

23rd April 2012

I hope this document will be of interest and some assistance in gaining an insight into life and ancestry of the Rev William Lewis Mason (1825-1879). I appreciate that the details may be considered somewhat over full however it is better to too much detail than too little. We will start with the Huguenot connection.

For sometime my research had one frustrating “dead end” that, despite every effort, could not be solved. This was despite the fact that the person concerned had lived in relatively recent times from a genealogical point of view. This dead end related to the parentage of William Mason (1794-1834), Collector and Magistrate for the *HEIC*, and who was the father of Rev William Lewis Mason. The only reference that could be found was an affidavit signed by him (William Mason) and certified as correct by an uncle called John Lewis Minet stating he was born on March 16th 1794 in St John, Newfoundland. This date conflicts with the age of 42 years that appears on his headstone, in India, which would give a birth year of circa 1792. The document is held in the India Office Records of the British Library and bears the reference of IOR: J/1/25 f.211. It seems that the Church in St John where one might find records to confirm which is the correct date and the name of at least one parent had its records relating to that period destroyed in a fire. Also other efforts to find a record of the birth in Newfoundland’s official archives proved fruitless. So the affidavit proved no help in this matter and created the new problem of who was this “uncle” John Lewis Minet.

At the suggestion of a very experienced researcher a copy of the will of John Lewis Minet, whose marriage was childless, was obtained and while proving to be an interesting document it served to move thinking slightly in the wrong direction. In it John Lewis Minet provided quite generously for his two “*friends*” *George Mason and William Mason whom I have hitherto provided for through life.....*” while in all previous references he is referred to as “uncle”. In all other references in his will he refers to all other members of the next generation as nephews and nieces. Particularly in view of the fact that he referred to George and William Mason as his “friends” gave rise to the thought he might have been their father. There is much likeness when comparing photos of John Lewis Minet and Rev William Lewis Mason, who under this situation would be his grandson. If in fact John Lewis Minet was the father then perhaps the affidavit referred to in the previous paragraph was not truthful and the St John birth place was given in the full knowledge that the records of the time had been

destroyed. The affidavit was required to enable William Mason to attend the Imperial Services College in Haileybury in England. He attended this college in the years 1810 to 1812 and it may have been necessary to adjust his age as there were age constraints for entry (remember the age conflict between the affidavit and the headstone). Attendance to this college prepared William Mason for Civil Service in the Honourable East India Company.

The possibility of John Lewis Minet being the father was all supposition and could therefore be difficult to prove. Research showed that William Mason's brother George was also in the employ of the Honourable East India Company rising to the rank of Captain in their navy. He died unmarried and presumably childless on February 4th 1837 and by this time had changed his surname to "Lewis Minet" (yes without a hyphen). A copy of his will included the interesting fact that he had in his possession a portrait of John Lewis Minet's brother, one General William Minet, who never married and appeared to die childless. Wondering why the Minet family would let such a portrait come into George Mason's possession was intriguing, so a copy of General William Minet's will was obtained in case it might turn up new and interesting facts. The following passage in this will revealed the answer being sought:

"And I give to my reputed sons George Mason Esquire now a Captain in the Honourable East India Company's Service and William Mason Esquire now in the Civil Service of the Honourable East India Company in the East Indies the sum of twelve thousand pounds equally to be divided between them share and share alike....."

Interestingly enough General William Minet was in Newfoundland for what appears to be a period of at least 5/6 years and may be as long as 7/9 years commencing 1789. So he was there at the time of William Mason's birth and the affidavit was correct, at least as to the place of birth. Also in terms of the *Violet Underwood Papers* General William Minet was, on August 30th 1825 made one of the God Parents of none other than his grandson William Lewis Mason (later Rev). In fact several of the Minet family featured in these records as god parents. Despite the circumstances of George and William Mason's birth the Minet family, in particular John Lewis Minet, provided them both with an excellent upbringing and

generous legacies in their wills. It appears that, when not at sea, George Mason continued to reside with Elizabeth Minet after the death of her husband John Lewis Minet.

