

France

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INTRODUCTION

This outline introduces you to the records you can use to discover your French ancestors. It describes the content, use, and availability of major genealogical records. Use this outline to set meaningful goals and to select the records that will help you achieve those goals.

Generally, *you must know the specific town where your French ancestor was born* before beginning research in France. Occasionally you may be able to

determine the town or general area of origin through French or other European sources.

You will need some basic understanding of genealogical research procedures. The video orientation program and the accompanying booklet, *Guide to Research* (30971), may be helpful. These are available at the Family History Library and at Family History Centers™.

Opportunities for genealogical research in France are good because many valuable records have been preserved. However, vital records of the last hundred years are restricted from public use. Beyond the last hundred years, you may search the records yourself or hire a genealogist.

Using This Outline

The “French Search Strategies” section of this outline explains how to effectively research your family history. This section is particularly valuable if you are just beginning your research.

The “Record Selection Table” on page 7 helps you select records to search. “Records at the Family History Library,” describes the library's French collection. The “Family History Library Catalog” section explains how to use the library's catalog to find specific records in the library's collection.

Beginning on page 9 the outline discusses, in alphabetical order, the major records used for French research, such as “Church Records” and “Civil Registration.” The names of these sections are the same as the subject headings used in the Family History Library Catalog.

Related records and concepts are grouped together under the same heading. For example, in the “Emigration and Immigration” section, you will find information about—

- The history of emigration from France.
- Passenger lists.
- Records of French emigrants in their destination nations.

In this outline, French-language terms are frequently given in brackets and italics after the English terms (for example, baptisms [*baptêmes*]). English translations, in parentheses, follow French-language book, microfilm, or microfiche titles. French spellings are used for French place-names: for example, *Savoie* instead of *Savoy* and *Corse* instead of *Corsica*.

Header

This outline does not mention all possible genealogical record sources. At the end of the outline, you will find a brief list of additional subject headings under “Other Records,” and a short bibliography of sources, “For Further Reading.” To find information about French people who emigrated, use the library's research outline for the nation where they settled and the *Tracing Immigrant Origins Research Outline* (34111).

FRENCH SEARCH STRATEGIES

Step 1. Identify What You Know about Your Family

Begin your research with family and home sources. Look for names, dates, and places in certificates, passports, letters, identity cards, family civil registration booklets [*livrets de famille*], photos, obituaries, diaries, family Bibles, and similar sources. Ask your relatives for any additional information. It's very likely that your second cousin, great-aunt, or other relative already has some family information. Organize the information you find and record it on pedigree charts and family group record forms.

To find out all you can about your ancestor, first check all sources in the area your ancestor immigrated to. Then check records in the area your ancestor came from. Going from the known to the unknown is easier, and you are likely to have more success.

Step 2. Decide What You Want to Learn

Select a specific relative or ancestor, born in France, *for whom you know at least a name, the town where he or she lived, and an approximate date when he or she lived there*. It's also very helpful to know the names of other family members born in France. For records prior to 1792, it also helps to know a person's religion.

If you don't have enough information on your French ancestor, review the sources mentioned in step one to find a birthplace or residence. For further suggestions on how to find a birthplace, see the “Emigration and Immigration” section of this outline. The library's *Tracing Immigrant Origins Research Outline* (34111) may also help.

Next, decide what you need to learn about your ancestor, such as the place and date of marriage or the names of parents. You may need to ask an experienced researcher or a librarian to help you select a goal that you can achieve.

Step 3. Select a Record to Search

Read this outline to learn about the types of records used for French research. To trace your family, you may need to use some of the records described in each section. This outline describes the content, availability, ease of use, time period covered, and reliability of the records. It can help you determine the likelihood that your ancestor is listed in a record. The table on page 7 can also help you decide which records to search.

Effective researchers look first for background information. Then they survey previous research. Finally, they search original documents.

Background Information Sources. You may need geographical and historical information. This can help you find the correct place and time period to research.

- *Locate the town or place of residence.* Examine gazetteers, maps, and other place-finding aids to learn as much as you can about each of the places where your ancestors lived. Identify the major migration routes, nearby cities, department boundaries, other geographical features, and government or ecclesiastical jurisdictions. Place-finding aids are described in the “Maps” and “Gazetteers” sections of this outline.
- *Review local history.* France's history has greatly affected the development of records used in genealogical research. If possible, study a history of the areas where your ancestors lived. Look for clues about the people, places, religions, and events that may have affected them and the records about them. Records with information about migration and settlement patterns, government jurisdictions, and historical events are described in the “Church History” and “Minorities” sections of this outline.
- *Learn about French jurisdictions.* Learn how France is divided into areas called departments, arrondissements, cantons, communes, and, before 1789, provinces. See the “Historical Geography” section of this outline.
- *Use language helps.* The records and histories of French places are usually written in French. A few are written in Latin, German, or Italian. It is not necessary to speak or read these languages to search the records, but you will need to learn some key words and phrases. Some helpful sources are described in the “Language and Languages” section of this outline.
- *Understand naming patterns.* A few families in France followed distinct naming patterns. Understanding these customs can help you locate missing ancestors. See the “Names, Personal” section of this outline for more information.

Previous Research Sources. Most genealogists do a survey of research previously done by others. This can save time and provide valuable information. You may want to look for—

- The International Genealogical Index®.
- Ancestral File™.
- The Family Group Records Collections.
- Printed family histories and genealogies.
- Local genealogical society periodicals, particularly lists of families or subjects each society member is researching.

Some records that contain previous research are described in the “Genealogy,” “Periodicals,” and “Societies” sections of this outline. Remember that the information in these sources may be inaccurate. Verify the information you find in such records with other records.

Original Research Sources. After surveying previous research, you will be ready to begin original research. Original research is the process of searching through original documents. These documents are usually handwritten in the native language. Often you will search microfilmed copies of the original. These documents give primary information about your family—information usually recorded during an event or soon after by a reliable witness. To be thorough, you should search records of—

- Each place where your ancestor lived.
- The time period in which your ancestor lived in each particular place.

Many types of original documents are described in this outline. For research in France, most family information is found in these kinds of records—

- Civil Registration.
- Church Records.
- Notarial Records.

When you know the record type you want, look for it in the Family History Library Catalog.

Step 4. Find and Search the Record

Suggestions for Obtaining Records. You may be able to obtain the records you need in the following ways:

- **Family History Library.** You are welcome to use the records at the Family History Library. The library is open to the public. There are no fees for using the records. If you would like more information about its services, contact the library at the following address:

Family History Library
35 North West Temple Street
Salt Lake City, UT 84150

- **Family History Centers.** Copies of most of the records on microform at the Family History Library can be loaned to more than 2,000 Family History Centers. There are small duplication and postage fees for this service.

The library's books cannot be loaned to the centers, but copies of many books not protected by copyright are available on microfilm or microfiche. You can get a list of the Family History Centers near you by writing to the Family History Library at the address above.
- **Town registrars.** Most of the original documents you will need are at the civil registration office [*bureau de l'état civil*], which is usually located in the local town hall [*mairie*]. The Family History Library has many records on microfilm, but some records are available only at the civil registration office. You can write to request one or two hand-copied certificates from registrars, but they will not send you original documents or do research for you. (See the “Archives and Libraries” section of this outline for more information.) Complete instructions on writing to France and preparing a genealogical letter in French are in the library's *French Letter-Writing Guide* (34059).
- **Professional researchers.** You can employ a private researcher to search the records for you. Some researchers specialize in French records. Lists of qualified professional researchers are available from the Family History Library. A list of researchers in France who are approved by the Council of Genealogists [*Chambre syndicale des généalogistes*] can be found on the last page of each issue of the *Gé[néalogie] Magazine* (Genealogy Magazine). Other researchers advertise on the last few pages of *La revue française de généalogie* (French Genealogical Review). See the “Periodicals” section for further details.
- **Photocopies.** The Family History Library offers limited photoduplication services for a small fee. You must specify the exact pages you need. Books protected by copyright cannot be copied in their entirety. However, a few pages can usually be copied for personal research. In France, photocopying vital records is illegal.

Correspondence. When requesting information by mail from town halls, archives, or professional researchers, you are more likely to be successful if

French Search Strategies

your letter is brief and very specific. Enclose a self-addressed, stamped envelope when writing to someone within your own nation. When you write to people in other nations, enclose at least three international reply coupons (available from large post offices).

Your letter should include the following information:

- Full name and the sex of the person sought.
- Names of the person's parents or spouse, if known.
- The event you wish to document (such as birth, marriage, death) and its approximate date and specific place.
- Your relationship to the person.
- Reason for the request (such as family history).

See the library's *French Letter-Writing Guide* (34059) for details.

Suggestions for Searching the Records. You will be most successful with French research if you can examine the original records (or microfilm of the original). Any transcription or translation may be less accurate than the original records.

As you search the records for your ancestor—

- *Search for one generation at a time.* Do not attempt to connect your family to others of the same surname who lived more than a generation before your proven ancestor. It is much easier to prove parentage than descent.
- *Search for the ancestor's entire family.* The records of each person in a family may provide clues for identifying other family members. In most families, children were born at regular intervals. If there appears to be a longer period between some children, reexamine the records for a child who may have been overlooked. Consider looking at other records and in other places to find a missing family member. Records for the first child born to a couple are often found in the place where the maternal grandparents lived.
- *Search each source thoroughly.* A minor detail on the record you are searching may lead you to another person or to trace the family further. Note the occupation of your ancestor and the names of witnesses, godparents, neighbors, relatives, guardians, and others. Also, note the places they are from.
- *Search a broad time period.* Dates obtained from some sources may not be accurate. Look several years before and after the date that you think an event, such as a birth, occurred.

- *Look for indexes.* Many records have indexes. However, many indexes are incomplete. They may include only the name of the specific person the record is about. They usually do not include parents, witnesses, or other incidental persons. Also, the original records may have been misinterpreted, or names may have been omitted during indexing. Some pages may have been missed during microfilming.
- *Search for previous residences.* Information about previous residences is crucial to continued successful research.
- *Watch for spelling variations.* Look for the many ways a name could have been spelled. Spelling was not standardized when most early records were made. You may find a name spelled differently than it is today.
- *Watch for name translations.* In some nations a surname may have been translated. For example, a person named Miller (wheat grinder) may be called *Meunier* (in French) or *Molitor* (in Latin).

Record Your Searches and Findings. Copy the information you find and keep detailed notes about each record you search. These notes should include the author, title, location, call numbers, description, and results of your search. Most researchers use a "Research Log" (31825) for this purpose. Making photocopies of the information, including the title page, may save you a lot of time and prevent possible errors.

Step 5. Use the Information

Evaluate the Information You Find. Carefully evaluate whether the information you find is complete and accurate. Ask yourself these questions:

- Who provided the information? Did that person witness the event?
- Was the information recorded near the time of the event, or was it recorded later? How much later?
- Was the handwritten information interpreted accurately?
- Is the information consistent and logical?
- Does the new information verify the information found in other sources? Does it differ from information in other sources?
- Does it suggest other places, time periods, or records to search?

Share Your Information with Others. Your family's history can become a source of enjoyment and education for yourself and your family. Contributing your information to Ancestral File™ is a good way to

share your information (see page 5). In addition, you may want to compile your findings into a family history. You can then share copies of your history with family members, the Family History Library, and other archives.

If you are a member of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, be sure to submit information about your ancestors so that temple ordinances can be done for them. Your ward family history consultant or a staff member at the Family History Library or your family history center can assist you. You can also use the booklet *Member's Guide to Temple and Family History Work* (34697), which is available through Church distribution centers.

RECORDS AT THE FAMILY HISTORY LIBRARY

Microform Records

The Family History Library has more than 100,000 microfilms and microfiche that contain information about people who have lived in France. Most of the library's records have been obtained through an extensive acquisition program. The library has microform copies of records found in government archives, church archives, and private collections. These records include—

- Birth, marriage, and death records from churches and civil officials.
- Passport applications, border crossings, and a few passenger lists.
- Notarial records.
- Private collections.
- Genealogies.

The library has collected many French records from the Alsace-Lorraine area bordering Germany, northern France, Normandie, Ile de France, and Languedoc. Many additional areas are being microfilmed. However, the library does not have records for every department in France. There are, for example, few records from the old provinces of Auvergne or Pyrénées.

Printed Records

The library has a collection of books and printed materials helpful for French research. Copies of some of these books are available in microform. The collection includes—

- Archive inventories.
- Atlases and maps.

- Family histories.
- Gazetteers.
- Handbooks and manuals.
- Indexes prepared by local societies.
- Periodicals.
- Private collections.
- Telephone directories.

FAMILYSEARCH®

FamilySearch is a powerful computer system that simplifies family history work. The FamilySearch system includes computer files of family history information. The files are gathered from many different sources, and more files will be added in the future.

When you select a file in FamilySearch and type in a name, the computer will search the file for any names that match. The computer even matches last names that are spelled differently but sound the same. It can guide users from the matches they find to full screens of information, including dates and places of birth, marriage, and death, as well as names of parents, children, and spouses.

FamilySearch is available at the Family History Library in Salt Lake City; at hundreds of family history centers; and at some public and private libraries in the United States, Canada, and other countries.

These FamilySearch files are useful for French research:

- *Ancestral File™*. Ancestral File contains family history information gathered from family group sheets and pedigrees that have been contributed since 1979. The file already contains millions of names. You may contribute your family history information to Ancestral File. For more information, see the library publication *Contributing Information to Ancestral File* (34029), which is available at the Family History Library and through family history centers.
- *Family History Library Catalog™*. The Family History Library Catalog on FamilySearch is an automated edition of the Family History Library's catalog. The automated edition simplifies use of the catalog. It allows you to quickly find information about records held by the library, including library call numbers.
- *International Genealogical Index®*. The International Genealogical Index provides the names and vital information—including birth,

christening, and marriage dates on more than 3.4 million deceased people who lived in France. The index includes names extracted by volunteers from parish registers and civil registrations and names submitted by other researchers.

- *Social Security Death Index.* The Social Security Death Index lists all the people in the United States who had social security numbers and who died between 1962 and 1988. The index can lead to other social security records that may provide your ancestor's birthplace in France.

Other files will be added to FamilySearch as they become available.

THE FAMILY HISTORY LIBRARY CATALOG

The key to finding a record in the Family History Library's collection is the Family History Library Catalog. The catalog describes each of the library's records and provides the call numbers. The catalog is available on microfiche and on compact disc as part of FamilySearch. It is available at the Family History Library and at each family history center.

The Family History Library Catalog on microfiche is divided into four major sections:

- Locality
- Surname
- Subject
- Author/Title

The Family History Library Catalog on compact disc has four types of searches:

- Locality Search
- Surname Search
- Film Number Search
- Computer Number Search

To find the call numbers of the records described in this outline, you will most often search the Locality section on microfiche or the Locality search on compact disc. When you know the record type you want (such as "church records" or "civil registration"), then you can look for it in the Locality section.

The catalog's description of a record is written in the same language as the record itself. A brief English summary of the content is included.

The Locality section or Locality Search lists records according to the area they cover. Records relating to the entire nation, such as nobility lists, are listed under "France." Most records (including records from old provinces) are listed under a specific department [*département*] or city.

For example, in the Locality section, look for—

- The *place* where an ancestor lived, such as—

EUROPE (continent)

FRANCE (nation)

FRANCE, RHONE (nation, department)

FRANCE, RHONE, LYON (nation, department, city)

- Then the *record type* you want, such as—

EUROPE - **NOBILITY**

FRANCE - **HISTORY**

FRANCE, RHONE - **GENEALOGY**

FRANCE, RHONE, LYON - **CHURCH RECORDS**

The catalog is organized by the department structure that existed before 1965. When the pre-1789 provinces are listed in the Family History Library Catalog, they are labeled regions, for example, **FRANCE, ALSACE (REGION) - MINORITIES**. For additional information, see the "Gazetteers," "Historical Geography," "History," and "Map" sections of this outline.

This outline also provides some of the library's call numbers. These are preceded by FHL, the abbreviation for Family History Library.

If you need more information on using the Family History Library Catalog, a short video program, written instructions, and librarians are available to help you.

Italian Records Listed under France

Genoa (now part of Italy) sold the island of Corse to France in 1768. France controlled the Duchy of Savoie and County of Nice from 1792 to 1814 and permanently after 1860. The Locality section of the Family History Library Catalog lists all records from Corse, Savoie, and Nice under their respective departments in France, for example, FRANCE, ALPES-MARITIMES, NICE.

French Records Listed under Other Nations

Alsace-Lorraine. The Family History Library Catalog lists records of Alsace-Lorraine (Bas-Rhin, Haut-Rhin, and Moselle) under both France and Germany for localities that were formerly claimed by Germany. For example, records from the town of Oudrenne (Udern) appear under both—

FRANCE, MOSELLE, OUDRENNE

and

GERMANY, ELSAß-LOTHRINGEN, UDERN

Overseas Areas. Records for independent overseas areas, such as Algeria, New Caledonia, and Guadeloupe, are listed under their own names in the Family History Library Catalog.

RECORD SELECTION TABLE: FRANCE

This table can help you decide which records to search.

In column 1, find what you need to know (your goal).

In column 2, find the types of records that are most likely to have the information you need. Then turn to that section of this outline.

In column 3, find additional records that may be useful.

When you know the record type you need, look for it in the Family History Library Catalog in the Locality section.

Records containing previous research (genealogy, biography, history, periodicals, and societies) could provide information for almost every category listed. These have not been included in the list unless they are especially helpful for the goal.

