

Huguenot Research in the Channel Islands.

Because of their geographical situation near France, yet their political situation as possessions of the English Crown, the islands of Jersey, Guernsey, Alderney and Sark were a useful stopping-off point and place of refuge for Huguenot refugees fleeing France from the 16th to the 18th centuries. The islands were French-speaking and Protestant, which made them even more inviting to refugees. Many refugees who had been forced to abjure their Protestant religion in France, made a *reconnaissance* (a recognition of their fault) once they had reached a place of refuge. These are recorded in the Ecclesiastical Court records of the islands.

There are two basic texts to assist researchers in Channel Island Huguenot family history:

M. L. Backhurst *Tracing Your Channel Island Ancestors. A Guide for Family Historians* (Pen & Sword Family History, Barnsley, 2011)

R.J. Nash (ed.) *A Directory of Huguenot Refugees on the Channel Islands, 1548-1825* (Vol. 63 of Quarto Series of the Huguenot Society of Great Britain and Ireland, London, 2020) available from HSGB on huguenotsociety.org.uk/publications

Jersey

Research in Jersey is fairly straightforward since documents are centralised in the Jersey Archives and church records are online at ancestry.com.

Jersey Heritage website www.jerseyheritage.org has the Channel Island Family History Society transcripts of Jersey parish records. These record baptisms, marriages and burials, parish by parish, according to family names (alphabetically). This means you can look up a family name in a certain parish and then find out the specific events you wish to research. However, you have to subscribe in order to view the transcripts. You can find them on catalogue.jerseyheritage.org/church-records

Then you can go to ancestry.com to view the actual parish registers in the collection *Jersey CofE Baptisms, Marriages and Burials, 1540-1812*.

The Jersey archives (in St Helier) have records of Jersey wills, and also *reconnaissances* and abjurations in the Ecclesiastical Court records. jerseyheritage.org/visit/places-to-visit/jersey-archive Wills are also available online on the Jersey Heritage website.

The Channel Island History Family History Society is an invaluable source of assistance. Their website is jerseyfamilyhistory.org

Guernsey

Guernsey research is a little more time-consuming since not all documentation is in the Guernsey Archives, and no records are online at present, although there are plans to begin digitisation in 2024.

Microfilms of all Guernsey parish records are available to be viewed at the Priaulx Library in St Peter Port. Their website is www.priaulxlibrary.co.uk/collections/family-history They will do look-ups for people who cannot visit Guernsey, but you have to pay a fee. There are also indexes of all the parish records in that library.

Guernsey Archives in St Peter Port gov.gg/islandarchives has the wills upto 1704, and the Ecclesiastical Court records from 1686 to 1704, which include the *reconnaissances* and abjurations.

The Office of the Greffe in St Peter Port guernseyroyalcourt/article/1654/Greffe has the wills 1704-1762, and records of the Ecclesiastical Court from 1704-1750. These are not available online, but if you locate a specific record in Nash (see above) they will photocopy it for you, for a fee.

The Family History section of the *Société Guernesiaise* is a very useful source of assistance. Their website is <http://societe.org.gg/wp/family-history>

Alderney and Sark

These two smaller islands are part of the Bailiwick of Guernsey, so genealogical records for them are available at the Priaulx Library in Guernsey, or at the Guernsey Greffe (see above). There are also chapters on them in Backhurst (see above.)