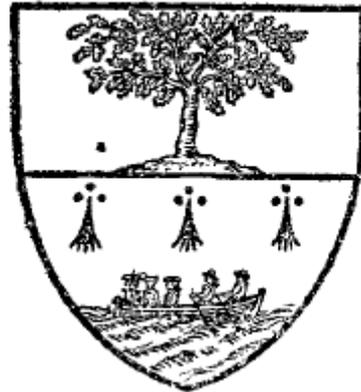
So who are these Minets that the “Mason” branch of the family find themselves descended from. Well here again good fortune prevails and there is a book written by a Minet descendant namely William Minet (1851-1933). He was a solicitor in the London area who, with his only daughter Susan, authored many publications relating to French Huguenot history. The book that is of interest to us is called “The Huguenot Family of Minet” and traces this family back as far as early 1600’s. William Minet (1851-1933) was the 3xs great grandson of Isaac Minet and Marie Sauchelle with General William Minet being their great grandson. This Isaac Minet (1660-1745) was a member of a family of merchants who lived in Calais, France, at the time of the persecution of members of the Protestant Reform Churches during the reign of Louis XIV. The persecution was carried out under what was called the “Revocation of the Edict of Nantes” which was issued by Louis XIV in October 1685. The original “Edict of Nantes” was issued in 1598 and granted the Huguenots the right to practice their religion without persecution from the state. This Revocation of the 1598 Edict gave the Catholic Church and the Army wide ranging powers to attempt to convert all the Huguenot population to Catholicism. The persecution was ruthless and relentless during which time many fled France. Some were not lucky enough to escape alive. In the *Minet Book* a brief passage from Isaac’s own account of events gives a small but graphic illustration of this: [sic]

Most of my Brothers and sisters got out of france, I was left alone at Calais wth my mother: in June 1685 my mother went to arders where she had a sister in law who was sick and dyed, and because she did not receive y^e Sacrament of y^e Romish Church her dead body was caryed to prison and her estate confiscated, and three days after she was dragged by y^e feet by horses about the street, y^e mob stoning y^e body in such a maner y^e her head was broke in pieces of from her body, and was drag^d out of y^e town and stakt on a crossway.

With the aid of his brother Stephen, who had with already fled to England, Isaac Minet arranged, on August 1st 1686, for a row boat to be sent from England to Calais. In the dark of

the night Isaac and his mother together with his sister Elizabeth Detriez, plus her husband and family escaped and were rowed back to England.

This event is depicted in the coat of arms granted to the family in 1799.



The grant of these Arms was applied for by Isaac Minet's grandson Hughes Minet in 1799 to fulfil his Uncle William Minet's intention to have applied for such a grant.

Isaac Minet's and his family's successful escape to England was their second attempt to flee France. The first, almost a year earlier in October 1685, was thwarted by a betrayal resulting in a period in prison. They managed to extricate themselves from incarceration by signing, with many others and under duress, renunciation of their Protestant Religion and undertaking in future to attend the Catholic Church. They would of course ignore this false oath as soon as they managed to flee France and rejoin their Protestant faith. A large number of Huguenots held positions of importance in trade and industry etc. in France and their mass exodus resulted in what in modern terms is referred to as a "Brain Drain" which took France many years to recover from.

On Isaac's arrival in England he was greeted with much joy by the other seven members of his family who had previously escaped to England. After about a month he with his brother Ambroise set up a small shop in Newport Street, London selling Liquors and Perfumes. Newport Street is in the Lambeth area and the Parish of Saint Martin in the Fields were their mother was eventually buried. Prior to Isaac's arrival in England his brother Stephen had already set up the Dover business that finally become the Counting House (and Merchant Bank) bearing the name of Minet and Fector. The original purpose of the business is thought to have been that of general merchants, plus commission and shipping agents. In 1690 Isaac

moved to Dover to run Stephen's business when the later become ill. On Stephen's death Isaac remained in Dover to run this business and from this time onwards flourished in most of his endeavours. The London business was left in the hands of his brother Ambroise, unfortunately it finally failed and Ambroise become one of the many members of the Minet family to receive financial support from the ever prospering Isaac. In fact of all the members of his immediate family, Isaac seems to have been the only one to make a success of things in England. A sentence in the *Minet Book* (page 61) best illustrates this:

"Settled in England, he [Isaac] alone of the family may be said to have succeeded in life; and his success he uses ungrudgingly for helping his brothers and sisters."



