

Chapter Four

Religious persecution

Burke's General Armoury says that the Tyzacks, Henzeys and Tytters were all refugees, most likely this meant Huguenot refugees. The evidence for this, certainly for the Thysacs, is sketchy and comes from the middle of the sixteenth century. Although some glassworkers were Huguenots, it would be wrong to assume all were. Indeed the records show that there were persons pursuing either religion among them. As several edicts banished "*persons of the reformed religion*", it is probable that those who emigrated included more of such adherents. Among the documents found, several mention this subject, the following eight items are examples:

1. At the main glasshouse of Belrupt, Charles Hennezel, the principal partner of Charles Tisal (Thysac), sought asylum outside of Lorraine for reasons of religion. In 1570 he ran the estate of Essouaivre, near to Montbéliard. Today this is near the Swiss border. From there he went to Picardie.

The same piece tells that Guillaume du Houx was a skilled "*glassworker of small glasses who remained at Belrupt. He purchased Belrupt from Charles, the glassworker of window glass, who, because of his religion, quit the Lorraine.*" (mss Lorraine 60 folio 219 to 223)

2. A piece about the "Grande Catherine" glassworks, tells that, Catherine Thysac was converted to Protestantism and gave her name to the glassworks of the "Grande -Catherine". This name of "Grande - Catherine" appeared in 1532, in an identification of the boundaries of the Lordship of Passavant. It was substituted for the former name of "Patrenostrière". The piece also tells that until 1572, makers of window glass still operated the Grand Catherine, but then the principal owner, M. Vioménil, had "*taken Jehan Hennezel to the country of Picardie*". After that the glasshouse passed into the hands of **small** glassworkers, principally of du Houx. (Arch. Dep. de Meurthe et Moselle, B 850, number. 35)

Two kilometres to the south of the Grand Catherine, was the very limit of Lorraine. It was the border with Franche Comté. Here Calvinism in Lorraine was shown by the Rock of the Huguenots, (which is still there about as big as a house). It was a focal point where the Protestant glassmakers of Lorraine met. Preachers held forth from the high part of the Rock. The pastor stood up and

was surrounded by six disciples occupying the six seats carved into the rock, which also still exist. They couldn't have endured long with the actions taken by the Duke of Lorraine, aimed at taking out of his State " *all persons who don't want to live in the catholic religion* ." { Mandement of Duke of Lorraine 17 December 1585 (Arch. Dep. de Meurthe et Moselle B 844 number. 99), and ordinance of 22 March 1587 *against the religious persons who don't want to Abjure*, [That is recant] (Arch. Dep. de Meurthe et Moselle B 844 number. 98).}

3. Before 1572, Nicolas Hennezel chose to follow the Pretended Reformed Religion. He went to Picardie, then at the beginning of 1573 he took refuge in Montbéliard. Nicolas then sold his possessions in Lorraine, ceding them to François Houx, husband of his sister Yolande and founder of the New Glasshouse of Francogney. After that he reached Vaud in Switzerland.

4. An admission and account of Glasshouse Hatrey was given by Adam Hennezel (Anesey) son of Christophe, in 1553. It was mentioned in a lawsuit on the 30 August 1833 and 2 December 1841 on the subject of the ownership of the Wood of Hatrey. In this account it is stated that the gentlemen glassworkers of Hatrey were all members of the Supposed Reformed Religion, that is Huguenots. (Archives Communal of Gruey)

5. Again at Hatrey, Moses Hennezel, who bore the title Sire of Grandmont and of la Rochère, married Anne Mary Hennezel of Tholoy, in 1642. Then in 1651, "*for reason of religion*", he went to Escoussens to exercise his art. In 1653 he lived at Collonges in Nivernais.

6. Around the year 1580, work at the glassworks La Pille was slowed down as a result of the departure of several gentlemen glassworkers, who became Huguenots.

In 1635 the dealers threatened the glassworkers " *to provide from others coming from England*" but the glassworkers quit to go to work in Thiérache with a new contract. It seems likely that these moves were associated with religion.

