

GETTING STARTED

The first step in researching your family history is to record everything you know about yourself, parents, grandparents and great-grandparents.

List the names, birth dates, marriage dates, and death dates of your ancestors, as well as the location (town, county, state, country) where each event occurred.

Contact other family members who might be able to provide additional information.

Begin collecting records such as birth, marriage and death certificates. Look for family Bibles, obituaries, letters, diaries, deeds and probate records.

If your ancestors were born in France, look for vital records in the registres d'état-civil (records of civil registration). If the records are over 100 years old, they may be found in the French Archives departmental archives; many are online. Myheritage.com has an index to French vital records, as well as databases for French baptisms and births, marriages, deaths and burials.

If your ancestors were born in one of the Caribbean countries, probate, church and vital records may be online at sites such as FamilySearch.org and government sites, such as an archive.

MEMBERSHIP

Membership in the Daughters of the American Revolution (DAR) honors and preserves the legacy of our patriot ancestors. As a member of the DAR, you can honor their actions by supporting historic preservation programs, promoting educational activities, and participating in patriotic endeavors.

Any woman 18 years of age or older, regardless of race, religion, or ethnic background, who can prove direct descent from a person who aided in achieving American independence during the period between 19 April 1775 and 26 November 1783 is eligible for membership.

Founded in 1890, DAR has approximately 190,000 members in 3,000 chapters across the United States and internationally. Each year, DAR members volunteer millions of hours in their communities, award thousands of dollars in scholarships, support our veterans and troops overseas, and assist with historic preservation projects throughout the country.

**For more information, contact
The Specialty Research Committee**
specialtyresearch@nsdar.org

**National Society
Daughters of the American Revolution
(202) 628-1776
www.dar.org**



Researching Your French Patriot



*Admiral François-Joseph Paul de Grasse.
Comte de Grasse commanded the French fleet
in the West Indies in 1781 and played a critical
role in the Battle of Chesapeake Capes that
paved the way for the American victory at the
Siege of Yorktown.*

Do you have ancestors from
France or the Caribbean?

If so, you may be eligible for
membership in the Daughters of
the American Revolution.

FRANCE IN THE AMERICAN REVOLUTION

Both Spain and France played pivotal roles in the American Revolution, offering crucial support to the American colonies in their fight for independence from British rule.

With the signing of the Treaty of Alliance in 1778, France officially joined the war against the British. France's most notable contributions were financial aid, providing equipment and provisions, supplying the Continental Army with training and resources of the French military, and especially the involvement of the French Navy against the British Royal Navy.



Painting by Henry Ogden shows George Washington reviewing French troops at the Philipsburg encampment, during the Yorktown campaign. www.americanrevolutioninstitute.org

Key battles in the American Revolution that involved French assistance were the: Battle of Newport, Rhode Island (1778); the Siege of Savannah (1779) and the Siege of Yorktown (1781);

There are many distinguished French figures in the American Revolution including King Louis XVI; Jean-Baptiste Donatien de Vimeur, comte de Rochambeau; François Joseph Paul de Grasse; François Jean de Beauvois, Marquis de Chastellux; Jacques-Donatien le Ray de Chaumont; Charles Gravier, Comte de Vergennes; and Louis le Bègue Duportail. Due to his Farewell Tour (1824-1825) in the United States as the last surviving Major General of the Revolutionary War, one of the most recognized names who came to the aid of the colonies is Gilbert du Motier, Marquis de Lafayette.

It is estimated, however, that over the course of the Revolution, France provided an estimated 12,000 soldiers and 32,000 sailors to the American war effort.

FRANCE IN THE CARIBBEAN

Even prior to the Treaty of Alliance, France covertly aided the American colonies. As early as 1776, France funneled gunpowder, artillery, money and clothing to the colonies via merchant ships from the French Caribbean territories of Martinique, Saint-Domingue and Guadeloupe.

Once France entered the war, the French increased their naval presence in the Caribbean, conquering several British Islands and diverting British troops, resources and attention from North America.

Spain and the Netherlands also provided the patriots with military and financial aid in the Caribbean.

FURTHER READING OR RESOURCES

- *America's First Ally: France in the Revolutionary War*, Norman Desmarais
- *An Empire Divided, The American Revolution and the British Caribbean*, Andrew J. O'Shaughnessy
- *Brothers at Arms: American Independence and the Men of France and Spain Who Saved It*, Larrie D. Ferreiro
- *Dictionnaire des Officiers de l'armée royale qui ont combattu aux États-Unis pendant la Guerre d'Indépendance, 1776-1783*, Gilbert Bodiner
- *How the French Saved America: Soldiers, Sailors, Diplomats, Louis XVI, and the Success of a Revolution*, Tom Shactman
- *Les Combattants Français de la Guerre Américaine, 1778-1783*, Ministère des Affaires Étrangères
- *Les Marins Français sous Louis XVI, Guerre d'Indépendance Américaine*, Christian de La Jonquière
- *The French in America during the War of Independence of the United States, 1777-1783* Thomas Balch
- *The George Rogers Clark Papers 1771-1781 v, 3*, pp. 56-59
- w3r-us.org
- www.americanrevolutioninstitute.org