Rev William Lewis Mason 1825-1879



John Lewis Minet 1766-1829

Uncle of Rev W L Mason

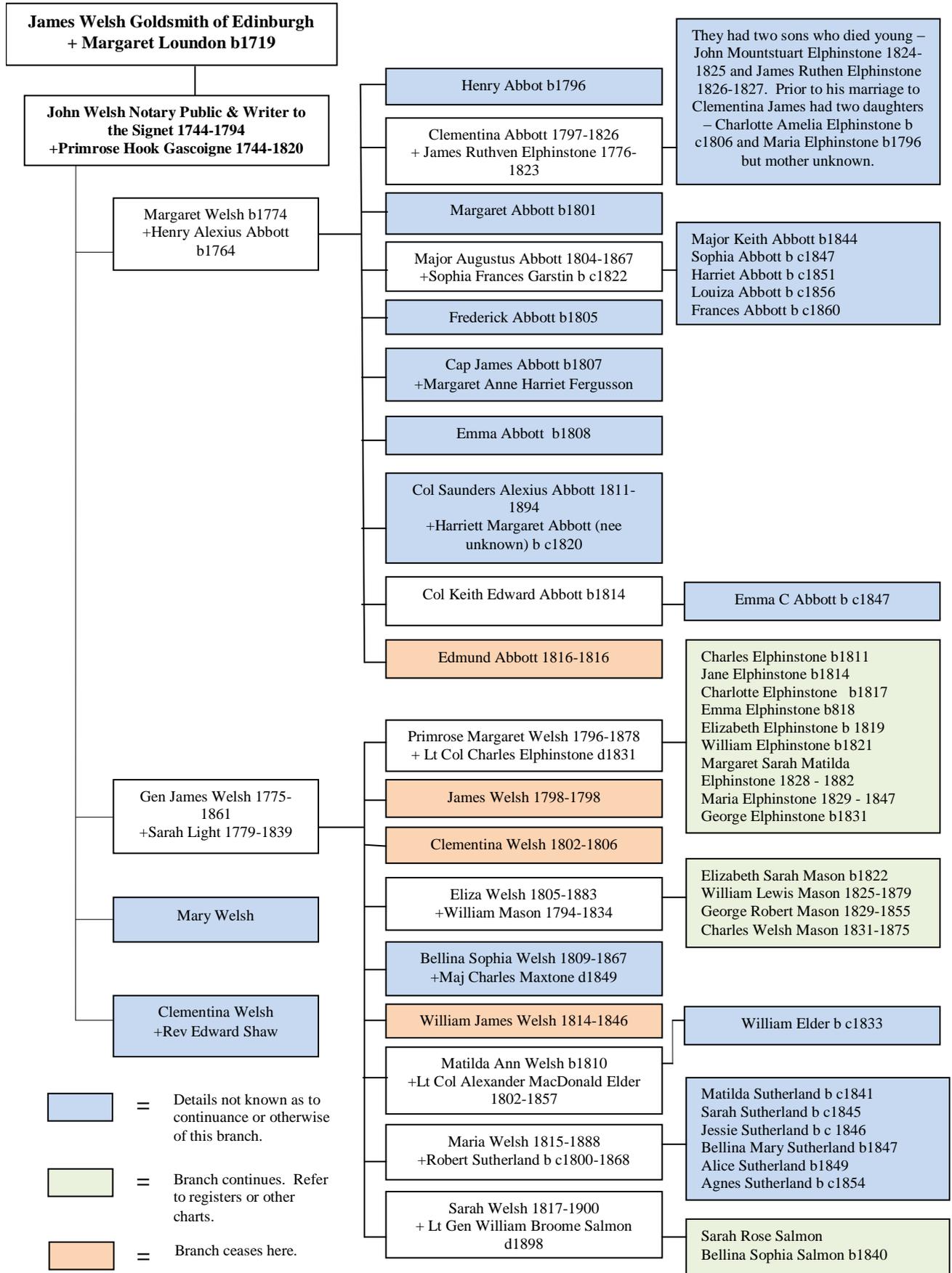
William Mason enjoyed a successful career in the civil service of the *HEIC* with his last post being Collector and Magistrate at Vizagapatam (Vishakhapatam) India. This settlement was known to the English as Waltair or Waltaire. William Mason unfortunately met with an untimely death at only 42 years of age (or maybe 40 years) when he was being conveyed in a small boat from the shore at Waltair to board a ship for a sea voyage of unknown route or