1. If You Need	2. Look First In	3. Then Search
Age	Civil Registration, Church Records, Notarial Records, Schools	Naturalization and Citizenship, Emigration and Immigration
Birth date and birthplace	Civil Registration, Church Records, Notarial Records, Jewish Records	Census, Military Records, Cemeteries, Biography
City or parish of foreign birth	Naturalization and Citizenship	Emigration and Immigration
Boundaries (province, canton, arrondissement, department)	Gazetteers, Maps, History	Historical Geography, Church History
Death	Civil Registration, Church Records, Notarial Records, Jewish Records	Cemeteries, Probate Records, Biography
Emigration information	Emigration and Immigration	Societies, Minorities
Historical background	History, Church History	Maps, Minorities
Language helps	Language and Languages	-
Living relatives	Directories, Genealogy	Societies, Periodicals
Maiden name	Civil Registration, Church Records	Notarial Records
Marriage	Civil Registration, Church Records	Notarial Records, Biography
Naming Customs	Names (Personal)	Genealogy, Periodicals
Occupations	Directories, Church Records, Census	Emigration and Immigration, Military Records
Parents, children, and other family members	Civil Registration, Church Records, Genealogy, Societies, Nobility	Probate Records, Notarial Records, Heraldry, Biography
Physical description	Military Records, Biography	Emigration and Immigration
Place-finding aids	Gazetteers, Maps	Historical Geography
Place of residence	Civil Registration, Directories, Emigration and Immigration	Census, Voting Registers, Schools, Taxation
Previous research (compiled genealogy)	Genealogy, Periodicals, Societies, Church History	Biography, History, Nobility, Heraldry, Minorities
Record-finding aids	Archives and Libraries, Church History	Societies, Periodicals, Minorities
Religion	Civil Registration, Church Records	Minorities, Cemeteries

Map: Old Provinces to 1789 and Departments to 1965

ARCHIVES AND LIBRARIES

Archives collect and preserve original documents of organizations. These documents include government and church records. Libraries normally collect published sources such as books, maps, and microfilms. This section describes the major repositories of genealogical and historical records and sources for France. When one of these institutions is referred to elsewhere in this outline, return to this section to obtain the address.

If you plan to visit one of these repositories, contact the organization and ask for information about their collection, hours, services, and fees.

Although the records you need may be in an archive or library in France, the Family History Library has filmed over half of the vital records of France. A microfilm copy may be available in Salt Lake City or in its family history centers.

France has three major types of genealogical repositories:

- Departmental archives
- Town registrars
- Other libraries, networks, and archives

Departmental Archives

In France each department has its own archive [*Archives départementales*] that is separate from those of the national government. Most French records of genealogical value are kept at these archives. The departmental archives serve as repositories for local records. Their collections include—

- Civil registration birth, marriage, and death records.
- Church records (before 1792).
- Census records.
- Some notarial records.
- Military conscription records.

The departmental archives of France are open to the public. They are usually located in the largest town of the department. The archivists or staff members will answer general correspondence inquiries, such as those about the availability of records, but they do not have time to do research for you. They do not make photocopies of records. All departmental archives have a reading room in which researchers can do their own research. You may want to hire a researcher through a nearby genealogical society to search records at the departmental archives. See the “Societies” section of this outline.

Copies of civil registers that are more than 100 years old are deposited at the departmental archives, except in extremely large towns, which have their own municipal archives.

Inventories, Registers, Catalogs. Most departmental archives have inventories and guides that describe their collections. If possible, study these inventories or guides before you visit an archive so that you can use your time more effectively. A bibliography of inventories and guides from each department is included in—

France. Direction des Archives. *État des inventaires des archives départementales, communales et hospitalières au 1er janvier 1983* (Report on archive inventories of departments, communities, and hospitals) 2 vols. Paris: Archives nationales, 1984. (FHL book 944 A3fan 1984; not on microfilm.)

Some of these inventories and guides are available at the Family History Library, at public or university libraries, or through interlibrary loan. These types of records are listed in the Locality section of the Family History Library Catalog under—

FRANCE - ARCHIVES AND LIBRARIES
FRANCE - ARCHIVES AND LIBRARIES -
INVENTORIES, REGISTERS, CATALOGS
FRANCE, [DEPARTMENT] - ARCHIVES AND
LIBRARIES - INVENTORIES, REGISTERS,
CATALOGS

More recent inventories may be available only at the departmental archives where the collection is continually updated. The archive inventories, however, are not always up to date. The person in charge of the reading room usually knows of records that may have been found recently. Inquire about other available civil or parish register collections not listed in the inventories.

A directory of French departmental archive addresses is found on pages 157-60 of the *International Directory of Archives*. (See a description of the directory at the end of this section, on page 11.)

Town Registrars

Original local records of births, marriages, and deaths created by a town registrar from 1792 to the present are usually found at the civil registration office [*bureau de l'état civil*] in the town hall [*mairie*]. However, the most recent hundred years are confidential. Birth and marriage certificates will be issued only to direct-line descendants who submit a written request. Obtaining death certificates for people who have died within the last hundred years is usually not a problem.

Archives and Libraries

First check the Family History Library Catalog for records that may already be microfilmed. If they are not at the library, your options are to visit the town, hire a researcher, or write.

Clerks at local civil registration offices are busy and are increasingly reluctant to help family history researchers. Clerks usually deposit duplicates of records before the last hundred years at the departmental archive. They expect researchers to use the departmental archive whenever possible. If you cannot visit, you may want to hire a researcher through a nearby genealogical society to search the records for you. See the "Societies" section of this outline.

See the library's *French Letter-Writing Guide* (34059) for details about writing to the civil registration office for certificates. Limit requests to registrars to one or two certificates.

Other Libraries, Networks, and Archives

Genealogical Library

The Genealogical Library [*Bibliothèque généalogique*] in Paris has a name index, genealogical books, and genealogical periodicals from all parts of France. There is a correspondence service that has a limit of three requests per letter (20 francs per request) plus costs for photocopies and postage. Instructional classes for the beginner are also offered. The first visit at this library is free; thereafter a yearly membership fee of 220 French francs is required.

Bibliothèque généalogique
3 rue de Turbigo
75001 Paris
FRANCE

Computer Networks

Minitel is a French on-line computer network service connected by telephone lines. *Minitel* includes several databases and services of interest to family history researchers. Researchers around the world who have personal computers, *Minitel* software (which is free), and a modem can gain access. Users are charged a fee based on their connect time. The service is available twenty-four hours a day.

Minitel includes French telephone directories (searched department by department or by city), a computer mailbox, lists of genealogical societies, marriage indexes, advice and addresses useful for genealogists, and other services. Their computer query file is a compiled source and relies on the opinions of the people who answer. Wherever possible, the answers found in a computer query file should be verified using original records.

French genealogical periodicals give additional information about *Minitel*'s databases and about other services useful to genealogists.

The Minitel address in the United States is—

Minitel Services Company
888 7th Ave 28th Floor
New York, NY 10106-1301
USA

Telephone 212-399-0080
Fax 212-399-0129

Minitel will mail you free information and a diskette for installing the software on your computer. The software and the installation are free. The charges will be made to your American Express, MasterCard, or Visa™ bank card number, which you provide when you sign up for the program.

Several American computer networks also have genealogical bulletin boards. These allow researchers to make genealogical queries that may be answered by other network users. Elsewhere in the same network, specialists can give brief answers to genealogical reference questions. The networks that offer this service include—

- America Online.
- CompuServe.
- GENie.
- Prodigy.

Public Library of Information

In Paris, the Public Library of Information [*Bibliothèque publique d'information*] has a collection of 300,000 volumes and 2,400 periodicals. Genealogy is well represented. This is a self-service library, and there is no entry fee. The library is closed on Tuesdays.

Géopatronyme is a computerized surname file available in the Public Library of Information. It maps the departments of France where a particular surname is found and the frequency of that surname. The search is free. Following a search on *Géopatronyme*, you can make a *Minitel* search in the telephone directories to obtain specific names and addresses in a given department. The Public Library of Information will not answer research requests by mail. The address for visitors is—

Bibliothèque publique d'information
Centre Georges Pompidou
rue Saint-Martin
Paris, France

Miscellaneous Archives and Libraries

The following archives and libraries have collections or services that are helpful to genealogical researchers. They do not have the staff to answer research requests by mail, only questions about hours and services.

Les Archives d'Outre-Mer (Overseas Archives)
29 Chemin du Moulin de Testas
13090 Aix en Provence
FRANCE

Bibliothèque Nationale (National Library)
58 rue de Richelieu
75084 Paris Cedex 02
FRANCE

Archives Militaires (Military Archives)
Château de Vincennes
94304 Vincennes Cedex
FRANCE

Archives Nationales (National Archives)
11, rue des Quatre-Fils
75141 Paris 3e
FRANCE

Archives des Affaires étrangères (Foreign Affairs Archives)
5 et 6 boulevard Louis-Barthou
B.P. 1056
44035 Nantes Cedex
FRANCE

Municipal Libraries. There are 163 towns with municipal libraries listed on pages 160-70 of the *International Directory of Archives* (listed next).

Directory of Archives

The following directory contains addresses of many important French archives:

International Council on Archives. *International Directory of Archives = Annuaire international des archives*. München; London; New York; Paris: Saur, 1992. Archivum; vol. 38. (FHL book 020.5 Ar25 v. 38; not on microfilm.) Text in French.

BIOGRAPHY

A biography is a history of a person's life. In a biography you may find an individual's birth, marriage, and death information and the names of his parents, children, or other family members. Use the information given in biographies carefully

because there may be inaccuracies. There are many biographical sources for France, but typically they are about the most notable people.

Thousands of brief biographies have been gathered and published in collective biographies, sometimes called biographical encyclopedias or dictionaries. Usually these include only biographies of prominent or well-known citizens of France. Some feature biographies of specific groups of people, such as artists, military officers, or Protestant leaders.

A significant biographical dictionary follows. Its articles about individuals run from a few lines to several pages:

Nouvelle biographie générale depuis les temps les plus reculés jusqu'à 1850-1860 (New biographical dictionary, early to 1860). Paris: Firmin Didot, 1853-1866. Reprint. Copenhagen: Rosenkilde et Bagger, 1963. (FHL book 920 N855n; not on microfilm.) Worldwide coverage.

There is also a major collection of French biographies:

Archives biographiques françaises (French biographical archives). New York: K.G. Saur, 1988-1989. (FHL fiche 6002178.) This set of 1073 microfiche may not be circulated to family history centers. It lists 140,000 pre-1914 individuals from 180 biographical works. It includes people from Switzerland, Belgium, Luxembourg, Quebec, and many French colonies. An index to these biographies is in the following book:

Dwyer, Helen, and Barry Dwyer. *Index Biographique Français* (French biographical index). 4 vols. London: K.G. Saur, 1993. (FHL book 944 D32i; not on microfilm.) Includes 40,000 cross-references. Citations include birth and death years, occupation, biographical source, microfiche, and frame number.

The following is an important bibliography of French biography:

Fierro, Alfred. *Bibliographie analytique des biographies collectives imprimées de la France contemporaine, 1789-1985* (Bibliography of collected biographies for modern France). Genève: Slatkine, 1986. (FHL book 944 D33f; not on microfilm.) This annotated bibliography cites 2,513 collected biographies. It is divided into general biographies, professional groups, and locality biographies. It also includes an author and title index.

Collective biographies at the Family History Library are generally listed in the Locality section of the Family History Library Catalog under one of the following:

FRANCE - BIOGRAPHY
FRANCE, [DEPARTMENT] - BIOGRAPHY
FRANCE, [DEPARTMENT], [TOWN] -
BIOGRAPHY

CEMETERIES

In France, tombstones with inscriptions can be found from as early as the 18th century. The inscriptions may apply to entire families, because members of the same family may be buried in the same grave in layers for several generations. Family inscriptions are especially common for the recent 20th century. Some older French graves have been replaced by new graves with recently deceased persons and new tombstones.

Cemetery records may include the name of the deceased, age, birth date, death date, and sometimes marriage information. They may also provide clues about military service, occupation, place of residence at time of death, or membership in an organization, such as a lodge. It is illegal to photograph French tombstones without permission of the cemetery keeper.

Cemetery files are usually kept at the town hall. The cemetery keeper at the entrance to a cemetery may have alphabetical files with detailed information and relationships.

A Jewish or German cemetery may be adjacent to but separated from the Catholic cemetery.

Few cemetery records or tombstone transcriptions from France have been published. Some are listed in the Locality section of the Family History Library Catalog under—

FRANCE - CEMETERIES
FRANCE, [DEPARTMENT] - CEMETERIES
FRANCE, [DEPARTMENT], [TOWN] -
CEMETERIES

CENSUS

A census is a count and description of a population. Censuses have been taken by the government of France, by individual towns, and by some old provinces. These have been taken primarily for military purposes, taxation, or identification of the poor.

French national censuses have not been microfilmed and are seldom used for genealogical research. Unlike the censuses of the United States, Canada, or Great Britain, they cannot be easily used to locate families. Because French censuses are not indexed, it is not

easy to find a name in them. Church records and indexed civil registration are better sources.

The first national census listing names in France was taken in the year 1772. Most national censuses from 1795 to 1836 show only statistics without personal names. From 1836 until 1936, a national census was taken every five years except for 1871 (which was taken in 1872) and 1916 (which was skipped).

Census records less than one hundred years old are confidential and may not be searched by individuals. However, some archivists are not strict with this rule and may allow access to census records up to the last 30 years.

Some earlier censuses may have been destroyed because of an 1887 decree, but this law was not applied everywhere. Early town and provincial censuses usually covered a smaller portion of the local population.

Census records do not consistently give the same information, but after 1836 they usually give the surname and given names, age, occupation, head of house, nationality, and sometimes the birthplace. Use the information with caution, however, since the information may have been given to a census taker by any member of the family or a neighbor. Some information may have been incorrect or deliberately falsified.

National censuses are usually found in the departmental archives. They are not microfilmed by the Family History Library. The early local census records (tax records) of a few towns have been published or microfilmed and are available at the Family History Library. These are listed in the Family History Library Catalog under FRANCE, [DEPARTMENT], [TOWN] - CENSUS.

For more details about French censuses see page 81 of *Guide des recherches sur l'histoire des familles*, listed in the "For Further Reading" section of this outline.

CHURCH HISTORY

Research procedures and genealogical sources are different for each religion. It is helpful to understand the historical events that led to the creation of records, such as parish registers, which may list your family.

In France most people have been Roman Catholics but a few other religions have existed for many centuries, namely the Huguenots, Waldensians, and Mennonites.

Roman Catholics

Roman Catholicism has been the predominant faith of France since the 6th century. However, several reform movements gained footholds in France, especially among people in Alsace-Lorraine and in Montbéliard, near Germany and Switzerland.

Protestants (Huguenots)

Beginning in 1541 some of the people of France accepted the teachings of John Calvin. Religious wars with the Roman Catholics began as early as 1562 and resulted in turmoil throughout France.

The first large migration of French Protestants (Huguenots) began after the St. Bartholomew's Day Massacre in 1572. In 1598 the Edict of Nantes granted religious freedom. Many Protestant records date from that year. They are arranged by town or province, depending on the denomination. But this religious freedom did not last and the peace was punctuated with occasional clashes. In 1685 the revocation of the Edict of Nantes removed all religious freedom and caused Protestants to flee by the thousands to foreign nations. Many Protestant records were destroyed.

The Protestants who could not leave France became Catholics, renounced Protestantism, and had their children baptized in the Catholic church. Converted Protestants are listed in Catholic records, especially after 1685. Some of these "converts" later left France and can be found in the Protestant records of another nation.

During the eighteenth century there were some revivals of Protestantism with various expressions of intolerance, but in 1787 Louis XVI signed the Edict of Tolerance, which again granted freedom of religion to Protestants.

For a history of the Huguenots see—

Roche, O.J.A. *The Days of the Upright: the Story of the Huguenots*. New York: Clarkson N. Potter, 1965. (FHL book 944 K2ro; not on microfilm.) Text in English.

Waldensians

The Waldensians were founded by Pierre Valdo (or Waldo) at the end of the twelfth century in Lyon. The movement soon spread to Germany, Flanders, and Aragon. In 1545 hundreds of French Waldensians were executed in the towns of Cabrières and Merindol. Persecutions caused Waldensians to move as far away as Uruguay and Argentina. A branch of this group in Merindol, France, publishes the—

La Valmasque: Bulletin de l'Association d'Etudes Vaudoises et Historiques du Luberon (Bulletin of the association for the study of the Waldensian history of Luberon). (FHL book 944.92 H25v; not on microfilm.) The address of the association is—

La Muse, BP No. 4
84360 Merindol
FRANCE

Mennonites

The Mennonites (or Anabaptists) have existed in France since 1523 and are found mostly in Alsace-Lorraine and in the former principality of Montbéliard. For more information about their history see—

Séguy, Jean. *Les assemblées Anabaptistes-Mennonites de France* (Mennonite congregations of France) Paris: Mouton, 1977. (FHL book 944.38 F2sj; not on microfilm.)

Sommer, Pierre. *Historique des assemblées* (History of the congregations) [France]: Association française d'Histoire Anabaptiste-Mennonite, 1982. (FHL book 944.38 F2s; not on microfilm.)

See also the "Minorities" section of this outline.

CHURCH RECORDS

Church records [*registres paroissiaux*] are excellent sources for information on names, dates, and places of baptisms, marriages, and deaths. Most persons who lived in France were recorded in a church record.

Records of births (baptisms), marriages, and deaths are commonly called "vital records" because critical events in a person's life are recorded in them. Church records are vital records made by priests. They are often referred to as *parish registers* or *church books*. They include records of births, christenings, marriages, and burials. Church records may also contain other information, lists, or documents.

Church records are crucial for pre-1792 research in France. Since civil authorities did not begin registering vital statistics until 1792, church records are often the only sources of family information before this date. After 1792 Church records continued to be kept, but such records were usually not filmed because they are incomplete and less accurate than the civil registers.

