

The 18th century Genealogists and Heralds of the Order of Saint Lazarus

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Abstract

The 1649 regulations of the Order of Saint Lazarus required prospective members to be derived from armigerous families. This required the creation of new posts within the administrative structure of the organization to assess the suitability of prospective admission to the Order, that of Genealogist and Herald. A series of individuals are recorded after 1724 as being appointed to these posts and to have given their respective services throughout the remaining decades of the 18th century up to the French Revolution and thereafter in the early decades of the 19th century during the Bourbon Restoration.

Keywords

Order of Saint Lazarus, coat-of-arms, herald

Introduction

Arms were important at this period in the Order's history because members of the Order had to be gentlemen with nobiliary requirements of all eight great-grandparents being armigerous, with the exception of Knights of Grace.

The 1649 regulations stated that:

Nul ne sera reçue Chevalier, s'il ne fait preuves exactes de Noblesse de quatre races, tant du côté Maternel que de Paternel, en présence d'un or deux Chevaliers députés par le Grand Maître, lesquelles lui seront envoyés pour juger si elles sont suffisantes. Et en ce cas elles

*seront remises au Chancelier, pour être conservés aux Archives de l'Ordre, avec les actes de la Réception & de la Profession.*¹

The requirement for belonging to an armigerous family was re-stated in the revised regulation of 1773:

*On ne pourra faire profession dans lesdits Ordres, qu'après avoir rempli les conditions portées dans les articles 3 et 4 du règlement du 20 mars 1773 ; c'est-à-dire, qu'après avoir atteint l'âge de trente ans accomplis, justifie de sa religion catholique, apostolique et romaine, de sa naissance légitime, et de huit degrés de noblesse paternelle, non compris le récipiendaire, sans anoblissement connu, conformément à l'article 4 dudit règlement, dont les disposition à cet égard seront toujours exécutées à la rigueur, et contre lesquelles, dans quelque cas que ce soit, il ne pourra jamais être accorde de dispense.*²

Applicants vying to become members of the Order were required to present proof of having had eight great-grandparents who had been armigerous. These proofs were then referred to the genealogist for confirmation of the claimed family ancestry. The first registered genealogist appointee for the Order appears for the first time in 1724.³

¹ L.P.C.D.M. *Mémoires, règles et statuts, cérémonies et privilèges des Ordres Militaires de Notre Dame du Mont-Carmel et se S. Lazare de Jérusalem* (Lyon: Antoine Cellier, 1649), 84.

² *Règlement que Monsieur, frère du Roi, en qualite de Grand – Maitre général, du 3 décembre 1778.* In : Garden de Saint-Ange. *Code des Ordres de Chevalier* (Paris, 1819 ; Guy Trédaniel edition, 1976), 435.

³ The list of appointed genealogists and heralds was identified from the reported officers serving the Order's management as published in the series of French administrative directories which appeared under the title *Almanach Royale présenté a sa Majesté.* (Paris, 1701-1791 and 1815-1830). The Order's management structure appears for the first time in the 1724 volume, there being no records in the earlier volumes.

The post remained vacant following the retirement of this individual in 1749 until 1757 when the appointed genealogist for the King's Orders was assigned the responsibility of assessing these proofs. During the period 1749-1757, only two individuals were admitted to the Order.⁴

The *Réglement du jiuin 1757* stated:

*Veut Sa Majesté que les preuves de Noblesse de ceux qui seront nommés audits Ordres, soient faites par le sieur de Clairambault, généalogiste de ses Ordres, qu'elle commet par le présent règlement, sans qu'il soit tenu de faire aucune nouveau serment ; lequel, après les avoir signées et certifiées, es sera le rapport au Grand-Maitre.....*⁵

While the 1649 regulations required the Chancellor of the Order to keep the proofs of nobility submitted by the prospective chevaliers, the post of herald (or *héraut – roi d'armes - garde armorial*) appears to have been created in 1725, during the reign of Louis XV. Appointed chancellors (or *Chancelier & Garde des Sceaux*) prior to 1724 who would have been responsible to maintain the genealogical proofs included:⁶