destination. The Asiatic Journal and Monthly Register for British and Foreign India, China and Australasia Vol XVI 1835 records "*Leave of Absence etc: June 24 [1834] W. Mason, Esq. to sea, for two months, for health*". The small boat capsized in the surf resulting in his death by drowning. It would seem that William Mason did not have much luck when venturing to sea as in 1820 he was wrecked off the coast of Madras when attempting to return to England on sick leave. This event resulting in him not taking advantage of the sick leave granted but instead resulting in him returning to his duties. So it would seem he had a long battle with some form of illness, probably malaria or some other tropical disease, and when the small boat capsized he did not have the strength to swim to the safety of the shore as did four others who were accompanying him.

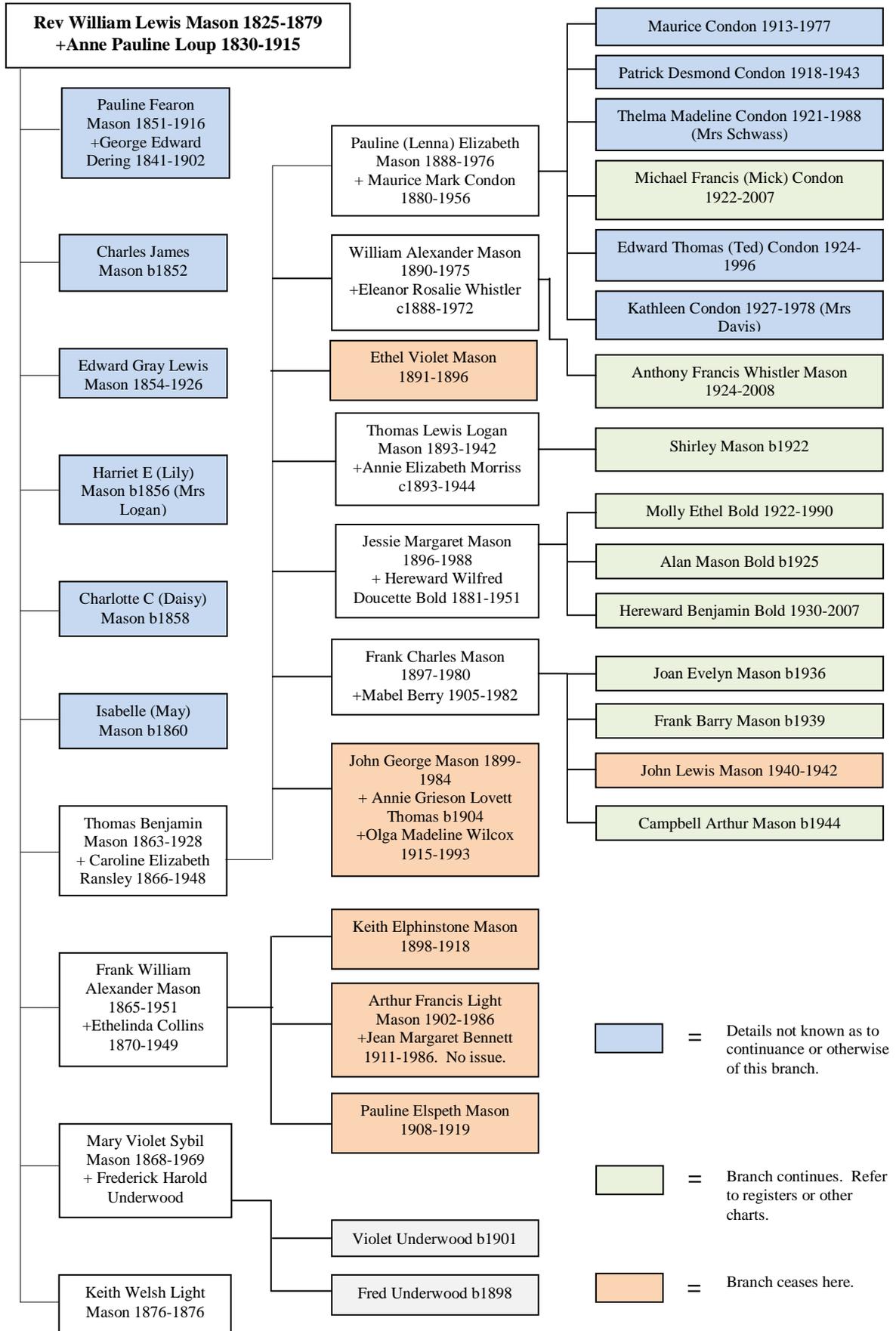
William Mason married Eliza Welsh at Cannanore, India on December 28th 1821. She was the daughter of General James Welsh. They had one daughter Elizabeth Sarah Mason b1822 and three sons William Lewis Mason b1825, George Robert Mason b1829 and Charles Welsh Mason b1831. General James Welsh spent in total almost 50 years in the service of the Honourable East India Company's army in India. He was the author of "Military Reminiscences" and married one Sarah Light the daughter of Capt Francis Light the founder of Penang. They had a total of nine children and Sarah died 1839 at Waltair India during his second tour of duty. By the time of his last tour of duty General Welsh had become very zealous about his Christian beliefs and spent a lot of his spare time encouraging the local population to follow the Christian path.