For birth, death, and marriage records after 1792, see the "Civil Registration" section of this outline.

General Historical Background

The keeping of Catholic parish registers was first required by the church at the beginning of the fifteenth century. The oldest parish register in France, for the city of Givry, dates back to 1334. However parish registers are rare until 1539, when the French king, François I, required priests to keep parish registers. Unfortunately, many of the earlier records have been destroyed or lost.

The efficient recording of baptisms, marriages, and deaths developed slowly. The record-keeping requirement was limited, at first, to baptisms. The requirements developed as follows:

- 1539 The first laws required baptismal registers showing the date and the hour of the birth.
- 1563 The Council of Trent required that the godparents' names be recorded in the baptismal certificates.
- 1579 Death and marriage records were required in addition to baptismal records.
- 1691 Some preprinted forms were given to priests for uniformity of record keeping.
- 1792 Civil registration began. Church records became less important as a genealogical source. Most church records before 1792 were turned over to the departmental archives.

Feast Dates. Each day of the year had several patron saints and was a feast day to honor those saints. Some vital events are recorded in church records only by the holy day (feast day) on the church calendar. For example, the feast day called “All Saints Day” [*Toussaint*] is “1 November.” To convert feast dates to days of the month for either the Julian (old style) or Gregorian (new style) calendar, use the following book:

Bukke, Inger M., et. al. *The Comprehensive Genealogical Feast Day Calendar*. Bountiful, UT: Thomson's Genealogical Center, 1983. (FHL book 529.44 C738; fiche 6054630.)

Duplicate Church Records

The practice of making duplicates of church books was introduced as law in 1667. The original was kept at the vicarage, and the duplicate was delivered to the clerk of the court [*greffe du bailliage*]. Although this law was not completely obeyed, most parishes did comply and made at least some copies. Another law reinforcing the requirement for parish register duplicates was passed in 1736. Sometime after the French Revolution, these duplicates and most of the original parish registers prior to 1792 were handed over to the departmental archives for safekeeping.

Differences in Record Keeping by Various Churches

The manner of keeping church records differed somewhat depending on the religion. For more information on the churches of France, see the “Church History” section of this outline.

Roman Catholic. The Catholic churches in France were amongst the first to keep vital records. The council of Trent in 1563 issued the first mandate that Roman Catholic parishes keep records of christenings. A later directive in 1579 required the keeping of marriage and death records. The churches in France did not always comply with this regulation. Many Catholic registers date from the mid-1600s, but a few date back to the 1500s. However, there are some earlier records, such as the parish registers of Givry (Saône-et-Loire) which go from 1334 to 1357 and the records of Roz Landrieux (Ille-et-Villaine) from 1451 to 1528. Records were kept in French or Latin.

Although many of the very early records may have been preserved, many parishes have gaps in their records, especially before 1736.

Protestants (Huguenots). In France, Protestantism started in 1541. A synod in Paris in 1559 decided that a record of baptisms and marriages of Protestants would be kept by the pastors. Because of wars, intolerance, and other calamities, some of these early Protestant records may have been destroyed.

Researching Protestants is difficult because these people moved frequently, sometimes from one nation to another. As with all genealogical research, it is necessary to go from the known to the unknown. To trace a Protestant from America back across the Atlantic, it is necessary to know more than just the name of a person. It is important to know relatives or at least friends who traveled as a group with the ancestor. Knowing the nation where they previously resided will help you search the records of that nation and identify the family and its previous nation of residence.

Most Protestants did not come straight from France to North America, but fled first to nearby nations, especially after the revocation of the Edict of Nantes in 1685. If your ancestors arrived in North America sometime in the early 1700s, the chances are that the family left France in 1685 and spent the years in between in a European nation such as England, the Netherlands, or Germany, sometimes moving from one nation to another. It may be necessary for you to research everyone with a selected surname, especially if this surname is not too common, rather than research just one ancestor. You also need to be aware that in going from one nation to another, the surname

spellings were subject to change to fit in better in the new nation.

It is a good idea to learn all you can about the history of these people and search every record available in the Family History Library in their area of residence. To do so, search the Subject section of Family History Library Catalog under subjects like—

HUGUENOTS - ENGLAND
HUGUENOTS - FRANCE
HUGUENOTS - NORTH CAROLINA
HUGUENOTS - UNITED STATES

Look for name indexes and study the history of the area. Identify their date of arrival and their nation of residence before they crossed the ocean. Do not believe everything that has been published previously, but prove information for yourself. The following sources may help researchers looking for Huguenot ancestors.

Indexes

Bibliothèque Wallonne (Leiden). *Fiches op de Waalse register, 1500-1828* (Card index of Huguenots, 1500-1828). Salt Lake City: Genealogical Society of Utah, 1950. (FHL film 199,755-953.) Text is mainly in French, with some Dutch, on 198 microfilms. Includes Huguenots in the Netherlands, Belgium, France, Germany and elsewhere. The names are alphabetical phonetically, then chronological in order by the event date. They show dates and places of births, marriages, deaths, and migrations.

Bibliothèque Wallonne (Leiden). *Fiches op de registers, collectie Montauban, 1647-1682* (Card index of Huguenots of Montauban, Tarn-et-Garonne, France, 1647-1682). Salt Lake City: Genealogical Society of Utah, 1950. (FHL film 199,957-62.) Text in French. Alphabetical by name. Shows dates and places of births, marriages, deaths, and migrations.

Bibliothèque Wallonne (Leiden). *Fiches op de registers, collectie La Rochelle, 1602-1685*. (Card index of Huguenots of La Rochelle, Charente-Maritime, France, 1602-1685). Salt Lake City: Genealogical Society of Utah, 1950. (FHL film 199,954-56.) Text in French. Alphabetical by name. Shows dates and places of births, marriages, deaths, and migrations.

Parish Register Inventory

France. Archives nationales. *Les familles Protestantes en France (XVI^e siècle-1792)* (French Protestant families from the 16th century to 1792). Paris: Archives Nationales, 1987. (FHL book 944 F23f;

not on microfilm.) Many of the parish registers mentioned in this inventory are also available on microfilms at the Family History Library.

Historical Periodicals

Cahiers du Centre de Généalogie Protestante (See the “Periodicals” section of this outline.)

Bulletin de la Société de l'Histoire du Protestantisme Français (See the “Periodicals” section of this outline.)

Publications of the Huguenot Society of London. 57 vols. London: HSL, 1969-1985. (FHL book 942.1/L1 B4h; most volumes have been microfilmed.) Includes many parish register transcripts from cities chiefly in Great Britain and Ireland. Text in French in some volumes.

Geschichtsblätter des Deutschen Hugenotten-Vereins (Historical series on Huguenot leaders, churches and settlements throughout the world, published by the German Huguenot Society). Sicking: Verlag des Deutschen Hugenotten-Vereins, 1892-. (FHL book 943 F2gd; fiche 6000819.) Place of publication varies. Text in German. Volumes 1-14 are indexed in Cordier, Leopold. *Hugenottische Familiennamen in Deutschland* (Huguenot surnames in Germany). Berlin: Verlag des Deutschen Hugenotten-Vereins, [1953?]. (FHL book 943 F2gd v. 1-14 index; film 962,761 item 3.) Volumes 15-19 are indexed in Mathieu, Ursula-Marianne. *Hugenottische Familiennamen in Deutschland, Teil II* (Huguenot surnames in Germany, part 2). Bad Karlshafen: Verlag des Deutschen Hugenotten-Vereins, 1991. (FHL book 943 F2gd v. 20 pt. 7-10; not on microfilm.)

Der Deutsche Hugenott (Periodical of German Huguenot genealogy and history) Hannover: Deutscher Hugenotten-Verein, 1929-. (FHL book 943 B2dh; film 908,257.) Text in German. A cumulative name index is found in Mathieu, Ursula-Marianne. *Namensregister 1.-40. Jahrgang, 1929-1976* (Name index for years 1 to 40, 1929-1976) Sicking: Verlag des Deutschen Hugenotten-Vereins, 1987. (FHL book 943 F2gd v. 19 pt. 5-7; not on microfilm.)

Significant Huguenot Records

Haag, Eugène. *La France protestante: l'histoire* (The history of Protestant France). 9 vols. Paris: Imp. de J.-B. Gros, 1846-1859. (FHL book 944 D3hg; film 962,949-53.) Biographical and genealogical sketches of prominent figures in the Protestant movement in France. Alphabetical by surname.

Church Records

Mours, Samuel. *Les Eglises réformées en France* (The reformed churches in France). Paris: Librairie Protestante, 1958. (FHL film 765,005.) Maps and listing of Protestant centers in France with dates of establishment.

Wagner, Henry. *Wagner collection of Huguenot pedigrees in England*. Salt Lake City: Genealogical Society of Utah, 1952. (FHL film 087,860-65, index on 824,245 item 9.) Text in English. About 1,000 surnames.

Handbook

La généalogie: histoire et pratique (see the “For Further Reading” section of this outline). Pages 181-87 describe Protestant records, their content, and history.

Some French Protestant records may have been published or indexed by a local genealogical society.

Library

You may also write to the Library of French Protestantism for assistance. To pay for the search send about \$15.00 worth of francs to—

Bibliothèque de la S.H.P.F.
54, rue des Saints-Pères
75007 Paris
FRANCE

Information Recorded in Church Registers

The information recorded in church books varied over time. The later records usually give more complete information.

The most important church records for genealogical research are baptism, marriage, and burial registers. Other helpful church records are marriage banns, marriage rehabilitations, and abjurations from Protestantism.

Catholic records are usually written in French or Latin. Protestant records in Alsace were often written in German. Some records from the area of Nice are in Italian. Local dialects may have affected the spelling of some names and other words in the church records. Some given names are common to some areas and unknown in others.

Baptisms [*baptêmes*]

Catholic children were usually baptized within two days of birth. Some were given an emergency baptism [*ondoyé*] by the midwife when the child was in danger of death. Protestant children were usually baptized within a few weeks of birth. Baptism registers usually give the infant's and parents' names,

status of legitimacy, names of godparents, and the baptism date. You may also find the child's birth date, the father's occupation, and the family's place of residence. Death information has sometimes been added as a note. Children who died at birth may be recorded only in the death records.

Earlier registers typically give less information, sometimes including only the child's and father's names and the date of the baptism. The mother's maiden surname may be missing, and even her given name may be omitted. At first only the baptism date was recorded, but in later years the birth date was given as well.

Marriages [*Mariages*]

Marriage registers give the date of the marriage and the names of the bride and groom and their parents or deceased spouse. They also indicate whether they were single or widowed and give the names and relationships of witnesses. They often include other information about the bride and groom, such as their ages, residences, occupations, and sometimes birthplaces. In cases of second and later marriages, they include the names of previous partners and their death dates. Often a note is made whether a parent or other party gave permission for the marriage.

Marriage registers sometimes give the dates on which the marriage intentions were announced in addition to the marriage date. These announcements, called banns, gave opportunity for anyone to come forward who knew any reasons why the couple shouldn't be married. Engagements may be recorded in the marriage register. In some cities, such as Lyon, the notary who recorded the marriage contract is sometimes mentioned.

Many genealogical societies in France are presently indexing the marriages before 1792. See the “Societies” section of this outline for information about contacting them.

Marriage banns [*publications de mariage*]. In addition to, or instead of the actual marriage register, some churches in France kept a separate register where marriage banns were recorded. Marriage banns do not always give the actual marriage date. However, hometown banns sometimes refer to a marriage place away from the bride's or groom's hometown.

Rehabilitation [*réhabilitation*]. Closely related people [*consanguinité* or *affinité spirituelle*] required special permission to marry [*dispensation*]. If a close relationship was discovered after marriage, a rehabilitation was required which granted the couple permission to stay married. Rehabilitations are often found in the marriage registers but more often at the diocesan archives. These were recorded like a marriage but sometimes twenty or thirty years after a marriage.

Sometimes a chart showing the relationship can be found either in the parish registers or in the departmental archives record, series G.

Burials [*Sépultures*]

Burials were recorded in the church record of the parish where the person was buried. The burial usually took place within a few days of the death, in the parish where the person died. Burial registers give the name of the deceased and the date and place of the burial. Often the age, place of residence, name of the surviving spouse or parents, and sometimes birthplace are given. But early death registers failed to record the age of the deceased and information about parents or spouse.

Some people, born and perhaps married before the keeping of vital records began in their area, may be recorded only in the burial records. These records may help fill in information when baptism or marriage records are lacking. Some children who died at birth are recorded only in the burial records (sometimes with a note that the child was baptized by the midwife).

Abjurations from Protestantism [*Abjurations*]

During times of persecution, especially in 1685, some French Protestants were forced to renounce their religion and convert to the Roman Catholic Church. The records of their abjurations show the name, age, occupation, and residence. You may also identify parents, spouses, or children in some of these records.

Other Lists

Other church records include confirmation lists, lists of families, rental of a church bench, communion lists, and attendance at special meetings. Unusual calamities, such as torrential rains, flash floods, and fires, were also noted.

Locating Church Records

Sometime after the French Revolution, the parish registers that had been kept at each parish until 1792 became state property. These registers were turned over to departmental archives or town registrars. The local priests no longer have parish registers before 1792. The departmental archives will answer written inquiries regarding the whereabouts of the parish registers of a specific locality, but they will not research a name in them.

You must know the town where your ancestor lived to use pre-1792 parish registers at the departmental archives. You need the same information to contact a priest for help with church records written after 1792.

Your ancestor may have lived in a village that belonged to a parish in a nearby town. A village may have belonged to different parishes during different periods. Try searching adjacent parishes with older records when you cannot find relatives in the parish where you think they should be.

Church Record Inventories

An inventory is a list of available church records, their location, and what years they cover. Church record inventories are included in the departmental archive inventories described in the “Archives and Libraries” section of this outline. Some inventories may be out of date.

Indexes

Andriveau Collection. For a description of indexes to parish registers of 25 large French and Belgian cities, see the “Genealogy” section of this outline.

Some Catholic church records have partial indexes in larger towns, but the church records in smaller towns usually have no indexes.

Several French genealogical societies have begun indexing pre-1792 church records in their districts. For a list of indexed church records, chiefly marriages, see—

Recensement des dépouillements systématiques réalisés en France pour faciliter les recherches généalogiques (Inventory of the systematic extraction made in France to help genealogical researchers). Paris: Bibliothèque généalogique, 1988. (FHL book 944 D2r; not on microfilm.) List of where to obtain assistance and abstracts of community records.

Some of these societies are entering these marriage indexes on *Minitel*. See the “Archives and Libraries” section of this outline for details.

GENLOR. The Genealogical Society of Lorraine has created a 600,000-name computer database of pre-1792 marriages in church records. It lists all marriages of the department of Vosges, about 95 percent of marriages in Meurthe-et-Moselle, about 50 percent of those in Meuse, and some for Moselle. *GENLOR* includes the groom's name, bride's name, parents, and date and place of marriage. The search is done one department at a time. *GENLOR* is on *Minitel* under “3628 GENLOR” (see the “Archives and Libraries” section of this outline for details). If you want to write to request a search of this database, send the names of the bride and groom and the approximate year of the marriage, three international reply coupons, an envelope, and the name of the department to be searched to—

Civil Registration

U.C.G.L.
Madame la Secrétaire
B.P. 8
54131 Saint Max Cedex
FRANCE

Records at the Family History Library

The Family History Library has Catholic church records on microfilm from over 60 percent of the departments in France. This collection continues to grow as new records are microfilmed. Most of these records are from the northern, eastern, and southern areas of France. Fewer are from central France. Most of the library's parish records come from years before 1792.

The specific holdings of the Family History Library are listed in the Family History Library Catalog. You can determine whether the library has records for the locality your ancestor came from by checking the Locality section of the Family History Library Catalog. However, if a record has been destroyed, was never kept, has not been microfilmed, or is restricted from public access, the Family History Library *does not have a copy*.

In the Family History Library Catalog, look under the name of the town where the parish was, not necessarily the town where your ancestor lived. Look under FRANCE, [DEPARTMENT], [TOWN] - CHURCH RECORDS.

New records are continually added to the Family History Library collection from numerous sources. Don't give up if records are not available yet. Check the Family History Library Catalog again every year for the records you need.

Records Not at the Family History Library

Baptism, marriage, burial, and other church records may be found by contacting or visiting departmental archives, town registrars, or local parishes in France, or you may hire a researcher to do this for you.

- *Departmental archives.* Most pre-1792 parish records are in departmental archives. See the "Archives and Libraries" section of this outline.
- *Town registrars.* A few pre-1792 church records are preserved at the local civil registration office. See the "Archives and Libraries" section of this outline.
- *Local parishes.* Church records after 1792 in France are available by writing to the parish. Parishes will usually answer correspondence in French. However, most researchers have more success by contacting civil registration offices first. Your request may be forwarded if the records have

been sent to another archive. To obtain the address of a given parish, write to the mayor of the town. The mayor will know if the parish office is in his town or in a nearby town.

If your request is unsuccessful, search for records that may have been filed in other archives or in civil registration offices. You may also want to hire a professional researcher for expert help.

Search Strategies

Effective use of church records includes the following strategies in addition to the general strategies on page 2:

- For records after 1792, search civil records thoroughly before searching church records.
- When you find the baptism record of a relative or ancestor, search for the baptisms of brothers and sisters. Note the towns where godparents lived—these may be additional places to search for church records.
- Then search for the marriage of the parents. Marriages are usually recorded in the bride's parish. The marriage record will often lead to the baptism records of the parents.
- You can estimate the ages of the parents and search for their baptism records.
- Then repeat the process for both the father and the mother.
- If earlier generations are not in the record, search neighboring parishes.
- Search the death registers for all family members. Death records may show children who were never recorded in baptism records.

