the James Monroe Birthplace House in Colonial Beach, VA. Huguenot descendants were a considerable influence in colonial Virginia, and in the spirit of those times and to honor Monroe, it is most fitting that VHS was recognized at the event. In the words of our late Dr. Jackson Darst, "Scratch a Virginian and you'll find a Huguenot."

The following day, "Chandler Fest," our Chandler Williams's 75th birthday party to benefit the Boys Home of Virginia, was held. There were about 300 at the party. Several VHS members were in attendance.

We are looking forward to taking on new projects, and keeping in touch as we approach Thanksgiving and Christmas.

THAN YOU every one for being involved with our Society.

In Huguenot Faith,

Louis

Louis T. March
President

*Save
the
Date*

**Mark your calendar for our next meeting:
Saturday, March 26, 2022
Watch our website for upcoming information!
frenchhuguenots-virginiasociety.org**

Did Someone say *New Project*?

Now the project of restoring "*Attack on the Huguenots*" is complete, our Society is looking for new projects or activities to honor the dedication and sacrifice of our Huguenot forefathers. Any ideas can be considered. Two ideas to help get you started:

- 1) A book or pamphlet that outlines the Huguenot ancestry of the presidents the United States (if they have such ancestry of course). This could be a long term project starting with Washington, or maybe the Huguenot ancestry of the signers of the Declaration of Independence.
- 2) A trip to the French Huguenot Church in Charleston SC for their annual service held in French. This could include a visit to the Huguenot Society of South Carolina & visiting other Huguenot points in Charleston.



You have an idea for a new project or activity that you believe would be of interest to our Society, please contact (name, email). Future activities can be discussed at our Spring Meeting.

What have you been doing the last six months of the Pandemic?

Gerald Runyan's daughter and husband visited him and Bette in August. They spent five days traveling the Shenandoah Valley, seeing the sights, hiking, and eating in some very nice restaurants. Gerald and Bette's daughter resides in Carlton, OR.

Ann Darst has been working hard in preparation for her move to Westminster Canterbury in Richmond. She hopes to be settled in before Christmas. During the move Ann Darst had an old family portrait restored by the Richmond Conservation Studio.

This handsome portrait is of Joseph Wilkins. He is Ann Darst's great, great-grandfather. The portrait hung over the fireplace in Ann's parents home. It is now hanging in Ann's daughter's home in Richmond.

Joseph Wilkins was born in Annapolis, MD on April 7, 1782 and died in Baltimore on July 21, 1850. He is buried in Green Mount Cemetery. Wilkins was a successful merchant in Baltimore and married Mary Cooke Bedford. The oil painting is thought to be by James Hubard though it is not signed. Hubard did one of his daughter that is signed and it is in the same style.

Their daughter, Ellen, married Christopher Quarles Tompkins, who was a Colonel in the CSA. Ellen was quite an author and wrote many books. (Some of her books are for sale on Amazon!). Continuing the family of Wilkins - Christopher Q. Tompkins was the brother of Capt. Sally Tompkins, the only woman to be commissioned Captain by Jefferson Davis. He did so because of her hard work and success of a hospital she operated during the War. There is a Wikipedia article on her if you want more details.



Ann had the painting restored at the Richmond Conservation Studio. Look closely at the frame, it is quite elaborate. The staff at the RCS seemed to be more interested in the frame than the painting!

VHS Fall Meeting Round Up

Our Fall meeting was held on October 30, 2021, at the Tanglewood Ordinary in Maidens, VA. We had a good turnout and the food at Tanglewood is out of this world good. Too much to eat and all served family style. Col. Gibson's presentation was the best program we have had since I have been a member. It was extremely informative and presented in a pleasant manner that held your attention throughout. The slides were clear and added greatly to the spoken presentation. Thank you, Keith Gibson. As you can see by these pictures, a good time was had by all.

~ Gerald Runyan



Council members hard at work usual, planning for the Society's future.



Early arrivals Bobby & Kathryn Edwards enjoy some of the benefits of membership



Fellowship time



Members continue arriving for the pre meeting fellowship



Speaker Col. Keith Gibson and VP Constance Paradiso discuss the program

Almost time to eat! The southern cooking at the Tanglewood is outstanding. . .



Delicious dishes are served family style, no one went hungry!



Col. Gibson gave a wonderful presentation on the W. D. Washington painting "Attack on the Huguenots," covering it's history and that of the artist, the conservation project and the current status of the work.

***Next meeting
March 26, 2022!***

In Memoriam

It is with great sadness that we must report the passing of our oldest member, Lida Overton. Lida was 102 years old. She remained a faithful member even though she had not been able to attend meetings for the past several years. She was a wonderful, gracious lady in the old style which is sorely missed. Expressions of sympathy may be sent to her daughter Ellen Weiss at 71 Lakeside Drive, Newport News, VA 23606. Should you wish to donate to the VHS in her memory please send it to Ann Darst 409 Oaktree Rd. Williamsburg, VA 23188. Make checks payable to the Virginia Huguenot Society & attach a note indicating that the gift is for the memory of Lida. See excerpts from her obituary following:



Lida Archbell Overton, 102, of Newport News, Virginia, passed away Tuesday, November 9, 2021.

Lida was born in Washington, NC, February 24, 1919. She was the daughter of the late Charles Carney Archbell and Belva Agnes Ross Arch-

bell of Aurora, NC. She was a longtime member of St. Andrew's Episcopal Church and Circle #3 of The Women of the Church.