The first of the following charts sets out some of William Lewis Mason's Scottish ancestry. Abbottabad in Pakistan was named after the Capt (later Sir) James Abbot that appears in this chart. Henry Alexius Abbott originated from a family that lived in Turkey but originated from the England. All his sons had distinguished careers in the HEIC army. This chart is followed by one containing the descendants of Rev William Lewis Mason after which there is a brief chart of the Minet (Huguenot) ancestry.

Descendants of James Welsh Goldsmith of Edinburgh (Five Generations Only)



Descendants of Rev William Lewis Mason (Four Generations Only)



= Details not known as to continuance or otherwise of this branch.

= Branch continues. Refer to registers or other charts.

= Branch ceases here.

MINET ANCESTRY CHART

Ambrose Minet

b1613 at Cormont d1679 at Calais. His brother James was the Postmaster at Frencq a position that was held for at least 3 Minet generations.

+Susanne De Haffregue - b 1626 at La Tresorerie and buried at St Martin's-in-the-Fields 1688. The Haffregues were an old and well know Huguenot family of La Tresorerie and La Conserserie.

They were married c1647 and had 3 daughters and 6 sons including **Isaac and Stephen**. Isaac escaped to Dover in 1686 with his mother by which time Stephen was already in England.

Stephen Minet

b Sep 24th 1664 at Calais - d Feb 11th 1690 at Dover without any known issue. He was the founder of the business at Dover that later become known as Minet and Fector, a "Counting House" or Merchant Bank.

Isaac Minet

- b1660 at Calais - d1745 at Dover.
+ Marie Sauchelle - b1670 at Flushing d1788 at Dover.
Isaac and Marie were married in London 1691. They had 6 sons with **John**, the second born, continuing the line of descent covered by these pages.

John Minet - b Sep 23rd 1695 at Dover - d Nov 13th 1771 at Eythorne. He was made Rector of Eythorne in 1722.

+ Alice Hughes - b 1701 and d Aug 15th 1778 - buried at Capel-le-Ferne. They were married on Sept 14th 1724 and had a total of 12 children of which **Hughes Minet** and **Mary Minet** are of interest to us. However another son **Isaac Minet** (1696 to 1731) appears to have been the member of this generation that continued in the business at Dover until his death.

Mary Minet - b Feb 4th 1728 d Oct 21st 1794 buried at Eythorne. Married July 13th 1751 in Canterbury Cathedral:

+ Peter Fector - b May 26th 1723 at Rotterdam d Jan 30th 1814 buried at Eythorne. He became the principal partner in Minet & Fector. Refer to the *Minet Book* chart "D" for their descendants.

Hughes Minet - b June 30th 1731 at Eythorne d Dec 23rd 1813, buried at Westerham.

+Mary Loubier b 1737 in London d Nov 21st 1768 at Eltham. She was also of strong Huguenot descent.

They were married Jan 28th 1761 at St Andrew Undershaft. As well as Charlotte who died young, they had the following issue.