CIVIL REGISTRATION

Civil registers are the vital records made by the government. Records of births, marriages, and deaths are commonly referred to as "vital records" because they refer to critical events in a person's life. French civil registration offices are excellent sources for accurate information on names, dates, and places of births, marriages, and deaths in their area. In addition, civil registration may include divorce records.

Civil records are crucial for research in France. Civil authorities began registering births, marriages, and deaths in 1792. After this date, all individuals who lived in France are recorded. Because these records cover all the population, are indexed, are easily accessible, provide more information than church records, and include persons of all denominations, they are the most important source for genealogical research in France.

Other significant genealogical sources, such as church records, are not easily available after 1792, not complete, not necessarily accurate and not considered as reliable a source as the civil registers. For many families, civil registers are often the only valuable source of information after 1792.

For baptism, death, and marriage records before 1792, see the “Church Records” section of this outline.

General Historical Background

The earliest vital records in France were made by the churches at the request of the French kings. In 1792, the revolutionary government made civil officers responsible for keeping vital records. Civil registration was accomplished by requiring the people to report all births, marriages, and deaths to a civil registration office [*bureau de l'état civil*], usually at the town hall [*mairie*]. Civil registration was well received, and nearly all of the people were recorded.

Baptism, marriage, and death record duplicates that were made by the churches before 1792 are usually in the departmental archives, or sometimes in the town's civil registration office. After civil registration began in 1792, the clergy continued to keep their own parish registers separate from civil registers.

Regional Differences in Record Keeping

Savoie and Nice. France controlled the Duchy of Savoie and the County [*comté*] of Nice from 1792 to 1814 and permanently after 1860. Use the church records of Savoie or Nice for the periods when they belonged to Sardinia and civil registration was suspended. These church records were given to the local community [*commune*] in 1906, but the ten-year indexes are often missing before 1882. French civil registers were usually made for towns in Savoie from 1792 to 1814 or 1815, and starting again in 1863.

The Family History Library Catalog shows many civil registers in Nice between 1815 and 1859. These were originally church records but are cataloged as civil registers because they were turned over to the French civil authorities for safekeeping.

Corse. Genoa (now part of Italy) sold the island of Corse to France in 1768. Some family surnames were not fixed until end of the eighteenth century. The records were kept in Latin or Italian, and starting in 1820 they are kept in French. The Family History Library has not yet obtained any microfilm of civil registration from Corse.

Overseas. In French territory overseas, parish registers were kept in duplicate until 1776 and then in triplicate in Africa and Asia. The three copies continued after 1792. For help locating these records,

see chapter 23 of *Guide des recherches sur l'histoire des familles* in the “For Further Reading” section of this outline.

Paris. A fire in 1871 destroyed almost all the civil registers of Paris before the year 1860. The government has reconstructed about 2.7 million of the estimated 8 million burned records. For a guide to the Paris records see—

Demeulenaère-Douyère, Christiane. *Guide des sources de l'état civil parisien* (Guide to civil registration sources of Paris). Paris?: s.n., 19--. (FHL book 944.361 V27d; film 1,573,092 item 15.)

The Family History Library has a part of the Andriveau collection (started before the fire) which includes some baptisms, marriages, and deaths in Paris from about 1800 to 1860. This collection is not complete, some film is out of focus, and circulation to family history centers in Europe is prohibited. For details see page 30.

Consulates. After 1792 the consuls, like the town registrars in France, had the responsibility of recording the births, marriages, and deaths of French citizens in foreign nations, when it was requested. These records are kept in duplicate. One copy is sent each year to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

Information Recorded in Civil Registers

The information recorded in civil registration records varied over time. The later records usually give more complete information than the earlier ones.

The most important civil records for genealogical research are birth, marriage, and death registers. References to other documents are often noted in the text or marginal entry of the civil records. This practice alerts researchers to look for documents such as acknowledgment of paternity, subsequent marriage of the parents of an illegitimate child, name rectification, or any court judgment regarding the person, or the name and date of the notary who wrote the marriage contract.

Most French civil registers are written in French, with the exception of areas under a foreign influence. In Alsace-Lorraine, some civil registers are in German. In Nice and Corse, some are in Italian.

Births [Naissances]

Birth records usually give the child's name, sex, date and place of birth, and the name of the parents, including the mother's maiden surname. The records may provide additional details, such as the age of the parents, occupation of the father, or place of origin of the parents.

Civil Registration

Births were usually registered within two or three days of the child's birth, usually by the father, but sometimes by a relative or friend, especially if the father was absent. Parents of a single mother are usually listed for more complete identification of the mother. Corrections to a birth record, marriage of the parents of an illegitimate child, or rectifications of any kind may have been added as marginal notes.

Children who died very young [*présenté mort* or *présenté sans vie*] are not stillborn but probably died shortly after birth. Some of the children who died at birth may be recorded only in the death records. The baptismal given name in church records may differ from the given name in civil registers. Search both when they are available.

Civil register births usually have yearly indexes in addition to the ten-year indexes (see page 21).

You may also find birth information in the "Family civil registration booklets" described in the following marriage section.

Marriages [*Mariages*]

After 1792 marriages had to be performed by civil authorities before the couple could be married by the church. The church wedding usually took place where the bride resided and was recorded there in the church records. But the civil marriage could be recorded in another town.

The early civil marriage records include more information than the corresponding church records. When they are available, search both the civil registration and church records of marriage.

A law passed in 1798 (year VI of the French Republic) required citizens to be married at the canton seat [*chef-lieu de canton*] instead of the local town [*commune*]. This law was abolished in 1800 (year VIII) when couples were again allowed to marry in their local town. For this reason, marriages for the years VII and VIII (1798-1800) are usually missing from town records. A note in town records may suggest you search for marriages at the canton seat.

When you cannot find a marriage record, search records of intent to marry.

Records of Intent to Marry. You may find records that show a couple's "intent to marry" in addition to or instead of the records of the actual marriage. Various records may have been created that show a couple's intent to marry.

- *Marriage banns* [*publications*] were made twice in the weeks before a couple planned to marry. The couple was required to announce their intention to give other community members the opportunity to raise any objections to the marriage. Some

registers of marriage banns before 1927 have been preserved. Banns are made in the places of origin of both the bride and the groom and usually show the town where the marriage took place or the residence of the bride. Search these if you do not know where a marriage took place.

- *Marriage supplements* [*pièces annexes* or *pièces justificatives*] were occasionally filed by the bride and groom in support of their application to be married. They may include birth record extracts of the bride and groom, death certificates of the parents, divorce decree of a previous union, certificates of residence, a marriage contract, legitimation of children, parent's consent, or military status of the groom, and sometimes documentation on earlier generations may be included. In France these marriage supplements were originally kept by the clerk of the court [*Greffé du tribunal*], but a few may have been given to the departmental archives.
- *Contracts* [*contracts de mariage*] are documents created for the protection of property. These are notarial documents. Sometimes the marriage certificate will show the name and town of the notary who wrote the contract and the date it was written. But these contracts are not usually on microfilm at the Family History Library and are not always deposited at the departmental archives. They may have remained in the office of the notary's successors.

Marriage Records. You may find the following records that document the actual marriage.

- *Certificates* [*certificats*]. You can obtain a marriage certificate from the last hundred years from the registrar's office [*bureau de l'état civil*] at the town hall [*mairie*]. A copy of a marriage certificate will be sent by mail to direct descendants only.
- *Marriage register* [*registre des actes de mariage*]. Civil officials recorded the marriages they performed, usually in a prescribed paragraph format, bound in a book and kept in the registrar's office.

The civil marriage registers give many details, such as the birth date and birthplace of the bride and groom and their parents' names, including mother's maiden surname. If the parents have died, their death date and death place are recorded. More recent civil marriage records may even include the same information for the grand-parents. There are usually four witnesses listed, with their age, occupation, residence, and relationship. Civil marriage records contain the complete birth information of the couple's children who are born out of wedlock. If a marriage contract was made, the date, the name of the notary, and the town where this contract was written may be

included. Civil marriage records may also mention the date of the banns [*publications*].

- *Family civil registration booklets* [*livrets de famille*]. After 1877 the civil registrar gave a booklet to each couple he married. This booklet includes an extract of the marriage record and references to the marriage contract. The couple was responsible for taking the booklet to the registrar as each of their children was born. The registrar would update the booklet with the child's birth information and return the booklet to the parents. The registrar also recorded deaths in this booklet. Families keep possession of their family civil registration booklets and often hand them down to their children.

Divorce Records [*Divorces*]

Divorce was permitted in France from 1792 to 1816 and after 1884. A few divorce records may be found with the marriages in the early period. A marginal note referring to the divorce was noted on the couple's birth certificates in more recent years.

The Family History Library has a few of the earlier divorce records in its collection of French civil registration. You can also obtain information from divorce records by contacting the civil registration office [*bureau de l'état civil*] at the town hall [*mairie*] where the divorce took place.

Deaths [*Décès*]

Death records are especially helpful because they may provide important information on a person's birth, spouse, parents, age, and birthplace. Civil death records often exist for individuals for whom there are no birth or marriage records. Deaths were usually registered within a day or two of the death in the town or city where the person died.

Early death records may give only the name, date, and place of death. But most of them will also give the age, birthplace, and parents' names (including mother's maiden surname), and whether or not the parents are also deceased. The death certificates usually have two informants, at least one of them closely related. Information in death records may be subject to error because the informants may have lacked complete information.

Children who died before the declaration of birth was made may be found only in the death records.

The death of a soldier who died away from home is usually noted in the death records of the town where the soldier was born. Such an entry may be listed in the records a year or two after the soldier died.

Locating Civil Registration Records

Two civil registers were created for each event. One register is kept at the registrar's office [*bureau de l'état civil*], usually in the town hall [*mairie*]. The other register is made available to the public at the departmental archive after it is 100 years old.

You must determine the town where your ancestor lived before you can find civil registration records. Your ancestor may have lived in a village that belonged to a nearby larger town. In large cities there may be many civil registration districts. Each district has its own registrar. You may need to use gazetteers and other geographic references to identify the place your ancestor lived and the civil registration office that served it. See the "Gazetteers" section of this outline.

In addition, it helps to know the approximate year in which the birth, marriage, divorce, or death occurred. Records less than 100 years old are confidential. This means the registrar will issue a birth or marriage certificate less than 100 years old only to direct relatives.

Indexes to Civil Registration Records

In each town's civil registration office [*bureau de l'état civil*] births, marriages, and deaths were written in the registers as they occurred and thus are arranged chronologically. Yearly indexes and ten-year indexes to civil registers can help you find your ancestor more easily.

Almost every registrar created a yearly index of his register. Indexes are usually bound with each year's register. It is often more practical to use the town's yearly indexes, which have fewer names to search, than to use ten-year indexes.

Ten-year indexes [*tables décennales*] were kept in a separate register. You can sometimes find the ten-year indexes for several towns in the same district [*arrondissement*] or canton [*canton*] bound together in the same volume. A ten-year index is especially useful when you are not certain of the year of an event.

Yearly indexes and ten-year indexes have several characteristics in common. The registrar usually indexed births, marriages, and deaths separately. The indexes are alphabetical by surname. They usually list the given name(s), document number, and date of the civil register entry. In marriage indexes, the groom's name is usually in alphabetical order, with the bride's maiden surname listed after the groom. In some indexes, only the first letter of the surname is in alphabetical order.

Records at the Family History Library

The Family History Library has microfilmed civil registration records from about half the departments of France to the 1870s, and some departments up to 1890. Most of these records are from the northern, eastern, and southern areas of France. Fewer are from central France.

The Family History Library has no nationwide collections or special indexes of French civil registration records. Yearly indexes and ten-year indexes are available for almost every individual town. Ten-year indexes for several towns in a canton are often bound together in the same volume on the same microfilm.

The Family History Library has civil registration from towns in many departments of France. However, if a record has been destroyed, was never kept, was not available in the archives at the time of microfilming, was not microfilmed, or is confidential, the Family History Library *does not have a copy*. You may use the records at the library for your family research, but the library does not issue or certify certificates for living or deceased individuals.

The specific holdings of the Family History Library are listed in the Family History Library Catalog. To find civil registration records in the Family History Library, search in the Locality section of the library's catalog under—

FRANCE - CIVIL REGISTRATION
FRANCE, [DEPARTMENT] - CIVIL
REGISTRATION
FRANCE, [DEPARTMENT], [TOWN] - CIVIL
REGISTRATION

The library's collection continues to grow and its catalog is updated annually. Don't give up if records are not available yet. Check the Family History Library Catalog every year for the records you need.

Locating Records Not at the Family History Library

France has no single, nationwide repository of civil registration records. Birth, marriage, divorce, and death records may be found by contacting or visiting local registrars' offices or departmental archives in France. To protect the privacy of living persons, records of the most recent 100 years are confidential and have restrictions on their use and access.

- *Local registrars' offices [bureau de l'état civil]* will usually mail one or two birth, marriage, or death certificates at no charge. However, they are busy and they may not respond to requests for more than two certificates at a time. If the records are less than 100 years old, they are confidential and will be sent only to direct descendants. Records more

than 100 years old are more accessible at the departmental archives.

- The *clerk of the court [greffe du tribunal]* keeps a duplicate of the most recent hundred years of civil registration records. Then the records are sent to the departmental archives. Clerks' copies are not normally available for research.
- *Departmental archives [archives départementales]* will only send replies to general questions about their holdings. They will not do research in their records for you. You may visit the archives to search the civil registers over 100 years old. You can also hire a researcher to examine archive records for you.

You may also find archive inventories (see the “Archives and Libraries” section) that describe the record-keeping systems and available civil registration records in France. They may not be up-to-date. These and other guides are found in the Locality section of the Family History Library Catalog under—

FRANCE - ARCHIVES AND LIBRARIES -
INVENTORIES, REGISTERS, CATALOGS
FRANCE, [DEPARTMENT] - ARCHIVES AND
LIBRARIES - INVENTORIES, REGISTERS,
CATALOGS

The “French Search Strategies” section of this outline and the Family History Library's *French Letter-Writing Guide* (34059) give details about how to write to town registrars and departmental archives in France for genealogical information.

If the reply does not have the information you request, try to get help from the local genealogical society.

Search Strategies

Effective use of civil registers includes the following strategies, in addition to the general strategies on page 2:

- Search for the relative or ancestor you selected in step 2. When you find his birth record, search for the birth records of his brothers and sisters.
- Search for the death records of his parents, which will tell you where the mother came from and where the marriage probably took place.
- Search for marriage records of all the children. Marriage records will tell you if the parents have died and where and when they died.
- If you cannot find the person you want in the regular marriage records, search the marriage banns [*publications*].
- Then, search for the marriage record of the parents. The marriage record will give you birth dates, birthplaces, and parents' names.

- Then repeat the process for both the father and the mother.
- Search the death registers for all family members. These are indexed and will take you back in the parish register period, giving you ages and localities of birth.
- Search the civil registers completely before starting to search in the parish registers.

DIRECTORIES

Directories are alphabetical lists of names and addresses. In the twentieth century there are directories of all those who have telephones.

The most helpful directories are telephone directories of local residents and businesses. These are usually published annually and may include an individual's name and address. An individual's address can be very helpful when you are trying to contact distant relatives.

The Family History Library has many telephone directories of France, but they are not cataloged. These directories date from about 1980 or later. Each directory covers one department, with each town listed separately, showing people's names in alphabetical order. Ask someone at the information desk to locate these directories. They are not available at family history centers.

A French computer network, *Minitel*, can search the computer telephone directory of France. *Minitel* is accessible in the U.S. and some other foreign nations. See the "Archives and Libraries" section of this outline for additional details.

EMIGRATION AND IMMIGRATION

Emigration and immigration records list the names of people leaving (emigration) or coming into (immigration) France. These lists are usually found as permissions to emigrate; records of passports issued, including passports for the interior; records of border crossings; and lists of prisoners deported. The information in these records may include the name of the emigrant, age, occupation; usually include the place of origin and destination; and sometimes include the reason for leaving. These sources can be very valuable in helping you determine where in France your ancestor came from. French emigration records are very incomplete and are not usually indexed.

In addition to their usefulness in determining where an emigrant lived in the nation before leaving, these records can help you construct family groups. If you

don't find your ancestor, you may find emigration information about neighbors of your ancestor. People who lived near each other in France often settled together in the nation where they emigrated to.

Records were created when individuals emigrated from or immigrated into France. Other records document an ancestor's arrival in his destination nation. This section discusses—

- Finding the emigrant's town of origin.
- Emigration from France, including the historical background of French emigration.
- Records of French emigrants in their destination nations.
- Immigration into France.

Unfortunately, there are few emigration records from France. There are some helpful Canadian records of French immigrants into Quebec from 1632 to 1713.

Finding the Emigrant's Town of Origin

Once you have traced your family back to a French emigrant, you must determine the city or town the ancestor was from. There are no nationwide indexes to birth, marriage, or death records in France. These records were kept locally.

There are several sources outside of France that may give your ancestor's place of origin. You may be able to learn the town your ancestor came from by talking to older family members. Members of your family or a library may have documents that name the city or town, such as obituaries, church records, and naturalization petitions.

Additional information about finding the origins of immigrant ancestors is given in the library's *Tracing Immigrant Origins* (34111) research outline.

Emigration from France

There was no systematic, official method of emigration, and few French emigration lists are available.

Significant numbers of emigrants left France during the following periods:

- *1538 to 1685*. Protestants flee religious persecutions in France.
- *1632 to 1713*. French settle Quebec and Acadia (Canada).
- *1722*. Alsatian colonies established in the Holy Roman Empire (Austria-Hungary).
- *1764 to 1786*. Alsatians colonize Russia, Ukraine, and Banat.