She had a wide range of interests including gardening, propagation of plants and history. For many years after her retirement, she enriched her life, family, and friends by doing extensive genealogy research and compiled a large library of documentation. She was a member of Charles Parish Chapter of National Society Daughters of the American Revolution, serving as Regent for three years; Tidewater Regents Club; Virginia Huguenot Society; Colonial Dames of Seventeenth Century; Tidewater Genealogical Society; United States Daughters of the War of 1812; Daughters of American Colonists, Fort Henry Chapter, VA; and Order of First Families of North Carolina. She also was a past member of Woman's Club of Hilton Village. She led a long, fruitful and healthy life and remained intellectually bright.

She was preceded in death by her husband, Jay B. Overton, son, Joseph A. Overton, and grandson Matthew Weiss. She is survived by many children including fourteen great-grandchildren, and one great-great granddaughter.

A service was held on November 15, 2021, at St. Andrews Episcopal Church in Newport News, VA. In lieu of flowers, contributions may be made to St. Andrew's Episcopal Church, 45 Main Street, Newport News, VA 23601 or to a favorite charity.

Virginia Huguenot Society Website: Great Place for Information!

Visit the VHS website for all things Huguenot!

<http://frenchhuguenots-virginiasociety.org/>

Looking for Books on the History of the Huguenots?

It depends on how specialized you want to get. You could start with general books such as D'Aubigne's *History of the Reformation*; Wylie's *History of Protestantism*; or Schaff's *History of the Christian Church* and focus on the history of France.

A short and readable guide to the Huguenots is Janet Gray's *The French Huguenots: Anatomy of Courage*. There is also O.I.A. Roche's *The Days of the Upright, A History of the Huguenots*. (this one is an excellent primer and very readable.)

The standard work on Huguenots who came to America is Charles Baird's *History of the Huguenot Emigration to America*. There is also *Pioneers of France in the New World* by Francis Parkman and *The French Blood in America* by Lucian J. Fosdick.

Others books of interest:

The French Wars of Religion, 1562-1629 by Mack Holt

The Edict of Nantes, ed. by Richard Goodbar

The Huguenots of London by Robin Gwynn

The Huguenot Galley-Slave: Autobiography of a French Protestant Condemned to the Galleys for the Sake of His Religion by Jean Marteilhe

Memoirs of James Fontaine.

Our Librarian, David LeGrande, has a number of books on the Huguenots in the VHS collection. Contact him at edlegrande@hotmail.com for a list.



This is plate #1 of 40 engravings by Huguenot Jaques LeMoyer, titled: *The arrival of the French in Florida in 1562*. The French are shown exchanging gifts with the friendly natives.

Jacques le Moyne de Morgues (c. 1533–1588) was a French artist and member of Jean Ribault's expedition to the New World. His depictions of Native American life and culture, colonial life, and plants are of extraordinary historical importance. (Credit: the Florida center for Instructional Technology, University of South Florida.)

Other Books of Interest on Virginia Huguenots

Our Historian/Librarian, David LeGrande, has visited the Goochland Historical Society (goochlandhistory.org) in Goochland and has found the following books relating to Huguenots and Huguenot history. Thank you, David, for keeping a sharp eye out for information about the Huguenots!

Huguenot Books in the Goochland Historical Society

1. *Huguenot Refugees in Settling of Colonial America*, Copyright 1985, published by The Huguenot Society of America, NY, NY. First chapter of the book begins with the development of the Reformation in France. The following 14 chapters detail the development of Huguenot settlements in Colonial America. Several authors have focused on the economic motives that prompted many colonists to migrate to North America.

(Continued on page 7)

Insignia of the Huguenot Society

The Huguenot Cross has eight points which stand for the Beatitudes from the Book of Matthew in the New Testament. Between each arm of the cross is a fleur-de-lis or lily, representing purity.

Suspended from the bottom is a dove signifying the Holy Spirit. The Huguenot Cross was designed and first manufactured in 1688.



Fashion that Makes a Statement!



Are you in the market for a new tie? This tie with Huguenot colors is not a Huguenot tie per se; however, shows off our colors very nicely. It can be purchased from Ben Silver & Co. Charleston, SC

(bensilver.com). Use code #U71 Birmingham University. (*Warning: It can be a bit pricey!*)

(Continued from page 6)

2. *Documents Relating to the Huguenot Emigration To Virginia and To The Settlement at Manikintown*, edited and compiled for Virginia Historical Society, originally published 1886, Richmond, VA, Genealogical Publishing Co. 1962: Beginning with proposals submitted by William Byrd to the Lords of Council of Trade and Plantations for sending French Protestants to Virginia. The book continues with distribution of land to Huguenot settlers and details of their lives.
3. *Library of the Huguenot Society of America*, 2nd Edition; compiled by Julia M. Morand; published by Genealogical Publishing Co. Inc. Baltimore, MD, 1971: A collection that has been classified with reference to the emigration and various settlements of the Huguenots and with their regard to their influence upon commercial, religious and social life of the various countries where they found refuge.

There are three more books in their library that David did not have time to review. *Huguenot Emigration to Virginia and to the Settlement of Manikintown*, by R.A. Brock. *Master Index to The Huguenots* and *Index to Vestry Book of King William Parish, Virginia*; editors: Langston James Goree, Janice Curtis Pampell, published: Family History Foundation 1986. *A Brief History of The Huguenots and Three Family Trees, Chastain, Lockridge and Stockton*; by James Garvin Chastain DD, published 1933.

There are many books in our library on the history of the Huguenots. Please contact David LeGrande if you wish to check out any books. edlegrande@hotmail.com or 804-739-3785





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