Isaac Minet - b Nov 10th 1767 - d March 14th 1839.
+ Susannah Pole - b April 5th 1779 - d March 15th 1869.
They were married Aug 7th 1802 and their issue included James Lewis Minet (1807 - 1885)

John Lewis Minet - b Jan 20th 1766 and d Nov 21st 1829.

+Elizabeth Morgan b - 1772 and d July 11th 1831.
They were married Feb 25th 1804 but died without issue. They took responsibility for raising George and William Mason.

Major General William Minet

b July 22nd 1762 - d Dec 27th 1827. Died unmarried but had two sons namely:

William Mason - b March 16th 1794 - d July 2nd 1834 and
George Mason - b circa 1797 - d Feb 4th 1837.

The following is a report generated from my genealogy software that sets out most of the details I have regarding Rev William Lewis Mason:

Name: Rev William Lewis (Louis) MASON

Father: William MASON (1794-1834)

Mother: Eliza WELSH (1805-1882)

Individual Facts

Birth	10 May 1825	Tellicherry, East India ¹
Chr	30 Aug 1825 (age 0)	Quilon ²
Degree	1848 (about age 23)	BA; Trinity College, Dublin ³
Census	1851 (about age 26)	33 Church Street (Row), Bury St Edmunds, Suffolk, England ⁴
Death	24 May 1879 (age 54)	10 Rue d'Ulm, Compiègne France ⁵
Probate	1 Jul 1879 (age 54)	London, England ⁶

Marriages/Children

1. Anne Pauline LOUP (1830-1915)

Marriage	8 Jul 1850 (age 25)	St James Chapel, Pentonville, London ⁷
Children	Pauline Fearon Elizabeth MASON (1851-1916) born Bury St Edmunds Charles James MASON (1852-) born Bury St Edmunds Edward Gray Lewis (Lewis) MASON (1854-1926) born Bury St Edmunds Harriet E. (Lily [Mrs Logan]) MASON (1856-) born Mauritius Charlotte C (Daisy) MASON (1858-) born Mauritius Isabelle (May) MASON (1860-) born Mauritius Thomas Benjamin MASON (1863-1928) born Mauritius Frank William Alexander MASON (1865-1951) born Mauritius Mary Violet Sybil MASON (1868-1969) born Compiègne Keith Welsh Light MASON (1876-1876) born Compiègne	

Notes

Notes: Rev William Lewis (Louis) MASON

Chr (30 August 1825): Christened by Rev C Jefferson. God parents - Lt. General Minet, Mrs J L Minet, Mrs H A Abbott.

Census (1851): This residence was next to the Tower Hotel at No. 34

Probate (1 July 1879): MASON(The Reverend) William Lewis. 1 July. The Will of the Reverend William Lewis Mason formerly of 10 Beaumont Street Portland Place in the County of Middlesex but late of 10 Rue d'Ulm Compiègne in the Department of Oise in

¹ Underwood Papers (by Violet Underwood). Asiatic Journal & Monthly Register for British India & Its Dependencies, July December 1825 page 715.

² Underwood Papers (by Violet Underwood).

³ Crockford Clerical Directory.

⁴ 1851 England Census, via Ancestry.com.

⁵ England & Wales National Probate Calendar 1861-1941, via ancestry.com.

⁶ England & Wales National Probate Calendar 1861-1941, via ancestry.com.

⁷ www.familysearch.org. England & Wales BDM Index, via Ancestry.com. Underwood Papers (by Violet Underwood). Marriage Certificate, General Register Office England MXD385170.

France Clerk who died 24 May 1879 at 10 Rue d'Ulm was proved at the Principal Registry by Anne Pauline Mason of 10 Rue d'Ulm Widow the Relict the sole Executrix .Personal Estate under £1,000.

General: William was a chaplain for the Anglican Church and known to have served at Bury St Edmonds, England (at the time of his marriage), then Mauritius and finally at Compiègne in France where he died. His various whereabouts can largely be traced by the birth places of his children The Gentleman's Magazine Vol. 196 shows under the date of November 18th 1854 his appointment as chaplain at Port Louis, Mauritius. The Colonial Office List 1862 records his continuance in this position together with one Phillip Pennington. The 1867 edition of this publication shows that from November 1855 to May 1857 he was the acting Superintendent of Government Schools in Mauritius after which he returned to his duties as a chaplain. The same publication shows the other chaplain there was W Banks and that they both enjoyed a salary of £400 each.