Emigration and Immigration

- 1785. Some exiled Acadians shipped from France to Louisiana.
- 1789 to 1791. About 500,000 refugees flee the French Revolution for neighboring nations and the Americas. About half later returned.
- 1804 to 1832. Additional Alsatians emigrate to Ukraine, Bessarabia, and Banat.
- 1815 to 1817. Political turmoil after the fall of Napoleon leads to a wave of French emigration to neighboring countries and the Americas.
- 1830 to 1962. French colonize Algeria (Africa).
- 1830s, 1840s, 1850s, and 1860s. Agents go from town to town recruiting emigrants, mostly in Alsace-Lorraine. Some went to America, others to Russia.
- 1871. There is a wave of French emigrants, largely to North America.

For emigrants leaving France, documents that record their migration can sometimes be found in France and in the country to which they moved.

Passenger Departure Lists

During the 1800s most French and south German emigrants left through the port of Le Havre. The records of departures from this port are called *passenger lists*. The information in these lists varied over time but usually included name, age, occupation, origin, and sometimes birthplace. There are only a few, incomplete passenger lists for ports in France, and they have no indexes.

The only lists available for the French port of Le Havre are lists of crews and passengers on some commercial cargo vessels. They are very incomplete. Very few passengers sailed on cargo ships. Passenger vessels are not included. These lists are not indexed. A few records from Calais, Cherbourg, Brest, Lorient, La Rochelle, and Dieppe are available at the French National Archives.

The Family History Library has filmed the Le Havre commercial cargo vessel passenger lists for the years 1750 to 1886. The film numbers are listed in the Locality section of the Family History Library Catalog under—

FRANCE, SEINE-MARITIME, LE HAVRE -
BUSINESS RECORDS AND COMMERCE

Le Havre Passenger Index

A French genealogical society has discovered a 100-year-old card file of 45,000 passengers, 25,000 sailors, and 5,000 retirees at Le Havre from 1780 to 1840. The source of the index is uncertain and it is

difficult to determine how comprehensive it is. It does not correspond to the unindexed lists mentioned above. The passenger cards usually show name, maiden surname of the spouse (including cross references), birth date or age, birthplace, parents, date and place of embarkation and debarkation, and, for French ships, the vessel's name.

Researchers may send written inquiries to learn if a relative is indexed. The society can search only for passengers between 1780 and 1840, and they will search only for a specific name. They will not respond to vague requests to search for anyone with a certain surname. Send the correctly spelled given name and surname of the passenger, a self-addressed envelope, and three international reply coupons (purchased at large post offices) to—

Liste de passagers
Groupeement Généalogique du Havre et de Seine-
Maritime
B.P. 80
76050 Le Havre Cedex
FRANCE

French Emigration Indexes

Alsace-Lorraine Emigration Indexes. Many French, Swiss, and Germans lived in Alsace-Lorraine or passed through it to emigrate. Several indexes help identify many of them.

Alsace Emigration Index. The Family History Library compiled an index of persons emigrating from or through Alsace-Lorraine from 1817 to 1866. About half the names are from France. The alphabetical index gives the emigrant's name, age, occupation, place of origin, residence, destination, passport date, and source microfilm number. Not everyone who emigrated via Alsace is in this index. The index is easiest to find in the Author/Title section of the Family History Library Catalog under "Alsace emigration index." It is also listed as—

France. Ministère de l'Intérieur. *Registres des émigrés, 1817-1866* (Register of emigrants). Salt Lake City: Genealogical Society of Utah, 1977. (FHL film 1,125,002-1,125,007.) Text in English.

Alsace Emigration Books. Cornelia Schrader-Muggenthaler used part of the *Alsace Emigration Index*, other emigration records, passenger lists, genealogies, genealogy periodicals, and newspaper articles to compile the following index:

Schrader-Muggenthaler, Cornelia. *The Alsace Emigration Book*. 2 vols. Apollo, PA: Closson Press, 1989-1991. (FHL book 944.38 W2s; not on microfilm.) Text in English. This index has over 20,000 entries, mostly of 1817-1870 emigrants.

Other useful books on the subject are—

Burgert, Annette Kunselman. *Eighteenth Century Emigrants from the Northern Alsace to America*. Camden, ME: Picton Press, 1992. (FHL book 974.8 B4pgp v. 26; not on microfilm.) Text in English.

Laybourn, Norman. *L'émigration des Alsaciens et des Lorrains du XVIII^e au XX^e siècles* (Emigration from Alsace-Lorraine from the 18th to the 20th century). Strasbourg: Association des Publications près les Universités de Strasbourg, 1986. (FHL 944.383 W2L; fiche 6001613-6001614.) Two volumes. Primarily a history but it contains many short lists of names and places. Indexed.

Smith, Clifford Neal. *Immigrants to America from France (Haut-Rhin Department) and Western Switzerland, 1859-1866*. 2 vols. McNeal, Ariz: Westland Publications, 1983, 1986. (FHL 973 W25s; not on microfilm.) Text in English. List of names, ages, occupations, places of origin, and destinations.

Bordeaux Emigration Index. About 16,000 emigrants from Bordeaux from 1713 to 1787 are listed on a card index on microfilm. The film can be viewed at the departmental archives in Bordeaux. A computer index is forthcoming. This index is not available at the Family History Library.

Published Emigration Records

Lists of emigrants are often published. These usually focus on the emigrants from one town, department, or region. An example follows:

Lassus, Alfred. "Les départs de passagers par Bayonne pour l'Amérique entre 1749 et 1779" *Ekaina - Revue d'études Basques* (Review of Basque studies). Bidart: Association Culturelle Amalur, 1982?-. (FHL 944.79 B2e; not on microfilm.) This article listing Basque emigrants and their home towns starts in the 1984 issue. It is not alphabetical.

Dozens of other published emigrant lists from many areas of France can be identified in the Locality section of the Family History Library Catalog under the town, department, province, or region from which the emigrants came, for example—

FRANCE, [DEPARTMENT] - EMIGRATION
AND IMMIGRATION
FRANCE, [DEPARTMENT], [TOWN] -
EMIGRATION AND IMMIGRATION

Records of French Emigrants in Their Destination Nations

Sometimes the best sources for information about your immigrant ancestor are found in the nation to which he or she immigrated. Emigrants from France in the seventeenth and eighteenth century settled in Canada, Pennsylvania, Russia, the Banat, and other areas. Huguenot emigrants settled in the Antilles, Switzerland, Germany, Scandinavia, the Netherlands, the British Isles, the United States, South Africa, Italy, and other areas. The French emigrants from Alsace-Lorraine province in the nineteenth century settled in the United States (Louisiana, Texas), Algeria, New Caledonia, Russia, South America, and other areas.

To learn about the records of these nations use handbooks and library research outlines, if available, for the nation where your ancestor settled and the library's research outline, *Tracing Immigrant Origins* (34111).

Acadia and Quebec (Canada)

In 1755 England dispersed French settlers in Acadia (Nova Scotia, New Brunswick, Cape Breton, Prince Edward Island, and Maine) to France, England, and English colonies in America. In 1785 Spain transported seven shiploads of Acadian exiles to Louisiana where Acadians were called Cajuns. A bibliography of these people is—

Sources of Acadian research materials in Acadian Genealogy's Repertoire. Covington, Kentucky: Acadian Genealogical Exchange, [1993?] (FHL book 970 F23s; not on microfilm.)

Several French Canadian sources mention the French home parish of an individual or his parents, for example:

Loiselle, Antoinin. *Loiselle card index to many marriages of the Province of Quebec and adjacent areas, 1642-1973*. Salt Lake City: Genealogical Society of Utah, 1972. (FHL film 543,685-543,858.) Text in French.

Rivest, Lucien. *Index to marriages of Quebec and adjacent areas, 1670-1964*. Salt Lake City: Genealogical Society of Utah, 1973. (FHL film 933,109-933,124, 933,142-933,166.) Alphabetical by the name of the bride. Text in French.

Jetté, René. *Dictionnaire généalogique des familles du Québec* (Genealogical dictionary of the families of Québec). Montréal: Les Presses de l'Université de Montréal, 1983. (FHL book 971.4 D2jr; fiche 6049365.)

United States

Passenger lists. Many French immigrants to the United States arrived at the ports of New Orleans, New York, Philadelphia, San Francisco, Canada, and others. The Family History Library has microfilm copies of the records and indexes of these. See the *United States Research Outline* (30972) for more information about emigration and immigration records of the United States.

A bibliography of over 2,500 published lists of emigrants and immigrants is—

Filby, P. William. *Passenger and Immigrations Lists Bibliography, 1538-1900*, 2d ed. Detroit: Gale Research, 1988. (FHL book 973 W33p 1988; not on microfilm.) Text in English. Almost 2,000 of these lists are indexed in P. William Filby et al., *Passenger and Immigration Lists Index*, 13+ vols. Detroit: Gale Research, 1981-. (FHL book Ref 973 W33p; not on microfilm.) Text in English. This does not index official U.S. arrival lists. Many of the names are from post-1820 published sources.

Immigration lists. An example of a published list of emigrants from Canada to America with French ancestors is—

Dennisen, Christian. *Genealogy of the French Families of the Detroit River Region, 1701-1936*. Ed. Harold F. Powell. 2 vols. Detroit: Detroit Society for Genealogical Research, 1987. (FHL book 977.43 D2d 1987; not on microfilm.) Text in English.

Russia

In 1763 Catherine the Great of Russia offered free land, no taxes for 30 years, freedom of religion, and other incentives to west Europeans to settle her vast, sparsely populated domain. Dozens of German and French (Alsatian) colonies were established and grew until World War I. Many Russian Alsatis moved to the United States, Canada, or South America, beginning in 1874.

A French Protestant colony was established at Schabo in Bessarabia. The Family History Library has acquired several records of this colony, some in French and some in German. They are listed in the Family History Library Catalog, Locality section, under—

RUSSIAN EMPIRE, BESSARABIA, SCHABO-KOLONIE - CHURCH RECORDS
RUSSIAN EMPIRE, BESSARABIA, SCHABO-POSSAD (AKKERMAN) - CHURCH RECORDS

Since many Alsatis (people in Alsace-Lorraine, France) spoke more German than French, they were

often called Germans when they emigrated to other nations. For example, some of the “Germans from Russia” were actually from Alsace-Lorraine, instead of from Germany. See the library's separate publication, *Germany Research Outline* (34061), for important emigration records that include German-speaking Alsatis of France.

The single most valuable source for researching German-speaking families of Alsace-Lorraine who moved to Russia is—

Stumpp, Karl. *The Emigration from Germany to Russia in the Years 1763-1862*. Tübingen: Stumpp, 1972. (FHL book 943 W2sk; fiche 6000829; 1978 ed. on film 1,183,529). Text in English.

Southeast Europe

Starting in 1722 the Holy Roman emperors and Austro-Hungarian monarchs encouraged German and Alsatian settlement in their lands, especially along the devastated border with the Turks. Colonies developed in what later became Hungary, Romania, and Yugoslavia. Following World War II many settlers moved to the United States, Canada, Australia, Brazil, and other nations.

An index that helps find Alsatis in Southeast Europe is—

Brandt, Bruce. *Where to look for hard-to-find German-speaking ancestors in Eastern Europe: index to 19,720 surnames in 13 books, with historical background on each*. 2nd ed. Baltimore: Clearfield Co., 1993. (FHL book 943 H22b; not on microfilm.) Text in English. Surnames only. Includes index from five books about immigrants to Galicia, Austria, Hungary, the Banat, and Batschka.

Other Nations

Similar immigration records and indexes are available at the Library for most nations and states where French people settled. They are listed under the new nation or state in the Locality section of the Family History Library Catalog under—

[NATION OR STATE] - EMIGRATION AND IMMIGRATION

You can also search the Subject section of the Family History Library Catalog under—
FRENCH - [NATION OR STATE]

See also the “Minorities” section of this outline.

Immigration into France

Significant numbers of immigrants moved to France during the following periods:

- 1618-1648. Many Swiss emigrants come into Alsace-Lorraine as a result of the Thirty Years War.
- 1755-1763. Acadians (French-Canadians) are exiled. Many return to France.
- 1848-1850. German revolutionaries take refuge in Bas-Rhin.
- 1831-1870. Polish refugees settle in Bas-Rhin.

Thousands of Mennonites came from Switzerland into Alsace. Some Swiss Protestants settled in the Montbéliard area. Many Italians immigrated into the south of France.

Unfortunately, there are very few immigration sources for France. Instead, look for emigration records of the nation from which your ancestor moved.

GAZETTEERS

A gazetteer is a dictionary of place-names. Gazetteers describe towns and villages, departments, provinces, rivers, mountains, sizes of population, and other geographical features. They include only the names of places that existed up to the time the gazetteer was published. The place-names are usually listed in alphabetical order, similar to a dictionary.

You can use a gazetteer to locate the places where your family lived and to determine the civil jurisdiction over those places. For example: Corbières (Ardèche) is a small village that belongs to the community of Gourdon.

Many places in France have the same or similar names. You will need to use a gazetteer to identify the specific village where your ancestor lived, the nearest town with a town hall [*mairie*] and registrar's office, the department [*département*] it was in, and the jurisdictions where records were kept. You will also need the name of the department when using the Locality section of the Family History Library Catalog.

Finding Place-Names in the Family History Library Catalog

Place-names in the Family History Library Catalog are listed under the name of the department [*département*]. To find the department in which a local community [*commune*] is filed in the Family History Library Catalog, you can use the “see” references on the first few Family History Library Catalog microfiche for France. If you are using the catalog on compact disc, use the Locality Browse search. The computer will find places with that name.

A few records before 1792 may be listed under the name of their province. Provinces are labelled “region” in the catalog; for example, FRANCE, ANJOU (REGION) - BIOGRAPHY.

Paris area. France has reorganized the departments in the vicinity of Paris. New departments such as Essonne, Hauts-de-Seine, Paris, Seine-St.-Denis, Val-d'Oise, Val-de-Marne, and Yvelines were created to replace the older Seine and Seine-et-Oise. The Family History Library continues to use the older Seine and Seine-et-Oise in its catalog.

The rest of France. Because of the many changes in place-names, the Family History Library uses gazetteers as the guide for listing places in the Family History Library Catalog. Except in the old departments of Seine, Seine-et-Oise, and Basses-Alpes, French places are listed in the Family History Library Catalog by the name and department listed in—

Code officiel géographique 1985 (Directory of geographic codes). Paris: Impr. Nationale, 1985. (FHL book 944 E2co 1985; not on microfilm.) Arranged by department. Lists the numbers assigned to each department, canton, district [*arrondissement*] and community in France and overseas. These are NOT postal codes.

Since this gazetteer is arranged by department, you must know the department before you can use it easily. Therefore, some researchers prefer to use—

Dictionnaire National des Communes de France (National dictionary of the communities of France). Paris: Albin-Michel, Berger-Levrault, 1984. (FHL book 944 E5di; not on microfilm.)

Localities in this gazetteer are listed in alphabetical order starting on page 203. Places in bold type are communities with a town hall [*mairie*] and its civil registrar's office. The information about each community is listed in the following order: community (in bold and all capitals), geographic code, department (in bold), *arrondissement* (ar.), canton (c.), tax office (perc.), number of houses (log.), population (h.), surface area in hectares (ha.), and postal code (in bold). A locality too small to have its own town hall and registrar's office is listed in italics. This is followed by its department (in bold) and the community (comm.) to which it belongs.

Modern Place-Names

For some research purposes, it is useful to learn modern jurisdictions for the area where your ancestors lived. It may also be helpful to find the ancestral town on modern maps. The following gazetteer can be found at some large libraries and archives:

Bottin des Communes (Bottin's gazetteer of communities). Paris: Didot-Bottin, 1991. (FHL book 944 E5b 1991; 1955 ed. on fiche 6053519.) This gazetteer gives a map and listing of each locality within a specific department. Searching a small department-by-department list of places makes it easier to find places for which you have a garbled spelling.

Historical Place-Names

Because names and boundaries of some places have changed or no longer exist, you may need to use sources that describe places as they were known earlier. Some of the historical national gazetteers that identify places in France are:

France. Administration Générale des Postes.

Dictionnaire des postes aux lettres (Dictionary of post offices). Paris: Imprimerie Royale, 1845. Microfilmed at Paris: Bibliothèque Nationale, 1983. (FHL film 1,344,020.) It lists the department immediately following the locality. The abbreviation *c^{ne}* shows its local community [*commune*]. Please do not confuse *c^{ne}* with *C^{on}*, which means *canton*. The last locality in italics refers to the post office in 1845. Many of these place names still exist today.

Guyot, M. *Dictionnaire géographique et universel des postes et du commerce . . .* (Gazetteer of France). Paris: Guillot, 1787. Microfilmed at Paris: Bibliothèque Nationale. Service Photographique, [19--]. (FHL film 418,114.) Contains the names of towns, villages, parishes, castles, and other places in the kingdom of France. Also gives the name of the province where these are located and the distance to the nearest post office.

These sources are listed in the Locality section of the Family History Library Catalog under FRANCE - GAZETTEERS. Gazetteers and similar guides to place-names for some departments are listed under FRANCE, [DEPARTMENT] - GAZETTEERS.

GENEALOGY

The term *genealogy* is used in this outline and in the Family History Library Catalog to describe a variety of records containing family information gathered by individuals, other researchers, societies, or archives. These records may include pedigree charts, compiled information on families, correspondence, ancestor lists, research exchange files, record abstracts, and collections of original or copied documents. These can be excellent sources of information that can save you valuable time. Because they are compiled from

other sources of information, they must be carefully evaluated for accuracy.

Additional sources of genealogy for noble families in France are described in the "Nobility" section of this outline.