- Pierre Merault de Chateaufort [adm. 1666 †1684]
- Claude de Guenegaud [adm. 1671 †1720]
- Jean-Baptiste Bosc [adm.1716 †1755]

⁴ The two admissions included Jean-Antoine Vidan de Cavaion who served as consul to Civatta-Vecchia (1750) and Don Antonio de Nouronha who served as confessor and almoner general to the King of Portugal (1751). H.M. de Langle, J.L. Treouret de Kerstrat, J.L. *Les Ordres de Saint Lazare de Jerusalem & De Notre Dame du Mont Carmel aux XVIIe et XVIIIe siecles.* (Paris Publications LMTK, 1992), 253-256.

⁵ *Réglement du jiuin 1757.* In : Garden de Saint-Ange. *Code des Ordres de Chevalier* (Paris, 1819 ; Guy Trédaniel edition, 1976), 418.

⁶ H.M. de Langle, J.L. Treouret de Kerstrat, J.L. *op. cit.*112, 120, 196.

Genealogists

<1724 – 1748 *Guibert*

The first registered appointed genealogist for the Order was Guibert who is first listed in the 1724 *Almanach Royale*. He continued to be listed until 1748, after which the post remained vacant until 1757 when it was filled by the previously appointed Genealogist of the King's Orders.

1758 *Nicolas-Pascal Clairambault*

Nicolas-Pascal Clairambault [*1698 †1762] took on the post of Genealogist of the King's Orders in 1740 retaining his post until 1758. He 'inherited' the post of his uncle Pierre Clairambault [*1651 †1740] who served as genealogist of the King's Orders 1698-1740. Nicholas-Pascal inherited his uncle's genealogical archives which he sold to the King in 1755 for the sum of 240,000 livres and a 3,000 livres life pension. In 1755, the archives consisted of 3,250 volumes.⁷

1758 – 1772 *Jean-Nicholas Beaujon*

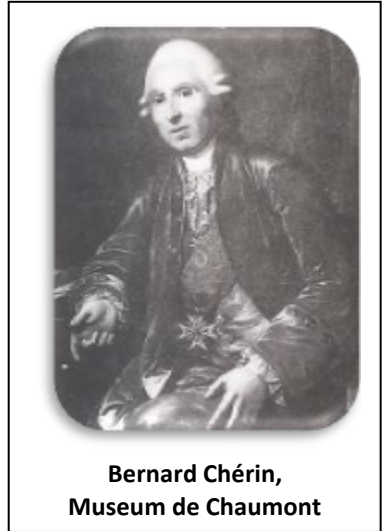
Jean-Nicholas Beaujon [*1722 †1799] served as Genealogist of the King's Orders during 1758-1772. He also served as Counsellor of the State, honorary treasurer of the Order of St. Louis and receiver-general of finances for the generality of Rouen. He resigned his post of genealogist in 1772.⁸

⁷ Nicolas-Pascal Clairambault. *Wikipédia: l'encyclopédie libre* (U.S.A., Wikipedia Foundation Inc., 2020, accessed 4 September 2023, https://fr.wikipedia.org/wiki/Nicolas-Pascal_Clairambault).

⁸ Augustin Jal. *Dictionnaire critique de biographie et d'histoire: errata et supplément pour tous les dictionnaires historiques d'après des documents authentiques inédits* (Paris, Henri Plon, 1867, vol. 1), 146.

1772 – 1785 *Bernard Chérin*

Bernard Chérin [*1718 †1785] served as Genealogist of the King's Orders during 1772-1785. He was also in 1776 appointed historiographer of the King's Orders. He was in 1781 made responsible to assess the genealogy of applicants to the *École militaire royale*. He was an Officer of the Order of the Holy Spirit and a Knight of the Order of Saint Michael.⁹



1785 – 1787 *Edme-Joseph Berthier*

Edme-Joseph Berthier [*1737 †1796] served as acting interim Genealogist of the King's Orders during 1785-1787. He worked as an assistant to Bernard Chérin who recommended him to the post of Genealogist of the King's Orders.¹⁰

1787 – 1790 *Louis Nicolas Hyacinthe Chérin*

Louis Nicolas Hyacinthe Chérin [*1762 †1799], son of Bernard Chérin, served as the last Genealogist of the King's Orders during 1787-1790 after which the post was abolished when the hereditary nobility was abolished by decree of 19 June 1790. He was also in 1788 appointed Counsellor of

⁹ P. Louis Lainé. *Dictionnaire veridique des origines des maisons nobles ou anobles du Royaume de France: contenant aussi les vrais ducs, marquis, comtes, vicomtes et barons* (Paris, Lainé et Bertrand, vol.1), 180-181.