From the Bishop of London's Act Books which records clergy being licensed to serve in the Bishop of London's jurisdiction overseas covering 1842-72 (Guildhall Library Ms 9532A/4, 5, 6), the following was extracted:

'24th August 1868: William Lewis Mason, Clerk MA., had permission to perform the Office of Chaplain to the British Residents at Compiègne in the Empire of France'.

The birth date of Mary Violet Sybil Mason would indicate that August 24th 1868 was the actual date of his appointment to Compiègne.

According to his daughter Violet Underwood her brother Keith Welsh Light Mason and her father were buried in the same grave at Compiègne. She also recorded that the cemetery at Compiègne was shattered in WW1 and a church warden there arranged for both remains to be removed to the Warden's family vault at Chantilly. Violet Underwood signed all the necessary authorisations in this regard.

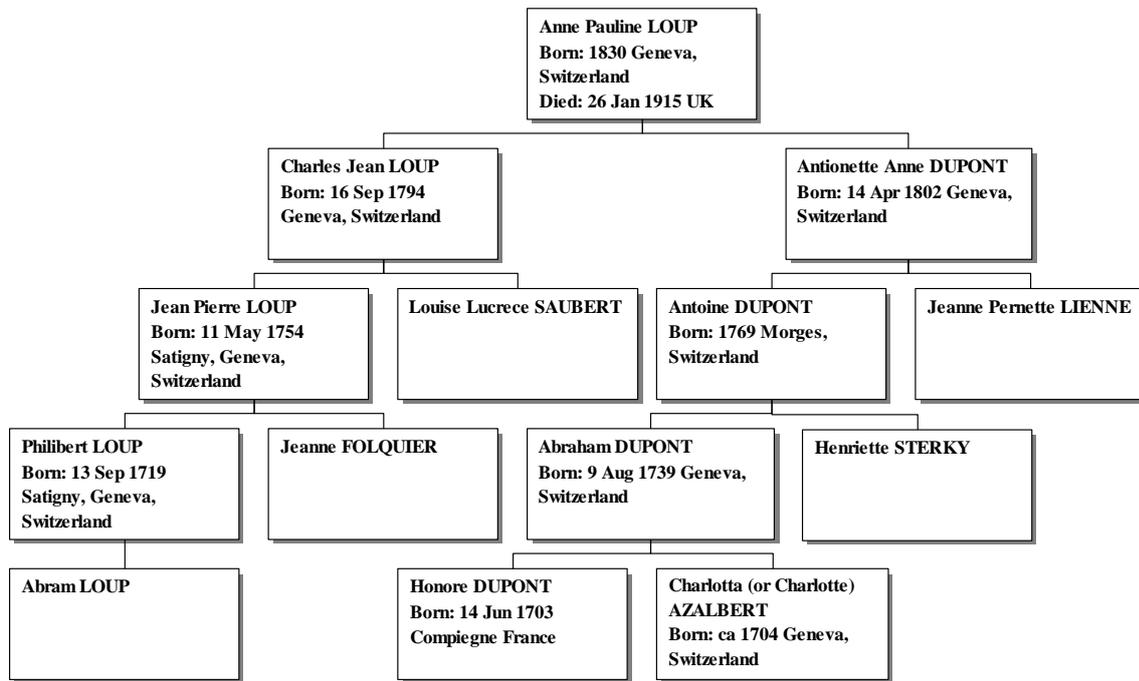
Notes (Family #1)

Marriage (8 July 1850): The Underwood papers record the exact date of the marriage. The IGI records the place of the marriage as Pentonville however the England and Wales Free Marriage Index (Ancestry.co search) shows the district as Clerkenwell. There is a pencil note of "St James" on this search and probably relates to St James's Row Clerkenwell where there is a church. The Marriage Certificate states the place of marriage as St James Chapel, Pentonville in the Parish of Clerkenwell which is consistent with the Gentleman's Magazine 1850 volume 34 .

After the death of Rev Mason the family moved back to England and resided initially at Lincoln. His wife Anne Pauline Mason (nee Loup) died on January 26th 1915 at the age of 85. It is thought she was living in the greater London area at the time.