Isaac Thiéry didn't follow his two brothers into their emigration. He stayed in the Vôge, where he remained the guardian of the possessions of his family in the Lorraine. Isaac was more preoccupied with raising stock than with glassware. There are numerous "indentures to title of crossings" that is certificates of pedigrees for livestock agreed between 1626 and 1670. In 1656 Isaac became the Collector of the Impositions (Tax man) of the glasshouses. In 1659 he swore an oath recanting the reformed religion. He and his wife Elisabeth Hennezel founded four masses per year in perpetuity in the church of Vioménil. They expressed thus " *their wish to live and die in the beliefs of the Catholic Church, Apostolic and Roman* ". So Isaac became a perfect example of the real difficulties of life experienced by the families of glassworkers, and the choices they had to make. He was also a witness of oaths to window glass secrets.

7. At the la Rochère glasshouse, the relationship between the inhabitants of Passavant and those of the village of la Rochère was, in general, tense. At la Rochère **all** the population were followers of the Reformed Religion and the *"Messieurs of the glasshouse had required and obtained that a chapel, settled for Huguenots, be set aside in the choir of the Church of Passavant ."* Several glassworkers quit this establishment at the beginning of the seventeenth century. This was a big thing for them for each would have inherited the title of "Sire of the la Rochère". Some departed to work in the glassworks of Nivernais and some of Quercy. Some of the others definitely reached England after passing through Thiérache.

8. At the glasshouse Torchon we read that this bastion of the Pretended Reformed Religion doesn't seem to have been worried by the officers of Lorraine, until 1621. In that year, several contract lawyers spent time there. Thus we can assume that to be the date of the departure of the glassworkers from Torchon.

So references do exist, with the few examples above, suggesting that some of our glassmaking artisans were Huguenots. From this it is clear that some of those who came to England were escaping religious persecution. There is no doubt that the civil disorder going on in France at that time which spilled over into Lorraine would have given them a real push. Although financial gain, and high wages, was the main motivator the unrest under the banners of religion was the spur. Because of this and because many of them became Huguenots, an understanding of their situation requires a review of the religious reform movement.

Religious Reforms

With the destruction and desolation that came from the passage of marauding armies across this border region, with the robbing by the roaming bands of brigands, with the ravages of pestilence, the glassmaking families of the Darney region thought that they had seen their fair shares of adversity. They were wrong! Their lives would undergo a sea change when they became involved with the new religious ideas being sown in their region.

When Luther nailed his theses to the door of Wittenberg church in 1517, he was announcing the end of medieval Christendom. For the glassworkers of Darney it was a time of decision. Luther's ideas were to spread like a bush fire.

The habit had arisen of treating the high offices of prelates or canons, and even well endowed curacies, as well -paid positions. Thus favourites were appointed as bishops or abbots, especially the younger sons of noble families. The posts were simply given in exchange for a payment from the new incumbent. Such incumbents often held several bishoprics or abbeys at the same time. These nobles, so endowed, could live off the income from their positions.

Thus, with few exceptions, the superior clergy had ceased to exercise any professional guidance over their underlings. Priests and monks were recruited haphazardly. They were without supervision or any religious instruction and so were often ignorant and indifferent to their calling. They had no knowledge of the doctrines and did not preach sermons. Some of them formulated their own ideas and many often spread heretical opinions among their flock.

The lay folk, and surely that would include glassmakers, kept up the traditional practices of worship but were left in a state of perplexity. Most persons felt the doctrine of salvation was vital to them. But they could draw no comfort from their religious practices. In this vacuum, the ecclesiastical authorities put up with the preaching of the new ideas and at least for a period, took no action against heretics.

Catherine Thysac, daughter of Jehan of Lichecourt and wife of Christophe Hennezel, converted to Protestantism. When she made her conversion is not certain but her name was given to the glasshouse, "Grande Catherine", in 1532. If her conversion was contemporary with that date then it was before the influence of Calvin.

At that early date we can find evidence of reform activity as close as Strasbourg. Strasbourg then was an imperial free city, which also suffered from absentee bishops and poor quality clergy. It was also a major centre of the book trade. It was therefore particularly susceptible to the printed word. The works of Luther were widely circulated.

In 1532 John Calvin became profoundly committed to the religious life. He settled in Basle in 1534 and his approach was in many ways similar to Luther's. His guiding principle was that the scriptures were the sole source of guidance on matters of religious faith. In 1523 Jacques Lefèvre, translated the New Testament into French and Calvinism substituted the French language for Latin. By the time of Calvin's death in 1564, he had founded an Academy with about fifteen hundred pupils and undergraduates. So by that date there were plenty of preachers, schooled in the reformed religion. Strasbourg is just about 80 miles from the Darney region, and so it is not hard to imagine preachers coming from that city and this happened, there was communication.

