

OLD DUBLIN SOCIETY



THE HUGUENOT CEMETERY, MERRION ROW, DUBLIN

Walking east past the Shelbourne Hotel on St. Stephen's Green one comes to Merrion Row, a short narrow street principally consisting of restaurants, pubs and convenience shops. It is easy to pass the little cemetery on the left, half hidden behind high railings and locked gate. The inscription on the granite lintel, high above the entrance, reads 'Huguenot Cemetery 1693'. This verdant, peaceful space is the last resting place of some of Dublin's earliest and most prominent Huguenot (French Protestant) families who fled religious persecution in France, particularly after the Revocation of the Edict of Nantes in 1685. Many of them settled in Dublin, especially in the Liberties. Over the centuries their descendants made a huge contribution to the commercial and financial life of the city, being renowned for their honesty and industry.

The burials here in Merrion Row are of those Huguenots who belonged to the French Non-Conformist Church. Their earliest place of worship was in a rented house known as St. Brigide's off Bride Street; they subsequently moved to Peter Street. The congregation north of the Liffey worshipped in a chapel in Lucy Lane, referred to by Roque as Mass Lane (now Chancery Place). A large plaque on the wall, erected in 1999, records the family names of those interred in the graveyard.

The cemetery is under the care of the Huguenot Trust which, assisted with a grant from the French government, restored it in 1988.

Sources

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