Major Collections and Databases

Several large databases contain previous research or can lead you to others who are interested in sharing family information. These sources include—

- *International Genealogical Index*. The index provides names and vital information for over 3.4 million deceased persons who lived in France. This valuable research tool lists birth, christening, or marriage dates. The index for France includes names extracted from parish registers by volunteers and names submitted by other researchers.

The International Genealogical Index is available on microfiche and on compact disc as part of FamilySearch. If you are using the microfiche, search under FRANCE. If you are using the compact disc edition, however, you will have to search for France under CONTINENTAL EUROPE. The 1992 International Genealogical Index contains about 187 million names, including almost 3 million French names. For more information on FamilySearch, see page 5.

- *Ancestral File*. This file, part of FamilySearch (see p. 5), contains family history information linked in family groups and pedigrees that has been contributed since 1979. As of 1993, the file contains the names of 15 million people, including thousands of French families. On Ancestral File you can print pedigree charts, family group records, and individual summary sheets for any person in the file.
- *Family Group Records Collection*. More than 8 million family group record forms have been microfilmed in the Family Group Records Collection. This collection includes many French families. There are two major sections: the Archive Section and the Patron Section. The film numbers for both sections are listed in the Author/Title section of the Family History Library Catalog under FAMILY GROUP RECORDS COLLECTION.
- *Minitel*. This French commercial computer network is available in the United States and includes French telephone directories, a computer mail box, genealogical society addresses, marriage indexes, and research advice. See the "Archives and Libraries" section of this outline for details.
- *Nordbib*. An organization called the Genealogical and Historical Sources of the Provinces of Nord [*Sources généalogiques et historiques des provinces*

du nord] has created a computer database of genealogical and historical sources for the area of northern France and southern Belgium. Researchers can search *Nordbib* for surnames and receive bibliographic citations from over 4,000 sources. To search *Nordbib* contact—

Union Régionale des Associations
Généalogiques du Nord et du Pas-de-Calais
133 rue de Silly
92100 Boulogne
FRANCE
Telephone 1-46-03-45-24

- *Géopatronyme*. The Public Library of Information in Paris has a computer database that lists the modern surnames of France. Researchers enter a surname into the computer and each department with ten or more persons with that surname will be shown on a map of France. The number of names in that department will also be shown. The names are apparently from telephone directories. This helps researchers locate the most likely departments to search for uncommon surnames.

Family Histories

Some French families have produced histories or newsletters that may include genealogical information, biographies, photographs, and other excellent information. These usually include several generations of the family.

The Family History Library has only a limited number of published French family histories and newsletters. These are listed in the Surname section of the Family History Library Catalog. Not every name found in a family history will be listed in the catalog; only the major surnames discussed in the family history are included.

Unpublished family histories are sometimes found in the possession of private individuals in France. These persons may have collected a variety of records about their own families. But such materials are accessible only by contacting the appropriate individual. Local genealogical societies can often help locate such collections.

Many French family histories are indexed in—

Arnaud, Étienne. *Répertoire de généalogies françaises imprimées* (French genealogical bibliography). 3 vols. Paris: Berger-Levrault, 1978-1982. (FHL book 944 D23a; not on microfilm.) This book indexes many periodical articles and published genealogies. Each listing cites a home area in France. The source reference is shown in an abbreviated form. Each source has to be looked up at the beginning of the volume in the list of list of abbreviations [*Liste des sigles*]. The reference number given after the

name of the author and the name of the source is the call number at the National Library. The Family History Library has a few of the sources found in the Author/Title section of the Family History Library Catalog.

Family Civil Registration Booklets

After 1877 the civil registrar gave a booklet [*livret de famille*] to each couple whose marriage he performed. For details, see page 21.

Genealogical Collections

The Family History Library has some collections of genealogical material for French families. These may include published and unpublished collections of family histories and lineages, as well as the research files of prominent, recognized genealogists.

A major genealogical collection is—

Andriveau, B. (Bernard). *Archives privées* (Private collection). Salt Lake City: Genealogical Society of Utah, 1966-1967. (FHL film 1,147,628-1,147,978, 1,296,501-1,297,226; computer number 37619.)

This is a manuscript card index of parish registers (1700-1891) of twenty-five large French and Belgian cities on 1068 rolls of microfilm. The films circulate only to family history centers outside Europe. The collection contains mostly marriages. It usually gives the name of the bride or groom, birthplace, birth date, spouse, and parents. The sections for Paris also include indexes of baptisms, deaths, and marriage contracts.

Some of the information for Paris may have been extracted from the original records before the fire that destroyed most of the pre-1860 Paris records. This collection can be used to help locate the general area of a surname in France.

Each city has its own separate index. Paris baptisms, marriages, and deaths are listed at the beginning of the Family History Library Catalog entry. Paris marriage contracts are listed at the end.

Genealogical collections are listed in the Locality section of the Family History Library Catalog under—

FRANCE - GENEALOGY
FRANCE - [DEPARTMENT] - GENEALOGY
FRANCE - [PROVINCE] (REGION) -
GENEALOGY

If you find your surname in any of the sources described in this section, determine whether the entry actually pertains to your family. All people with the same surname are not necessarily related. Often, you will have to do some original research before you can connect your ancestry to families listed in these sources. Many of the films are out of focus.

HERALDRY

In France only the noble classes originally had coats of arms. But little was done to prevent the spread of heraldry to French burgher, artisan, and peasant classes. In 1696 the king, to raise money, ordered everyone who bore arms to register them. Even those who did not bear arms were forced to buy them. Arms registrations were documented.

Various authors in France have prepared armorial or heraldry books. An *armorial* is a collection of descriptions of coats of arms and the families that bear them. It also briefly describes their entitlement to that coat of arms. It may also note early bearers of that coat of arms, sometimes with relationships, birth dates, and other genealogical information. Each armorial will differ from others and will include different names. Some minor noble families are not included in any books. The following sources are of particular interest in France:

Jouglar de Morenas, Henri. *Grand armorial de France* (Great armorial of France). 7 vols. Paris: Editions Héraldiques, 1934-1952. (FHL Q book 944 D22j; fiche 661990-661993.)

Rietstap, Johannes Baptist. *Armorial Général*. 2 vols. Gouda: G.B. van Goor Zonen, 1887. Reprinted Berlin: J.S. Stargardt, 1934, and New York: Barnes and Noble, 1965. (FHL book 940 D6r; film 1,045,393 items 2-4, and 1,045,394.)

The Family History Library has collected many armorials. These are listed in the Locality section of the Family History Library Catalog under FRANCE - HERALDRY. For information about noble ancestors, look in the catalog under FRANCE - NOBILITY. In addition, such families are often subjects of published genealogical books or articles. See the "Genealogy" and "Nobility" sections of this outline.

HISTORICAL GEOGRAPHY

This section describes the changes that have taken place in the provincial and departmental structure of France. It describes the jurisdictions used in the Family History Library Catalog.

The boundaries of France have changed frequently. Genoa (now part of Italy) sold the island of Corse to France in 1768. France controlled the Duchy of Savoie and County of Nice from 1792 to 1814 and permanently after 1860. Alsace-Lorraine (basically Moselle, Bas-Rhin, Haut-Rhin) has been an area disputed over the centuries between France and Germany. France lost Alsace-Lorraine in 1871 and regained it in 1914. In the seventeenth century, France acquired a number of cities in Flanders from Belgium.

Before 1789 France was divided into provinces, referred to as "regions" in the Family History Library Catalog. The French revolutionary government reorganized France into new territorial divisions called departments [*départements*].

In 1966 France changed the departments in the vicinity of Paris. New departments such as Essonne, Hauts-de-Seine, Paris, Seine-St.-Denis, Val-d'Oise, Val-de-Marne, and Yvelines were created to replace the older Seine and Seine-et-Oise departments. In southeast France, the department of Basses-Alpes was changed in 1970 to Alpes-de-Haute-Provence. Côtes-du-Nord, in the northwest, was recently changed to Côtes-d'Armor. The Family History Library continues to use the older Seine, Seine-et-Oise, Basses-Alpes, and Côtes-du-Nord departments in its catalog.

Departments were smaller than the old provinces. Each department was divided into several districts [*arrondissements*] and each district was divided into several cantons.

During the French Revolution, starting in 1789 and for a few years afterward, names of towns containing the name Saint or God were temporarily changed to nonreligious names. For example, *Dieulouard* became *Scarponne* for a few years.

The following book explains more about the historical geography of France. You can find this and similar material at the Family History Library and many other research libraries.

Mirot, Léon. *Manuel de géographie historique de la France* (Historical geography of France). 2 vols. Paris: Picard, 1980. (FHL book 944 E2m; not on microfilm.)

Other sources about boundary changes are found in the Family History Library Catalog under—

FRANCE - HISTORICAL GEOGRAPHY
FRANCE - HISTORY
FRANCE, [DEPARTMENT] - HISTORICAL GEOGRAPHY
FRANCE, [DEPARTMENT] - HISTORY
FRANCE, [PROVINCE] (REGION) - HISTORICAL GEOGRAPHY
FRANCE, [PROVINCE] (REGION) - HISTORY

HISTORY

Effective family research requires some understanding of the historical events that may have affected your family and the records about them. Learning about wars, governments, laws, migrations, and religious trends may help you understand political boundaries, family movements, and settlement patterns. These events may

have led to the creation of records such as land and military documents that mention your family.

Your ancestors will become more interesting to you if you also use histories to learn about the events in which they may have participated. For example, by using a history you might learn about the events that occurred in the year your great grandparents were married.

Some key dates and events in the history of France are as follows:

- 1334 Earliest Roman Catholic parish register in France begins.
- 1348 Black plague kills one third of the French population.
- 1572 Saint Bartholomew's Day massacre. Many Protestants flee France.
- 1579 Parish register of marriages and deaths required.
- 1598 Edict of Nantes (Protestants granted religious freedom).
- 1632 French begin settling Quebec and Acadia (Canada).
- 1685 Revocation of the Edict of Nantes, which causes many Protestants to leave France.
- 1722 First wave of settlers begins moving from Alsace-Lorraine to colonies in the Banat (Austria-Hungary, in southeastern Europe).
- 1755 French Acadians (Canadians) deported by the British.
- 1764 First wave of settlers begins moving from Alsace-Lorraine to colonies in Russia and the Ukraine.
- 1787 Edict of Tolerance grants freedom of religion to the Protestants and Jews.
- 1789 French revolution. Half a million refugees flee.
- 1792 French civil registration started.
- 1808 Jews required to take a fixed family surname in addition to their given name.
- 1870 Franco-Prussian War. Alsace-Lorraine annexed by Germany.

The Family History Library has some published provincial and departmental histories for France. You can find histories in the Locality section of the Family History Library Catalog under one of the following:

EUROPE - HISTORY
 FRANCE - HISTORY
 FRANCE, [PROVINCE] (REGION) - HISTORY
 FRANCE, [DEPARTMENT] - HISTORY
 FRANCE, [DEPARTMENT], [CITY] - HISTORY

Several encyclopedias give good summaries of the history of France. Books with film numbers can be ordered through local family history centers. They may also be found in major research libraries. The following is only one of many historical books available:

Guizot, François Pierre Guillaume. *History of France*. 8 vols. New York and London: Co-operative Publication Society, 1869. (FHL book 944 H2g; film 1,573,087 item 3 [v. 1]; film 1,181,964 [v. 2-7]; film 1,181,965 [v. 8].) Text in English.

Local Histories

Some of the most valuable sources for family history research are local histories. They give details about the history of the area, the population, immigration, wars and destruction, pestilences, natural disasters, names of some of the residents, social life in early times, traditions, invasions, and religious persecutions. Even if your ancestor is not listed, information on local history or other relatives may provide important clues for locating the ancestor. The bibliography may also mention other authors or earlier histories important for the area.

In addition, local histories should be studied and enjoyed for the background information they can provide about your family's lifestyle and the community and environment in which your family lived.

For some localities, there may be more than one history. Although relatively few local histories have been published for towns or departments in France, a careful search for available histories of your ancestor's locality is worthwhile.

The Family History Library has some local histories for towns in France. Similar histories are often available at major public and university libraries and archives.

Bibliographies that list local histories are available for some provinces or departments of France. These are listed in the Locality section of the Family History

Library Catalog under—
 FRANCE, [PROVINCE] (REGION) -
 BIBLIOGRAPHY
 FRANCE, [DEPARTMENT] - BIBLIOGRAPHY
 FRANCE - HISTORY - BIBLIOGRAPHY
 FRANCE, [PROVINCE] (REGION) - HISTORY -
 BIBLIOGRAPHY
 FRANCE, [DEPARTMENT] - HISTORY -
 BIBLIOGRAPHY

Calendar Changes

The Gregorian calendar is the calendar in common use in the world today. It is a correction of the Julian calendar, which had been in use since A.D. 46. Leap years had been miscalculated in the Julian calendar. By 1582, the calendar was ten days behind the solar year.

In France, the last day of the Julian calendar was 9 Dec 1582. At that time, ten days were omitted to bring the calendar in line with the solar year. The day after 9 December 1582 was 20 December 1582.

During the years 1793 to 1805, another calendar was introduced. This calendar was based on the founding of the French Republic and used a system of months unrelated to the regular calendar. See the library's *French Republican Calendar* resource guide.

LANGUAGE AND LANGUAGES

Most materials used in French research are written in French. However, you do not need to speak or read French to do research in French records. You merely need to know some key numbers, words, and phrases to understand the records.

Infrequently you may find other languages in French records. These include Latin, German, Italian, and Breton. Latin is sometimes found in Roman Catholic parish registers, but it is unusual to find it in baptism, marriage, and burial records, except in Alsace-Lorraine. German is also frequently found in records from Alsace-Lorraine. Records from Corse, especially before 1768, may be in Italian. Some records from Savoie and Nice are in Italian, especially before 1792 and from 1815-1859. Breton is spoken in Bretagne but is only rarely found in records useful to family historians.

French grammar and customs may affect the way names appear in genealogical records. For example, the names of your ancestor may vary from record to record in French. For help in understanding name variations, see the "Names, Personal" section of this outline.

Language Aids

The Family History Library has genealogical word lists for French, German, and Latin. The French list is found in the Author/Title section of the Family History Library Catalog under—

French: Genealogical Word List. Salt Lake City: Family History Library, 1990. (FHL book 929.1 F21wL; fiche 6105236.) Contains French words of value in genealogical research translated into English.

The Family History Library's separate *Germany Research Outline* (34061) includes an example of the German (Gothic) alphabet in print and handwriting.

The following books and English-French dictionaries can also help you in your research. You can find these and similar material at many research libraries.

French records extraction. Salt Lake City: The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, [198-?]. (FHL book 944 D27f; fiche 6068523.) Text in English. Shows examples of French civil and parish records, translations of common words found in them, personal name lists, and handwriting examples.

New Cassell's French dictionary: French-English, English-French. New York: Funk & Wagnalls, 1970. (FHL book 443.21 C272; not on microfilm.)

Additional language aids (including dictionaries of various dialects and time periods) are listed in the Family History Library Catalog in the Locality section under FRANCE - LANGUAGE AND LANGUAGES or in the Subject section under FRENCH LANGUAGE - DICTIONARIES.

MAPS

Maps are an important source to locate the places where your ancestors lived. They help you see the neighboring towns and geographic features of the area your ancestor came from.

Maps locate places, churches, geographical features, transportation routes, and proximity to other towns. Historical maps are especially useful for understanding boundary changes.

Maps are published individually, or in atlases. An atlas is a bound collection of maps. Maps may also be included in gazetteers, guidebooks, local histories, and history texts.

Different types of maps will help you in different ways. Historical atlases describe the growth and development of nations. They show boundaries, migration routes, settlement patterns, military campaigns, and other historical information. French road atlases provide useful details. Other types of maps include departmental maps, topographical maps, and road maps. Maps show townships in great detail up to one-half inch to the mile. City street maps can be helpful when researching in the parish registers of large cities such as Lyon.

Using Maps

Maps must be used carefully for several reasons:

- Often several places have the same name. For example, at least ten towns are called Saint-Clément in present-day France.
- Not every town is on every map.
- The spelling and even names of some towns may have changed since your ancestors lived there. For example, *Crantenoy* became *Mesnils sur Madon (Les)* in 1971.

- Some localities have different names in different languages. For example, the French town of *Sélestat* is called *Schlettstadt* in German. *Bretagne* is spelled *Brittany* in English.
- Political boundaries are not clearly indicated on all maps.
- Complete listings of localities in the old provinces or dioceses are difficult to find.

Finding the Specific Town on the Map

To do successful research in France, you must identify the town where your ancestor lived. Because many towns have the same name, you may need some additional information before you can locate the correct town on a map. You will be more successful if you have some information about the town. Before using a map, search gazetteers, histories, family records, and other sources to learn all you can about the following:

- The canton, district [*arrondissement*], department [*département*], province, or parish, and diocese [*diocèse*] your ancestor's town was in.
- The name of the town where your ancestor was born or married.
- Towns where related ancestors lived.
- The size of the town.
- The occupation of your ancestor or his relatives (this may indicate the size or industries of the town), or nearby localities, such as large cities.
- Nearby features, such as rivers and mountains.
- Dates when the town was renamed.
- Other names the town was known by.

Use gazetteers to identify the department or canton your ancestor's town was in. This will distinguish it from other towns of the same name and help you locate it on a map. See the "Gazetteers" section of this outline.

Finding Maps and Atlases

Collections of maps and atlases are available at numerous historical societies and at public and university libraries.

The Family History Library has an excellent collection of French maps and atlases. These are listed in the Locality section of the Family History Library Catalog under:

FRANCE - MAPS.