The culture of the local people was based on free and open discussion. The inhabitants of towns had been in the habit of debating legal matters freely, and now they discussed religious matters with the same lack of inhibition. It was in this climate of enquiry that John Calvin proclaimed his thesis of reform.

In France, the forces of conservative orthodoxy were at work. From 1535 onwards, the French government was committed to the destruction of heresy within the kingdom, though the intensity of persecution varied with fluctuations in French foreign policy. As time went on, interference with religious beliefs was more common.

The principal leaders of the defence of the catholic faith came from the family of the Guises which, from René II onwards, provided the Dukes of Lorraine! Anthony, Duke of Lorraine from 1508 until 1544, was the brother of Claude, the first Duke of Guise. Small wonder the records don't reveal much about glassmakers proclaiming their faith when the Guise family had such access to the records?

Religious scene

Religious reform in France began in the reign of Francis I. The new religion spread rapidly. Most of northern Germany had converted to Protestantism by 1545.

In March 1547 Francis died and his son became the new king. Henry II needed time to establish himself. Henry resolved to combat heresy and adopted vigorous measures. He was far less tolerant than his father. An edict in 1551, known as the Edict of Châteaubriant, authorised the confiscation of the property of convicted heretics. It established the **death** penalty for heresy and ordered the denunciation of heretics under pain of severe punishment. Even with such blistering persecution, the reform movement attracted more followers. Until now, these converts had been called Lutherans but their main source of teaching, their literature and their organisation came from Geneva. Thus Calvinism was making the biggest inroads in France.

Calvin's ideas were based on the existence of a chosen elite. If a man were saved, it was through an act of grace, his own merit playing no part. God had decided from all eternity whether each man was one of the elect and therefore saved, or an outcast and therefore damned. Any person was damned who carried out a wrong act. So such an act was simply evidence that he was an outcast. Only two sacraments were retained, Baptism and the Communion. Calvin abolished genuflection and making the sign of the cross.

So Calvinism became a religion that appealed to ordinary folk for many reasons. They could understand it, and it possessed amazing simplicity. Not least, there were missionaries from Geneva who had been taught how and what to preach. These early secret Huguenot services later became more defiant. Calvinism spread with a speed that amazed even Calvin himself. Its centre of gravity soon began to shift away from our region in the north-east of France. This area became increasingly under the control of the Catholic families, particularly the Guises, the family of the Dukes of Lorraine.

Absorbed by wars, Henry II had allowed Calvinism to make headway with the nobles. To add to this, heresy everywhere was jeopardising the stability of States. Religious dissidence spread alarmingly. It was only a matter of time before Philip II of Spain and Henry II of France must settle their differences and attend to these internal problems.

On 3rd April 1559, after sealing an agreement with Elizabeth's England the previous day, France sealed its peace treaty with Spain.

Immediately after Henry made peace with Charles V at Cateau - Cambrésis he turned to concentrate on his internal problems. He ordered the rigid enforcement of the laws against heresy. French Protestantism was about to enter a critical stage.

Then a splinter in the eye from a lance killed Henry II in a tournament. His son was too young and so the Duke of Guise and Cardinal Guise of Lorraine, both determined enemies of Calvinism, ran the government.

The Wars of Religion

It was religious differences, which came to the forefront after 1559, cutting across national frontiers and fomenting new hatreds. By now torpor had overcome the second generation of Lutherans and it was the Calvinists who became the most dynamic agents of the Reformed Religion. Calvinism enjoyed some advantages as a militant creed. Its doctrines were more clear-cut and its devotees more disciplined.

The first war of religion, which broke out in 1562, shortly after a massacre at Vassy, was an affair of skirmishes rather than major battles. It removed many leading figures from the scene. That included Francis, Duke of Guise and this made reconciliation possible.

A few thousand men on either side fought the eight French wars of religion, which lasted until 1598

In July 1585 Henry III of France agreed to the Treaty of Nemours. It revoked all the edicts of toleration and required Huguenots either to abjure their religion or leave the realm within six months. In Lorraine duke Charles III copied this repressive legislation with his own laws.