¹⁰ Jean Baptiste Joseph Mathieu. *Biographie du département de la Haute-Marne* (Paris, Chaumont, 1811), 211-212.

the Cours des aides. After the Revolution, he rallied in favour of the National Assembly and joined the army to eventually in 1799 being appointed Chief of the General Staff of the armies of the Danube and Helvetia. He died as a result of his wounds suffered during battle.¹¹

Heralds

As keepers of the heraldic records, heralds of the Order under the Bourbons were artists, recording the arms of members of the Order. A series of individuals served as heralds to the Order. This post was regularly filled right through the eighteenth century up to the last registered council in 1830.

1724 – 1754 Pezey père assisted by Pezey fils

The 18th century Pezey family was characterised by a number of individuals who contributed their artistic and print-making talents to the Order of St Lazarus. Antoine Pezey [†1710] was an artist of note (fl. 1695-1710) whose works included the painting depicting Philippe de Courcillon, Marquis de Dangeau as Grand Master (tenure 1693-1720) swearing his oath to King Louis XIV on 18 December 1695. This painting was subsequently published as an 259 mm x 376 mm etching by Le Clerc Sébastien. Antoine Pezey is listed as a *frere serviers d'Armes* in a membership list of the Order dated 1701.¹²

Another Pezey was formally recorded as serving Herald of the Order assisted by his son from 1725 until his death in 1731. His son continued in the post as *Herault Roy d'Armes* until his death in 1754. After 1746, he

¹¹ Louis Nicolas Hyacinthe Chérin. *Wikipédia: l'encyclpédie libre* (U.S.A., Wikipedia Foundation Inc., 2023, accessed 4 September 2023, https://fr.wikipedia.org/wiki/Louis_Nicolas_Hyacinthe_Ch%C3%A9rin).

¹² *Liste de l' Ordre Royal de Notre-Dame du Mont-Carmel et de Saint-Lazare* (Paris, Jean Baptiste Coignard, 1701)

was assisted by Vincent Thomassin who took over the post after Pezey *fil's* death.



**Louis XIV receiving the oath of the Marquis De Dangeau as Grand Master
(Original, Château de Versailles, France by Antoine Pezey, c. 1695)**

1746 – 1757 Vincent Thomassin

Vincent Thomassin was appointed assistant to Pezey *fil's* in 1746 and eventually assumed the post of *Herault Roy d'Armes* in 1746 retaining the post to 1757. The Thomassin family was a dynasty of printmakers established in the end of the 16th century. Vincent's brother, Simon Thomassin [*1654 †1733], was also a noted printmaker at the court of Louis XIV. During his tenure in 1753, Vincent Thomassin undertook to prepare an armorial of the Order of St Lazarus with a series of armigerous drawings reflecting the various known masters and members of the

Order. This is presently available in manuscript form held in the French National Archives.¹³ This armorial was based on the earlier researches of Chevalier Claude Dorat de Chameulles and was presented to the Regular Canons of the Royal Abbey of Saint-Victor de Paris by Vincent Thomassin. Thomassin also prepared the coat-of-arms of an armorial said to have been written by Pierre-Josse Poulain.¹⁴ This latter armorial is similar to the earlier coloured armorial prepared by Claude Dorat de Chameulles in 1744.¹⁵ Claude Dorat de Chameulles (*1696 †1771) was admitted to the Order in 1720 and in 1746 served as Registrar and Secretary General of the Order. He served as Commander of Saint-Louis de Juvisy near Paris, as Councillor to the King, and as Ordinary Auditor in his Chamber of Accounts in Paris. He married Denise de Rotrou in 1728 and had at least two children, one of whom Claude-Denis joined the Order in 1730.¹⁶