Some helpful maps at the Family History Library are—

Cassini de Thury, César François. *Carte de France* (Map of France). Paris: [s.n.], 1759-1789. Microfiched at Washington, DC: LC Photoduplication Service, 1985. (FHL fiche 6002154 part 1 to 186.) Scale 1: 86,400.

Institut Géographique National (France). *Cartes topographique [de France]* (Topographic maps of France). Paris: Institut Géographique National, 1984. (FHL Map 944 E7ig; not on microfilm.) Scale 1: 100,000.

Helpful atlases for France are—

Grand atlas routier, France, Belgique (Road atlas of France and Belgium). Paris: Editions Solar, 1986. (FHL book 944 E7g; not on microfilm.) Includes Luxembourg. Scale 1: 250,000.

See also the "Gazetteer" and "Historical Geography" sections of this outline.

You can purchase maps of France from—

Genealogy Unlimited
P.O. Box 537
Orem, UT 84059-0537
USA
Telephone 800-666-4363

MILITARY RECORDS

Military records identify individuals who served in the military or who were eligible for service. Most young men were required to serve in or register for military service in France. Evidence that an ancestor actually served may be found in family records, civil registrations, biographies, censuses, probate records, military conscription records, and church records.

Some French military records begin as early as the 1500s. They may give information about an ancestor's military career, such as promotions, places served, pensions, and conduct. In addition, these records may include information about his age, birthplace, residence, occupation, physical description, and family members.

The records you will find include—

- Conscription records (in the 1800s).
- Muster rolls.
- Personnel files.
- Regimental files.
- Lists of officers
- Pension records.
- Correspondence.

Many of these records have been centralized at the Military Archives in Vincennes, but the conscription records are kept at the departmental archives. The

Family History Library has not filmed military records, except for a few conscription records in the department of Bas-Rhin from 1817 to 1856.

Although military records have genealogical information, they are rarely used in French research because they are difficult to access and few are indexed. Military records are kept confidential for 120 years from the soldier's birth. Other sources (such as church records and civil registration) are more easily available and contain much of the same information.

To use French military records, you will have to determine the soldier's specific regiment or ship the sailor served on. If you do not know this information, it may be possible to learn which units were raised in the area where your ancestor lived. To do this, you must know at least the district [*arrondissement*] where the individual was living when he was of age to serve in the military.

Military Records of Genealogical Value

Military censuses or conscription records may help determine where a person was from. They are not indexed. They are compiled year by year and listed alphabetically in each locality for men who are age 19 and 20. The towns are grouped in cantons and districts. Each department has several districts. Because of this, a search of conscription records can be time consuming. You will need your relative's birth year and birth department before hiring somebody to search conscription records in departmental archives.

Records of French troop assignments [*contrôles de troupes*] start in 1716. They are arranged by regiment name and the date each company in the regiment was raised. The list shows where the company was raised, commanders, and number of men. It cites the archive number of the company's records and the types of information in the records (such as names of parents and dates and places of birth). Troop assignments from 1716 to 1789 are listed in—

Corvisier, André. *Les contrôles des troupes de l'Ancien Régime* (Troop assignments of the Ancien Régime). 4 vols. [S.n.]: Concours du C.N.R.S., 1970. (FHL book 944 M23c; not on microfilm.) Volume 2 infantry; Volume 3 cavalry, artillery, militia, French guards, Swiss troops, disabled companies, and colonial navy; Volume 4 indexes by name of the regiment, commanders, or company.

The military archives in Vincennes have not been microfilmed. The archivists occasionally answer letters, but you must know the exact name of the person, time period, rank, and regiment or ship. Do not expect to obtain much information from before 1800.

The following books help you locate French military records:

France. Archives nationales. *Archives de la marine, série B service général* (Navy archive index) Paris: S.E.V.P.E.N., 1969. (FHL book 944 A3fn; film 962,225 item 2.) Alphabetical index to places, names, subjects, and ships mentioned in subseries B 1-3.

France. Ministère de la Marine. *Officiers civils, 1645-1817* (Index of civilian officers attached to the French navy). Paris: Chadwyck-Healey France, 1988. (FHL fiche 6002208.)

Bodinier, Gilbert. *Dictionnaire des officiers de l'armée royale qui ont combattu aux Etats-Unis pendant la guerre d'Indépendance 1776-1783* (Officers in the Royal French Army who fought in the United States during the American War for Independence, 1776-1783). Vincennes: Service historique de l'armée de terre, 1983. (FHL book 944 M2b; not on microfilm.)

Les combattants français de la guerre américaine, 1778-1783 (French soldiers in the American Revolution). Baltimore: Genealogical Publishing, 1969. Originally published as: United States Congress. 58th Congress, 2d. Session. Senate. Document no. 77. (FHL Q book 944 M2cf; film 547,088 item 5.) Includes index.

Military History

France was involved in many military actions, including—

- | | |
|-----------|---|
| 1618-48 | <i>Thirty Years War</i> . Many records destroyed in eastern France. Severe devastation in German areas. |
| 1756-63 | <i>Seven Years War</i> (French and Indian War). Britain consolidates colonial power at the expense of France. |
| 1778-83 | French intervention in the <i>American Revolution</i> . |
| 1792-1800 | <i>French Revolutionary Wars</i> . France invaded Germany and Italy. |
| 1800-15 | <i>Napoleonic Wars</i> surge back and forth across Europe. |
| 1853-56 | <i>Crimean War</i> . France, Britain, Turkey fight Russia. |
| 1870-71 | <i>Franco-Prussian War</i> . Alsace-Lorraine lost. |
| 1914-18 | <i>World War I</i> . France regains Alsace-Lorraine. |

For more historical information about the French military campaigns, use—

Dupuy, R. Earnest, and Trevor N. Dupuy.
Encyclopedia of Military History: From 3500 B.C. to the Present. (Rev. ed.) London, Sidney: Jane's Publishing, 1980. (FHL book 355.033 D929e; not on microfilm.) Text in English.

Additional military histories are listed in the Family History Library Catalog under—

FRANCE - MILITARY HISTORY
 FRANCE, [DEPARTMENT] - MILITARY HISTORY
 FRANCE, [PROVINCE] (REGION) - MILITARY HISTORY

MINORITIES

France has had many ethnic and religious minorities, including Germans, Swiss, Italians, Protestants, Jews, Gypsies, and Mennonites. It's important to learn the history of the ethnic, racial, and religious groups your ancestors belonged to. For example, you might study a history of the Protestants in France, Jews in Alsace, or Mennonites in Alsace-Lorraine and Montbéliard. This historical background can help you identify where your ancestors lived and when they lived there, where they migrated, the types of records where they might be listed, and other information to help you understand your family's history.

For most minorities in France there are some unique records and resources available. These include histories, inventories, biographical sources, settlement patterns, handbooks, and genealogical societies.

The Family History Library collects records of these groups, especially published histories. These are listed in the Family History Library Catalog, Locality section, under—

FRANCE - MINORITIES
 FRANCE, [DEPARTMENT] - MINORITIES
 FRANCE, [PROVINCE] (REGION) - MINORITIES
 FRANCE - JEWISH HISTORY

Other sources are also in the Subject section of the Family History Library Catalog under the name of the minority, such as HUGUENOTS, JEWS, GERMANS, or MENNONITES. Some sources are listed under [MINORITY] - FRANCE. Examples of these books are—

Mathiot, Charles. *Recherches historiques sur les Anabaptistes de l'ancienne principauté de Montbéliard, d'Alsace, et des régions voisines* (Historical research regarding the Anabaptists [Mennonites] of Montbéliard, Alsace, and nearby regions). Belfort: Mission Intérieure luthérienne de Montbéliard, 1922. (FHL film 1,071,437 item 2.)

Scheid, Elie. *Histoire des Juifs d'Alsace* (History of the Jews of Alsace). Paris: Librairie Armand Durlacher, 1887. Reprint. Strasbourg: Willy Fischer, 1975. (FHL book 944.383 F2; film 1,184,064 item 5.)

The Family History Library also has many books about French people in other nations or states. These are listed in the Locality section of the Family History Library Catalog under [NATION OR STATE] - MINORITIES and in the Subject section under FRENCH - [NATION OR STATE]. Additional examples of Subject section headings about French people in foreign lands include—

ACADIANS
 CAJUNS - LOUISIANA
 CREOLES - MISSOURI
 FRENCH-CANADIANS - MAINE
 HUGUENOTS - GERMANY

In nations to which members of French ethnic or religious groups went, various local and national societies have been organized to gather, preserve, and share the cultural contributions and histories of their groups. Some examples are the various French-Canadian and Huguenot communities in North America. See the "Societies" section of this outline.

See the "Church History" and "Church Records" sections of this outline for more information about Huguenots, Mennonites, and other Christian religious minorities.

NAMES, PERSONAL

Understanding surnames and given names can help you find and identify your ancestors in the records.

Surnames

Before the 1200s most people had only one name, such as John [*Jean*]. As the population increased, it became necessary to distinguish between individuals with the same name. The problem was usually solved by adding descriptive information. John became John the stout [*Jean Le Gros*] or John from the town of Dieulouard [*Jean Dieulouard*]. At first, "surnames" applied only to one person and not to the whole family. After a few generations, these names became hereditary and were used from father to son.

Surnames were developed from several major sources:

- Names of saints or persons from the Bible, such as David or Martin.
- Occupational names based on the person's trade, such as merchant [*Marchand*].
- Descriptive nicknames, such as Little John [*Petitjean*].

Names, Personal

- Geographical names based on a person's residence such as forest [*Dubois*] or “from Burgundy province” [*de Bourgogne*].

Surnames were first used by the nobility and wealthy land owners. Later the custom was followed by merchants and townspeople and eventually by the rural population. This process took two or three centuries. In France, the practice was well established by the 1200s.

Since 1539 the law that required priests to write baptism registers also required them to write the surname next to the baptismal name. In the 1700s researchers often find a name written various ways in the same document. But by 1808, especially in civil registration, the spelling of surnames became fixed.

Jewish Naming Customs. Before 1808, the use of a family name by Jews was left to the discretion of the individual. Most Jews in France followed the custom of using only a given name and the father's name, such as Isaac, son of Abraham. Occasionally the name of the town where the person lived was used, as in Isaac of Metz.

Most Jews did not adopt hereditary family names until required to do so by law. In 1808 Napoléon made Jews take a fixed surname. They were required to register their surnames and some of these surname registers still exist. They are usually at the departmental archives.

Double surnames. In some areas of France, especially in the mountainous regions of the Alps and the Pyrénées, individuals may have taken a second (double) surname. The first part of the surname is usually the family surname. The second part of the surname may be a place, a house name, or a nickname. Examples of double surnames are—

Lavit-Jeantoy
Dupraz-Canard
Raffin-Varende

Alias names. A few people, most often soldiers or sailors, took a second surname preceded by “so-called” [*dit*]. Sometimes the individual adopted the *dit* name as the family name, and dropped the original surname. For example, the surname HURNON dit LAJOIE may be listed in these ways:

HURNON
HURNON dit LAJOIE
HURNON-LAJOIE
LAJOIE

Nobility names. Noble families often have several surnames, including one referring to the fief; for example, Chandon de Briailles, de Bourbon de Vendôme, or Dubois d'Ernemont.

Official Name Changes. Starting in 1474 anyone who wished to change his name was required to get permission from the King. Official name changes are indexed in—

Jérôme, archiviste. *Dictionnaire des changements de noms de 1803 à 1956* (Dictionary of changed names from 1803 to 1956). Paris: Librairie Française, 1974. (FHL book 944 D4j 1974; not on microfilm.)

French Names in Other Languages

French genealogical records may be in various languages: French, German, Latin, or Italian. Your ancestor's name could be in Latin in his birth record, in French in his marriage record, and in German on his death record. Given names are often very different when translated into different languages; for example—

Latin	French	German
Deodata	Dieudonné	Theodor
Stephanus	Etienne	Stephan
Guilhelmus	Guillaume	Wilhelm
Jacobus	Jacques	Jacob

Given names are translated into 23 different European languages, including English, in this book—

Janowowa, Wanda, et al. *Słownik Imion* (Dictionary of Names). Wrocław: Ossoliński, 1975. (FHL book 940 D4si; film 1,181,578 item 2; fiche 6000839.)

Given Names

Children were usually given two, three, four, or more given names. Some of these may be the names of parents or other relatives. Baptism names may be different from the names given in civil registration. They may not have been used later in the child's life.

Many given names have variants and dialectical forms. Dominique may also be found as Demange. Isabelle may be called Babet. An example of a book about name meanings, variants, and places of origin is—

Morlet, Marie-Thérèse. *Dictionnaire étymologique des noms de famille* (Etymological dictionary of surnames). Paris: Perrin, 1991. (FHL book 944 D46m; not on microfilm.)

See the “Archives and Libraries” section of this outline for information about *Géopatronyme*, a computerized file showing the frequency of surnames in each department of France.

Other books and microfilms about French names can be found in the Family History Library Catalog, Locality section, under—

FRANCE - NAMES, PERSONAL

NATURALIZATION AND CITIZENSHIP

In France before the 1789 revolution, everyone born outside of the kingdom was a foreigner even if born of French parents. All persons born in France, even of foreign parents, were French.

From the 1100s to 1789, citizenship was frequently limited to individual cities (burgess records) and associated with craft guilds. Burgess and guild records are available only for selected cities. They are difficult to find and use. Church records are usually more available and easier to use.

After 1789, naturalization applications concerning the whole of France are found in the judiciary series [*série judiciaire*] at the National Archives. An index to earlier naturalization records is—

France. Archives nationales. *Lettres de naturalité et de légitimation, 1674-1787: table alphabétique* (Index to naturalizations and legitimations 1674-1787). Paris: Chadwyck-Healey, 1988. (FHL fiche 6002227.) The index lists names, place of origin (nation or city), year of naturalization, and source reference.

In 1871 Alsace-Lorraine was annexed by Germany. Some of the former residents of Alsace-Lorraine declared their preference for French citizenship. Three hundred ninety-five alphabetical, printed lists of these declarations were published in—

France. Ministère de la Justice. *Bulletin des lois de la République française* (Lists of persons preferring French citizenship). Paris: Imp. Nationale, 1872. (FHL film 787,154-787,166.) These lists help locate where a particular surname appeared in Alsace-Lorraine in 1872. They give name, birth date, birthplace, residence, date of the declaration, and notes. These lists include about 950,000 names.

NOBILITY

The nobility is a class of people that has special political and social status. Nobility is inherited or is granted by the king as a reward to persons who perform a heroic deed, achieve greatness in some endeavor, or hold a prominent government position. French nobility has a well-defined order. The highest noblemen are **peers** [*pairs*], which include the titles (in descending rank) duke [*duc*], marquis, earl [*comte*], viscount [*vicomte*], and baron. This is followed by the **gentry** [*petite noblesse*], whose titles

are knight [*chevalier*], esquire [*écuyer*], and gentleman [*gentilhomme*]. Both peers and gentry are entitled to coats of arms.

Most family traditions of a noble ancestor turn out, on investigation, to have little foundation in fact. Very few members of the noble class emigrated to the United States. In addition, contrary to prevailing opinion, it was *not* customary to disown members of noble families for unacceptable behavior. Thus, traditions of an ancestor's being "erased" or eliminated from "all records" are unfounded.

Illegitimate children, though not entitled to noble status, often were recorded (although the father may not have been named) and can be found in the records.

If your research in the original records of France indicates that your ancestor was of the noble class, additional records, such as those described below, will be helpful in your research.

Grants of nobility were documented. Because of frequent false claims to nobility, families had to legitimize (provide documentary proof of) their nobility. Grants of nobility and nobility legitimizations are kept at the National Archives, the National Library, Bibliothèque de l'Arsenal, and departmental archives.

Although some original records (such as the grant of nobility) are still in existence, you can adequately accomplish most nobility research in secondary sources. These include published or manuscript genealogies of noble families. The noble class has been anxious to preserve its identity. This has led to the publication of many noble lines of France. Hundreds of publications are available to help you trace a French noble family. Some of the most important are—

Arnaud, Étienne. *Répertoire de généalogies françaises imprimées*. See the "Genealogy" section for a full citation.

Saffroy, Gaston. *Bibliographie généalogique héraldique et nobiliaire de la France des origines à nos jours, imprimés et manuscrits* (Bibliography of genealogy, heraldry and nobility of France). 5 vols. Paris: Saffroy, 1968-1988. (FHL book 944 D23s; not on microfilm.)

See also the "Heraldry" and "Genealogy" sections of this outline. The Family History Library has collected many records of noble families. these records are listed in the Family History Library Catalog, Locality section, under—

FRANCE - NOBILITY

FRANCE, [PROVINCE] (REGION) - NOBILITY

FRANCE, [DEPARTMENT] - NOBILITY

NOTARIAL RECORDS

Notarial records [*actes notariés* or *minutes de notaire*] are records prepared by a notary [*notaire* or *protonotaire* or *tabellion*]. Notaries are important officials in France and other nations where a civil code based on Roman law is in force. Among other matters, notarial records deal with estates and inheritances. They are somewhat equivalent to probate records of the United States, but they include more document types.

Notarial records cover an early time period, sometimes earlier than church records and civil registration. They often provide a great deal of genealogical information about the people listed in them. However, they are very difficult to find and they are difficult to use unless they are indexed.

Availability

Notarial records were made in all areas of France and its colonies. Researchers sometimes use notarial records from as early as the 1300s.

Notaries are required to deposit records more than 125 years old in the departmental archives, but compliance with this rule is incomplete. Most French notarial records are not indexed. In order to use the records, it helps to know or guess who the notary was, where he lived, and when the document was created.

Many notarial records have been deposited in departmental archives in bundles or boxes arranged by the name of the notary and his town of residence. Most of them have to be searched systematically one by one. In some areas, there may be some indexes. Other notarial records may still be in the office of the notary's successor.