Persecution of Huguenots

A translation of the edict of Charles III, of Lorraine, shows how he defended the Catholic faith, against the "supposed reformed church". Laws often required immediate emigration from Lorraine, and the total seizure of any property remaining. The edicts also threatened imprisonment to any one who returned. This kind of persecution had been going on for some time, although perhaps not quite so harsh. In spite of its apparent severity, the methods cannot have been totally successful, certainly not in 1585. A subsequent edict was signed in 1587. It is essentially a repeat of the edict for 1585. If Charles thought the second necessary, the first apparently did not work. Edicts of Charles in Lorraine were more ruthless than those of Henry III in France. At least Henry allowed six months for Protestants to abjure or leave his realm!

On his part Calvin was equally ruthless. He wrote, as a commentary on the thirteenth chapter of Deuteronomy, "*God makes plain that the false prophet is to be stoned without mercy.*" He then went on to say that no father should spare his child or brother his brother, when the choice was between God and relative.

The 1585 Edict,¹ is on the last page of this chapter. There was at least one further edict later,².

This date of 1585, is of great significance in our narrative because it coincides with the emigration of at least one Tyzack.

Other Religious Edicts

In France, an edict ordered the extermination of the heretics as early as 1535. This resulted in the first of many emigrations. In 1547, when Henry II came to the throne of France, he established the special court of *Chambre Ardente*, to completely root out heresy. Several laws followed in 1551 to the same end. They were labelled the Edict of Châteaubriant. The Crown rewarded informers and confiscated the property of convicted heretics. Anyone who dared plead for them was regarded as a heretic. Only those of proven orthodoxy could become teachers or professors.

Francis II, a feeble man, followed Henry. During his short reign, the Guise brothers controlled affairs of state. With their fanatical Catholicism they persecuted heretics viciously. Anne du Bourge, a prominent member of the grand Council of Paris, was executed.

In May 1560, there was the Edict of Romorantin. This gave bishops exclusive rights to deal with heresy in their dioceses; it pleased neither side. A year later a new law said that only those taking part in heretical assemblies should be put to death. This edict was soon abolished. By January 1562 all penalties against heretics were suspended. Had the Huguenots been led by men of vision this could have been the beginning of an age of tolerance, but instead they went on the rampage in December 1562.

Earlier, in September, Elizabeth had signed a treaty at Hampton Court with Conde's Huguenots. She made a substantial loan in exchange for the cession of Le Havre. Huguenot's enemies were also enemies of Elizabeth. Huguenots from Lorraine could expect a welcome in England.

So it is clear that for most of the sixteenth century numerous French edicts set policy, which threatened all heretics. After the St. Bartholomew's Eve Massacre in 1572, matters came to a head. Henry III came to the French Throne in 1574. His first act ordered Huguenots to become Catholics or quit his kingdom. But

¹ M. M. B 844 number 99

² M. M. B 844 number 98.

the king found himself powerless to impose this. In 1576 he signed the Edict of Beaulieu that again gave Huguenots full religious liberty and other guarantees.

In 1589, a Dominican friar named Jacques Clement, stabbed Henry III to death. It ended the rule of the Valois and France faced the prospect of a Huguenot heir, Henry of Navarre. Henry's claim to the throne did not go unchallenged. Charles, duke of Lorraine, made a claim on two counts. He could trace his ancestry back before the Carpetian kings in 987, and secondly he was the husband of the late king's sister.

Philip II of Spain had a claim and so did the Guises.

So Henry of Navarre fought several indecisive battles to resolve his position. In July 1593, he signed a declaration of faith and converted to Catholicism. In March 1594, King Henry, the former Huguenot, and recent Roman Catholic convert, appeared before the gates of Paris. There was virtually no resistance and he entered and was at last master in the capital. In 1598 Henry IV now King of France issued the Edict of Nantes and guaranteed the liberty of conscience of all his subjects. It restricted freedom of worship for Huguenots to those places that they had previously used.

Religious Outcome

The purpose of listing these edicts is to show the many attempts made by the French throne, to give order to the religious structure of France. Even the list above is very simplified. After reading the edict signed by Charles III of Lorraine, the reader is left wondering. Why was it necessary to issue a second only two years after the first? The answer is that until Henry IV came along no ruler was strong enough to impose his will on all. This was probably also true in Lorraine. An edict would emerge but before it succeeded, the other faction managed to win an advantage. Often the effect was the continuation of fighting, which cost money, as always difficult to raise.