¹³ Claude Dorat de Chameulles, Vincent Thomassin. *Armorial général des Ordres royaux, militaires et hospitaliers de N.-D. du Mont-Carmel et de Saint-Lazare de Jérusalem, recherché et recueilly par frère Claude Dorat de Chameulles présenté à MM. les Chanoines réguliers de l'abbaye royale de Saint-Victor de Paris par M. Vincent Thomassin, avocat au parlement, juge-garde armorial desdits Ordres, en 1753* (Paris: Bibliothèque nationale de France – Département des manuscrits, 1753), Français 23135, 96^o.

¹⁴ Pierre-Josse Poulain, Vincent Thomassin. *Armorial général des Ordres royaux, militaires et hospitaliers de N.-D. du Mont-Carmel et de Saint-Lazare de Jérusalem*. (Bibliothèque nationale de France – Département des manuscrits, n.d.), Français 31795-31796, 2 vols.

¹⁵ Claude Dorat de Chameulles. *Armorial général des ordres royaux, militaires et hospitaliers de Notre Dame du Mont Carmel et de St Lazare de Jérusalem fait en 1744 par les Ordres de Monseigneur le duc d'Orléans 1er prince du sang et grand maitre général de tout l'ordre* (Manuscrit, 1744), 2 volumes, <https://www.artcurial.com/fr/lot-manuscrit-armorial-ordres-militaires-dorat-de-chameulles-claude-armorial-general-des-ordres> [accessed 24 July 2023].

¹⁶ H.M. de Langle, J.L. Treouret de Kerstrat, J.L., *op. cit.*, 211.

1758 – 1761 *De Georges*

Thomassin was succeeded in the post of *Herault, Roy d'Armes & Garde Armorial* by De Georges in 1758.

1762 – 1774 *Jean-Baptiste Duchesne*

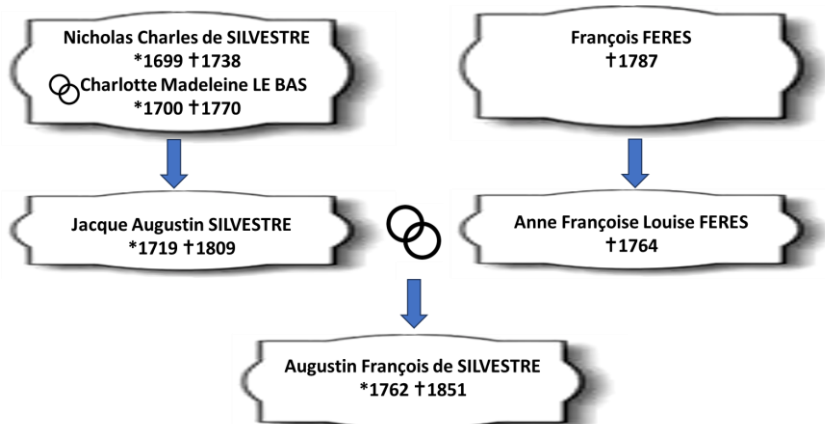
De Georges occupied the post until 1761 when he was replaced by Duchesne, presumably the sculptor Jean-Baptiste Duchesne, father of the famous artist Jean-Baptiste-Joseph Duchesne (*1770 †1856).



Jean-Baptiste Duchesne

1775 – 1788 *François Ferès*

Duchesne was replaced in the post of *Herault, Roy d'Armes & Garde Armorial* by François Ferès in 1775. Ferès was the reader and librarian of the Count of Provence who served as Grand Master of the Order of Saint Lazarus and later King Louis XVIII.¹⁷ In his later years after 1782, he was assisted by his grandson Augustine-François de Silvestre.



De SILVESTER Family genealogy

1782 – 1851 *Augustine-François de Silvestre*

The de Silvestre family, originally from Lorraine, was characterised by a number of prominent French draftsmen, etchers and print dealers. Augustine-François's father, Jacques-Augustine de Silvestre, was a well-known painter, engraver and draughtsman, and the drawing teacher of

¹⁷ Guillaume-Pierre- François Feres de Saint-Hilaire: Served as valet to the Count of Provence, and secretary to the queen's counsel in 1774. Listed in 1774 as 'officer of the Order of Saint Lazarus'. See: W. Ritchey Newton. *Almanach de la Cour*. (France: the author, 2020), 2853.