Now we can move to some background relating to the other Huguenot connection that is that of Rev Mason's wife one Anne Pauline Loup (usually known as Pauline).

Anne Pauline Loup was born in 1830 and it was always understood she came from the Lausanne area in Switzerland however her marriage certificate states she was born in Geneva and that her father Charles Jean Loup was a manufacturer of Geneva. She may at one stage have lived at Lausanne. A complicating aspect is the Swiss habit of recording the area they were born in and not the actual place of birth. Also it could be that the Lausanne area reference was given as a general indication of area of origin because we find there were a large number of people with the Loup surname born in the small mountain village of Rougemont. While Rougemont is a moderate distance away from Lausanne it would be the closest centre of any significance and may have been quoted as a matter of convenience. We know from Peter and Michael Loup (great grandsons of her brother Jean Francois Loup) that she was of Huguenot descent. Peter and Michael Loup have undertaken considerable research into their ancestry and Peter Loup posted a family tree on ancestry.com which has been a useful source of information. Anne Pauline Loup's ancestral chart follows on the next page and this includes Honore Dupont's birth as being registered at the Church of St Germain in Compiègne. This information, including the "Oise, France Births and Christenings 1600-1907" source reference, was obtained from the Bennett Family Tree compiled by one Kathleen Anne Edwards of Bountiful, Utah, USA and has not been verified by the writer of these pages. This would be at variance with Peter and Michael Loup's understanding that the Dupont family originated from Grenoble in France.



The birth certificate of Jean Pierre Loup shows Philibert's (his father) place d'origine was Rougemont.

Pauline Loup was an accomplished artist as was her daughter Violet Underwood. Violet Underwood continued with her artistic pursuits up to a very old age and lived to over 100 years of age⁸.

Circa 1885 it was decided that two of the late Rev Mason's sons, namely Thomas Benjamin Mason (my grandfather) and Frank William Alexander Mason would immigrate to New Zealand which they did first taking up residence in the Christchurch area. They later moved to North Wairarapa area finally both becoming dairy farmers in that area. Three sons of Thomas Benjamin Mason and their cousin Keith Elphinstone Mason all enlisted for active service in WWI with only Keith not returning having died of influenza at Cannock Case UK before reaching the front lines. The three brothers all saw active service and returned safely despite my father on 5th November 1918 showing little regard for his own safety (and my future being). He was awarded the Military Medal for his actions and the citation reads as follows:

⁸ Colonel William Light – Founder of a City” by Dutton and elder page ix.

MASON, Charles Frank 33255

M.M. Lance-Corporal 1st Bn Canterbury Regiment.

LG 17 June 1919 p7700 Rec No 3202

Operations: British front in the vicinity of the Foret de Mormal - 5th November 1918. For conspicuous gallantry and devotion to duty. During the above operations Lance-Corporal Mason was in command of a Lewis Gun Section. When held up by hostile machine gun fire he pushed his gun forward to a flank and rushed the gun, capturing it. By his bravery and skill he set a fine example to all ranks.

[Source: *Honours & Awards to the New Zealand Expeditionary Force in the Great War 1914-1918* by Wayne McDonald pub. 2001] (Tauranga Library Ref 940.46 HON.)

So there we have about as much detail as I can provide you with relating to Rev William Mason and his extended family. So it can be seen that the Mason/Minet family has at various times had a long association with France and for that matter other parts of the world.

I have attached four JPEGs of Rev Mason, his wife and some of their children. I believe these photos, apart from the later one of his wife, were taken in Mauritius. The later one of Anne Pauline Mason (nee Loup) was taken by the Compiègne photographer one Charles Hideux. The two sons appearing with the young Anne Pauline Mason would be Charles James Mason and Edward Gray Lewis Mason. The person at the rear is thought to be a servant. The three daughters appearing with Rev Mason would be Pauline Fearon Elizabeth Mason, Harriet E Mason and Charlotte C Mason. These photographs unfortunately are not of high quality and are all copies of old photos that were in various states of disrepair. I have done the best I can to bring them back to as near as possible to their original state.

Campbell Mason

Tauranga, New Zealand



Anne Pauline LOUP and sons. (Mauritius)



Anne Pauline LOUP