We can only guess at how difficult it was for any aspiring Calvinist to follow his chosen religion without being reported to the authorities. Clearly some glassworkers had made their allegiance known because it is in the records. There is however not a great deal of reference to religious affiliation. That is probably because it was best kept quiet.

An enormous change occurred in the last forty years of the sixteenth century. In 1560 it had seemed possible that Huguenots were becoming so strong that they might take over the religious control of France and maybe the land might turn Protestant. In 1562 there had been more than 2,000 Huguenot congregations. But by the end of the sixteenth century, such congregations totalled only some 800. Their threat had gone. By sixteen hundred Protestantism had virtually stagnated. France was firmly Catholic and now it had a strong Catholic king. Many factors brought about the decline of the Protestant base and although many Protestants still lived in France the country lost much of its skilled and noble core.

Religious regime in England

England was in a different position. Unlike Francis I and Charles V, Henry VIII, of England, did break with Rome. He ascended the throne in 1509. Henry made his break however for personal reasons unconnected with his personal religious beliefs. He was a conservative catholic. In 1521 he wrote a book that argued against Luther. For doing so the Pope conferred that title which appeared around the edge of British coins, "*Defensor fidei*". He was a Defender of the faith. By the time of his death in 1547, Protestantism had made little headway in England. Henry's motive for his break with Rome was not founded in religious beliefs. His motive was to end his marriage to his wife Catherine of Aragon. However because Catherine had been the widow of Henry's elder brother, it had been necessary to obtain the Pope's dispensation for the marriage, in the first place. Now that he wanted it cancelled, Henry required the Pope's formal annulment. It is quite probable that ordinarily the Pope would grant such an annulment without delay. Catherine, however, was the aunt of Charles V, the Holy Roman Emperor. At the time, since 1527, Rome was in the hands of the Emperor's troops and the Pope was unable to grant the request. The pregnancy of Anne Boleyn, in January 1533, brought matters to a head. By May 1533 Archbishop Cranmer of England granted the annulment. The future Queen Elizabeth was born in the autumn. So from 1534 until 1547 England was Henrician Catholic. From 1547 until 1553 it became Protestant under Edward VI. Mary then reverted to Roman Catholicism from 1553 to 1558, but England finally returned to Protestantism under Elizabeth from 1558.

Edict of Charles duc of Lorraine concerning persons of the supposed reformed religion

Sir the royal officer.

As by this, my edict and order in front of the public, I have made sufficiently understandable concerning that which is my will on the handling of the catholic apostolic and Roman faith, and the errors which any of my seduced subjects (the ones who do fall into the deceitful, lying mistakes,) those erring of this topic (under pretext of the supposed reformed religion) who have been induced to abandon their mistakes and return to the lap and union of the church nothing less.

It is my wish that several among them would be stopped in their foolish opinions but to my very big regret, by remonstrations or threats that has been done to them they do not themselves voluntarily withdraw. Neither do they abjure their perverse and miserable doctrine thing, so that I then either punish more in order to be of service directly towards the honour and service of God or endure the contempt of my aforesaid orders and scandal of all good people. This is the reason I send you an order transmitted. That immediately this summons is received by you my general district attorney, you do order for me any persons of whatever quality or status they are within the ambit of your responsibility following the aforesaid supposed reformed religion, that after twenty days have been reckoned from the intimation of this, they must have abjured their said religion.

Bring testimony and sufficient attestation of their abjuration, of returning to the union with the church catholic apostolic and Roman church. If the said twenty days expires and they are in errors this is what is ahead of them and brook no refusal or delay. Be ordered to make them leave immediately, country lands and lordships, to settle.

In obedience and with deference to me, not just to be of service, punish offenders of my orders. The adversity that they have is to dispose of their possessions after two subsequent months. Equally I refuse any excuses or delays. Without hope for the long term, on expiration and in the case that they won't have disposed of their possessions, then if there be so much as pieces of furniture or building of the aforesaid, you make an inventory of them and seize under my hand and by justice for profit later. These will be realized by my aforesaid order in this case.

I bestow on you and impart power, authority and special commission, in your presence. In undertaking this service understand and obey carefully, by all that to him belongs the royal officer the father or guard of you etc At Nancy the 17th December 1585. Given so as to serve as a copy in the Treasury of the Deeds of his highness at Nancy by my secretary of estates of his Highness (subscript)