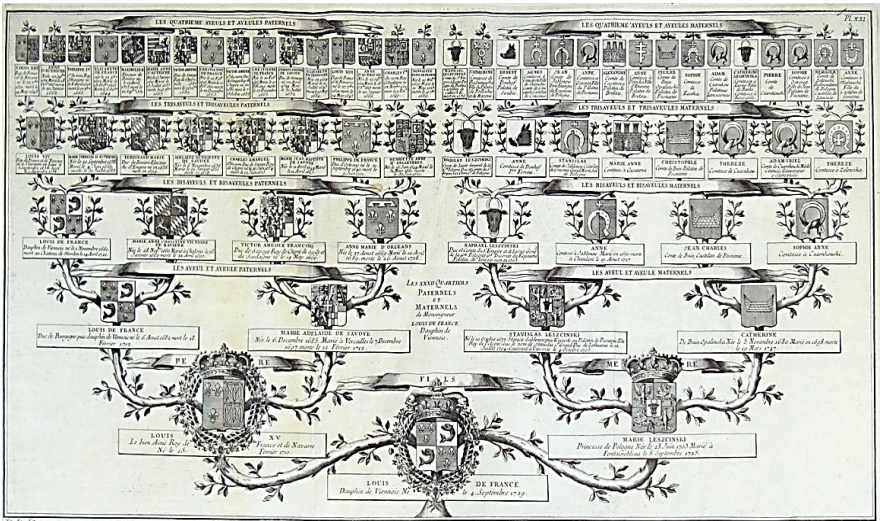
the children of King Louis XV – Madame Victoire, Madame Adelaide, and Madame Elizabeth. He married the daughter of Francois Ferès. Augustine-François de Silvestre was first appointed to the post of assistant herald to Ferès in 1782 and to the post of *Herault, Roy d'Armes & Garde Armorial* in 1789. He also aspired to replace his father as drawing teacher to the Royal children. In 1788, Silvestre co-founded the Paris Philomathic Society (a scientific and philosophical society) and distinguished himself as a leading French agriculturist. He was prominent in promoting agriculture, horticulture and national industry and



**Augustine-François de
Silvestre**

became a member of the Institute of France in 1806. However, the 1791 Revolution put a stop to all his aspiration. The turmoil engendered by the revolution led to a disbandment in the administrative organization of the Order of St Lazarus with the grand master and his immediate entourage going into exile. The 1814 Bourbon restoration laid the ground for a re-organization of the Order to take place and for Augustine-François de Silvestre to achieve his aspirations. In 1814, Louis XVIII named him reader-librarian and made him a member of the Legion of Honor in 1821. He was eventually raised to the rank of baron by King Charles X on 23 March 1828. By 1822, the Order of St Lazarus had initiated the process of reorganizing its administrative structure and Augustine-François de Silvestre was in 1822 re-appointed to the post of *Herault, Roy d'Armes & Garde Armorial*. He definitely retained his post until 1830 when the Order lost the Royal protectorship but possibly until his death in 1851. An lithograph by Bailly published in 1869 indicates Silvestre as *chevalier des orders de la Legion d'honneur et de Saint-Lazare*. There is no record of his admission during

the *ancien régime*.¹⁸ It is likely that he was admitted after King Charles X raised him to the rank of baron. He also is listed as a *chev. de l'ordre de St-Lazare* in the 1846 almanac of Parisian residents.¹⁹



Family genealogy of Louis, Dauphin of France

¹⁸ E. de Silvestre. *Renseignements sur quelques Peintres et Graveurs des XVII et XVIII siècles*. (Paris: Veuve Bouchard-Huzard, 1869), 117-121

¹⁹ M. Corby. *Almanach de 25,000 adresses des principaux habitants de Paris – Année 1846* (Paris : Bureau de l'Armanach, 1846), 516.