The records of each notary are usually arranged chronologically, so records of most value to the family historian are mixed with other written agreements, including conveyances of land and other property, bonds for the payment of money, and partnerships.

Notarial Record Types

In France the legal profession is divided into notaries [*notaires*] and lawyers [*avocats*]. Lawyers handle legal disputes, but notaries prepare acts and contracts and certify authentic copies of them. Some important notarial records are—

- Marriage contracts [*contrats de mariage*].
- Wills [*testaments*].
- Division of property among heirs [*partages* and *successions*].

- Household inventories taken after someone's death [*inventaires des biens* or *inventaires après décès*].
- Guardianship agreements [*actes de tutelle*] providing for the care of minor children at the death of one or both spouses.

In many of these documents, names and relationships of all family members and friends present at the drafting are given.

Search Strategies

It is often necessary to start with a list of the notaries for the area where your relatives lived. A list of notaries and when and where they worked should be available at the departmental archives. Note the dates when each notary served. Search among the records of notaries in the area at the time your relatives lived there.

A family did not always go to the nearest notary. They may have used an old friend of the family or a notary their parents and grandparents used. Not every family needed a notary, but when they did they often stayed with him through several generations. You may find many documents together concerning the same family.

It may be difficult and costly to hire someone to search notarial documents on your behalf in France. You may be able to hire a professional genealogist listed in a French genealogical periodical or offer to exchange research with another reader of a genealogical periodical in order to have notarial records searched for you.

Also, members of French genealogical associations sometimes compile and sell indexes of notarial records, especially marriage contracts. To know if the notarial records of a locality have been indexed, find the list of indexed records [*relevés*] in the local French genealogical society periodical, or write to the society. They may ask you to become a member of their society before they sell you a copy of their indexes.

Notarial records can be useful to complete a family history. They are a good substitute for missing parish registers before 1792. But search for civil registers first and parish registers second. Then check archive inventories for notarial records.

The Family History Library has only a few French notarial records in its collection. They are listed in the Locality section of the Family History Library Catalog under—

FRANCE, [DEPARTMENT] - NOTARIAL
RECORDS
FRANCE, [DEPARTMENT], [TOWN] -
NOTARIAL RECORDS

PERIODICALS

Most genealogical and historical societies in North America and in France publish magazines and newsletters. The articles often include—

- Family genealogies and pedigrees.
- Transcripts or abstracts of local records.
- Helpful articles on research methodology.
- Information about local records, archives, and services.
- Book advertisements and book reviews.
- Queries or requests for information about specific ancestors that can help you contact other interested researchers.
- Offers to exchange genealogical research services.
- Advertisements of professional researchers.

North American Periodicals

There are more than 25 historical and genealogical societies that publish periodicals focusing on French immigrants to North America. These are often published quarterly and may focus on the immigrants to a particular region or state. Some major examples are—

Acadian Genealogy Exchange. 1972-. Published by Janet Jehn, Acadian Genealogy Exchange, 863 Wayman Branch Road, Covington, Kentucky 41015 USA. (FHL book 973 B2aca; not on microfilm.) Text in English. It includes Acadian/Cajun families in Canada, Louisiana, and anywhere else in the world.

Je me souviens (I remember). 1978-. Published by American French Genealogical Society, P.O. Box 2113, Pawtucket, RI 02861 USA. (FHL book 973 F25am; not on microfilm.) Text in English. Indexes available through Summer 1985.

Lifelines. 1984-. Published by Northern New York American Canadian Genealogical Society, P.O. Box 1256, Plattsburgh, NY 12901 USA. (FHL book 974.7 D25L; not on microfilm.) Text in English.

Les Voyageurs (The voyagers). 1980-. German-Acadian Coast Historical and Genealogical Society, P.O. Box 517, Destrahan, LA 70047 USA. (FHL book 976.33 D25L; fiche 6088746-6088753.) Text in English.

You can find additional genealogical periodicals about the French in North America by contacting the genealogical societies in the areas where your ancestors lived. See the “Societies” section of this

outline. The following book identifies most societies and some of their periodicals:

Bentley, Elizabeth Petty. *The Genealogist's Address Book*, Baltimore: Genealogical Publishing, 1995. (FHL book 973 D24ben; not on microfilm.) See the “Canadian,” “Creole,” “French,” and “Huguenot” sections.

Another way to identify genealogy periodicals about the French in North America is to search the Subject section of the Family History Library Catalog under the subject FRENCH - [NATION, STATE, OR PROVINCE], for example, FRENCH - UNITED STATES.

North American Periodical Index

Many magazines have annual or cumulative indexes. A major composite index to some French-Canadian and French-American family history periodicals is—

Periodical Source Index (PERSI). Ft. Wayne, Ind.: Allen Co. Public Library, 1987-. (FHL book 973 D25per; fiche 6016864.) This annual index begins with periodicals published in 1986. There is also a multivolume retrospective 1847-1985 index (FHL fiche 6016863). It indexes about 2,000 English-language and French-Canadian genealogy and local history periodicals published in North America. For Canada, articles are listed by record type within provinces. The families section indexes worldwide surnames alphabetically.

French Periodicals

Many societies and organizations in France publish genealogical periodicals. These are in French. Much of their content is devoted to compiled genealogies of native families. They also are an excellent place to publish queries or advertisements for a lost ancestor from a specific area of France. The last few pages of these periodicals usually include queries, research exchange offers and professional researchers' advertisements. Some major examples of national French genealogical periodicals are—

Héraldique et généalogie (Heraldry and genealogy). 1969-. Published by Héraldique et Généalogie, B.P. 526, 78005 Versailles Cedex, FRANCE. (FHL book 944 B2h; fiche 6312504.)

Gé[néalogie] Magazine (Genealogy Magazine). 1982-. Published by Editions Christian, 5, rue Alphonse Baudin, 75011 Paris, FRANCE. (FHL book 944 D25gm; not on microfilm.)

La revue française de généalogie (French Genealogical Review). 1979-. Published by La Revue, 12, rue Raymond-Poincaré, 55800 Revigny, FRANCE. (FHL book 944 D25r; not on microfilm.)

Periodicals

In addition, excellent departmental and regional periodicals are also available. These include, for example, *Généalogie Lorraine* (Genealogy of Lorraine), *Cercle généalogique de Languedoc* (Genealogical Society of Languedoc), and *Nord Généalogie* (Genealogy of Nord).

French genealogical periodicals about ethnic or religious minorities may also be useful. They include—

Cercle de Généalogie Juive (Jewish Genealogical Society). 1985-. Published by the Cercle de Généalogie Juive, Centre Edmond Fleg, 8bis rue de l'Eperon, 75006 Paris, FRANCE. (FHL book 944 D25b; not on microfilm.)

Cahiers du Centre de Généalogie Protestante (Notices of the Center for Protestant Genealogy). 1978-. Published by the Society for the History of French Protestantism [*Société de l'histoire du Protestantisme Français*] 54, rue des Saints-Pères, 75007 Paris, FRANCE. (FHL book 944 F25c; not on microfilm.)

Bulletin de la Société de l'Histoire du Protestantisme Français (Bulletin of the Society for the History of French Protestantism). 1852-. Published by the Society for the History of French Protestantism [*Société de l'histoire du Protestantisme Français*] 54, rue des Saints-Pères, 75007 Paris, FRANCE. (FHL book 944 B2sp, vol. 1-115; film 885,700-29 and 885,753-58. The index for volumes 1 to 114 is on FHL film 104,348.)

Indexes

Some periodicals have annual or cumulative indexes. Others publish directories of their members' research interests. Some have indexes on the French commercial computer network *Minitel* (see the “Archives and Libraries” section of this outline). French genealogical periodicals are the best place to learn about *Minitel's* genealogical services.

Obtaining Periodicals

Copies of periodicals are available from the local societies that publish them. Major genealogical societies and libraries with genealogical collections will have copies of many periodicals, particularly those representing the area they serve.

The Family History Library subscribes to numerous periodicals. These are listed in the Family History Library Catalog in several ways. If you know the title of a periodical, search the Author/Title section of the catalog. More than 50 French regional and departmental genealogical periodicals have titles that start with “*Cercle généalogique . . .*” (Genealogical

society . . .) To find periodicals in the Locality section of the catalog, use the following approaches:

FRANCE - GENEALOGY - PERIODICALS
FRANCE - HISTORY - PERIODICALS
FRANCE - PERIODICALS
FRANCE, [PROVINCE] (REGION) -
 GENEALOGY - PERIODICALS
FRANCE, [DEPARTMENT] - GENEALOGY -
 PERIODICALS

See also *La généalogie: histoire et pratique*, pages 296-306 (see the “For Further Reading” section of this outline). The name of the periodical is in italics after the name of the society.

Also see the “Societies” section of this outline.

PROBATE RECORDS

Probate records are legal records that describe the distribution of a person's estate after he or she dies. In France certain kinds of notarial records are used as probate records. See the “Notarial Records” section of this research outline.

SOCIETIES

There are many societies and organizations that may have information of value to your genealogical research in France, and in the nation to which your ancestor immigrated, especially the United States and Canada. You may find it helpful to join some of these societies and support their efforts.

Genealogical Societies

There are many genealogical societies which emphasize French research. Most of these societies publish helpful periodicals, transcripts, compiled genealogies, and may have special indexes, collections, and projects. Many publish queries about French ancestors or maintain a list of members' research interests. Some also help find immigrants to or from a specific area.

French Societies. There are an estimated 300 genealogical societies in France, representing about 50,000 genealogists and publishing about 100 periodicals. Most French departments have genealogical societies. French genealogical societies are often involved in indexing church records before 1792. Contact the society in the department where your ancestor lived. The following societies may be of interest:

Cercle Généalogique d'Alsace
5, rue Fischart
67000 Strasbourg
FRANCE

Union des Cercles Généalogiques et Héraldiques
de Normandie
B.P. 556
27005 Evreux Cedex
FRANCE

Societies outside France. There are often French genealogical societies in the nations to which French people immigrated. For example—

Quebec Family History Society
P.O. Box 1026
Point Claire, PQ G9A 5L2
CANADA

American-French Genealogical Society
P.O. Box 2113
Pawtucket, RI 02861
USA

Historical Societies

Historical societies can be valuable sources of information for French ancestors. Similar societies are found in nations where French emigrants settled. These often collect information about French immigrants. Some may have information about specific French individuals. Many societies have special collections of books and manuscript material for France that may be difficult to find in libraries and archives. For example, you may be interested in the services, activities, and collections of the following:

British Huguenot Society
c/o University College
Gower Street
London WC1E 6BT
ENGLAND

The Society for the History of French Protestantism has a library open to the public and will search their records for a donation:

Société de l'histoire du Protestantisme Français
54, rue des Saints-Pères
75007 Paris
FRANCE

The American Historical Society of Germans from Russia has information about German-speaking people from French Alsace-Lorraine:

American Historical Society of Germans from Russia
631 D Street
Lincoln, NE 68502-1199
USA

Fraternal Societies

Your ancestor or relative may have belonged to an association, lodge, or fraternal society whose membership is based on common interests, religion, or ethnicity. These societies were involved in political, social, and financial activities, including life and burial insurance.

Several sources, such as local histories, biographies, obituaries, tombstones, family records, and artifacts may give you clues that an ancestor belonged to a fraternal society. An example French-American fraternal organization is—

Union Saint-Jean Baptiste
Box F
Woonsocket, RI 02895
USA

The records of fraternal organizations may exist in a society or business archive. You may be able to obtain some genealogical information through correspondence. The Family History Library has histories of a few fraternal societies but very few records. These are listed in the Locality section of the Family History Library Catalog under the place-name followed by subject headings such as, SOCIETIES, GENEALOGY, HISTORY, OCCUPATIONS, and MINORITIES.

Guides to Societies and Associations

Directories. A good list of French genealogical societies is in—

Johnson, Keith A., and Malcolm R. Sainty.
Genealogical research directory: national and international. Sydney: Johnson and Sainty, 1993. Annual. (FHL book 929.1025 G286grd 1993; not on microfilm.) Pages 766-81 describe 148 French genealogical societies including their mailing addresses. French text usually has an English translation.

A list of 175 historical-genealogical societies in France and their periodicals is found on pages 296 to 306 of *La généalogie: histoire et pratique* (see the “For Further Reading” section of this outline).

More than 40 genealogical societies with interest in French immigrants to North America are included in—

Meyer, Mary Keysor. *Meyer's Directory of Genealogical Societies in the U.S.A. and Canada.* 10th ed. Mt. Airy, MD: Meyer, 1994. (FHL book 970 C44m 1994; not on microfilm.) Search the “Canada” chapter under “Quebec,” and the “Special Interest” chapter under the headings “Canadian” (separate from the “Canada” chapter), “French,” and “French-Canadian-Acadian.”

Twenty-three Canadian and United States genealogical societies emphasizing French immigrant research are

Societies

listed in Dennis M. Boudreau's *Beginning Franco-American Genealogy* (see the "For Further Reading" section of this outline).

Another directory listing North American French-immigrant genealogical societies is—

Bentley, Elizabeth Petty. *The Genealogist's Address Book*. Baltimore: Genealogical Publishing Co., 1995. (FHL book 973 D24ben; not on microfilm.) Look in part 3, "Ethnic and Religious Organizations and Research Centers," for the headings "Creole" (1 society) and "French" (40 societies). In part 4, "Special Resources," look for the heading "Huguenot" (10 societies).

The addresses of thousands of historical societies in North America are given in—

Wheeler, Mary Bray. *Directory of Historical Organizations in the United States and Canada*. 14th ed. Nashville: AASLH Press, 1990. (FHL book Ref 970 H24d 1990; not on microfilm.) Text in English.

For more information about fraternal societies of interest to French immigrants in North America, see—

Wynar, Lubomyr Roman. *Encyclopedic Directory of Ethnic Organizations in the United States*. Littleton, Colo.: Libraries Unlimited, 1975. (FHL book 305.8 W99e; not on microfilm.) Text in English.

Guide to indexing projects in France. Many French genealogical societies have begun indexing church records (chiefly marriages) kept in their areas before 1792. For a list of indexed records use *Recensement des dépouillements systématiques . . .* (see page 17 of this outline) or write to the appropriate French genealogical society.

Locating Records at the Family History Library

Records of these societies are usually described in the Author/Title section of the Family History Library Catalog under the name of the society. They are also listed in the Locality section of the catalog under one of the following:

FRANCE - SOCIETIES
FRANCE, [DEPARTMENT] - SOCIETIES
FRANCE - GENEALOGY
FRANCE, [DEPARTMENT] - GENEALOGY

Some records gathered by societies are listed in the Locality section of the Family History Library Catalog under the type of record. For example, church record indexes prepared by a local genealogical society are listed in the catalog under:

FRANCE, [DEPARTMENT] - CHURCH
RECORDS - INDEXES.

Lists and guides that describe the collections of societies are listed in the Locality section of the Family History Library Catalog under—

FRANCE - ARCHIVES AND LIBRARIES -
INVENTORIES, REGISTERS, CATALOGS
FRANCE, [DEPARTMENT] - ARCHIVES AND
LIBRARIES - INVENTORIES, REGISTERS,
CATALOGS
FRANCE, [DEPARTMENT], [TOWN] -
ARCHIVES AND LIBRARIES - INVENTORIES,
REGISTERS, CATALOGS

Records Not at the Family History Library

The "French Search Strategies" section of this outline and the Family History Library's *French Letter-Writing Guide* (34059) give details about how to write to societies in France for genealogical information.

OTHER RECORDS OF FRANCE

The subject headings listed below can be found in the Locality section of the Family History Library Catalog after the locality: for example—

FRANCE - [SUBJECT]
FRANCE, [PROVINCE] (REGION) - [SUBJECT]
FRANCE, [DEPARTMENT] - [SUBJECT]
FRANCE, [DEPARTMENT], [TOWN] -
[SUBJECT]

Though not discussed in this outline, the following catalog subject headings may be useful to your research:

CHURCH DIRECTORIES
COLONIZATION
COURT RECORDS
DESCRIPTION AND TRAVEL
ENCYCLOPEDIAS AND DICTIONARIES
HANDWRITING
JEWISH HISTORY
JEWISH RECORDS
LAND AND PROPERTY
LAW AND LEGISLATION
MANORS
MIGRATION, INTERNAL
MILITARY HISTORY
NAMES, GEOGRAPHICAL
OBITUARIES
OCCUPATIONS
POSTAL AND SHIPPING GUIDES
SCHOOLS
SOCIAL LIFE AND CUSTOMS
TAXATION
VOTING REGISTERS

FOR FURTHER READING

More detailed information about research and records of France can be found in—

Aublet, Robert. *Nouveau guide de généalogie* (New guide to genealogy). Evreux: Ouest-France, 1986. (FHL book 944 D27a; not on microfilm.)

Bernard, Gildas. *Guide des recherches sur l'histoire des familles* (Family history research guide). Paris: Archives Nationales, 1981. (FHL book 944 D27b; not on microfilm.)

Boudreau, Dennis M. *Beginning Franco-American Genealogy*. [Pawtucket, RI]: American-French Genealogical Society, 1986. (FHL book 973 D27bo; not on microfilm.) Text in English.

Durye, Pierre. *Genealogy: an introduction to continental concepts*. New Orleans: Polyanthos, 1977. (FHL book 944 D25dp; not on microfilm.) Text in English.

Valynseele, Joseph. *La généalogie: histoire et pratique* (Genealogy: History and Practice). Paris: Larousse, 1992. (FHL book 944 D27gL; not on microfilm.)

COMMENTS AND SUGGESTIONS

The Family History Library welcomes additions and corrections that will improve future editions of this outline. Please send your suggestions to—

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35 North West Temple Street
Salt Lake City, Utah 84150.
USA

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