

Mr RONDEAU, master weaver, 1742–43 and 1754. Garthwaite sold five designs to Mr Rondeau, one in 1742, three in 1743 and one in 1754.<sup>1</sup> These were for grograms, a vellure, ‘a grogram shaped waistcoat’, and one small, unidentified design. He seems, therefore, to have concentrated on the cheaper silks and half silks (the grograms) for men, just as the Lekeux specialized in the most expensive. The grogram waistcoat was thus drawn without a separate design for the pocket flap which was provided for the more expensive waistcoats.

One Rondeau family can be identified from the Court Books of the Weavers’ Company. A hypothetical family tree can be constructed on the basis of one quite certain fact, that Jacob was the son of John Rondeau – the Court Books said so – and this has been confirmed and the information corrected by descendants to whom we are very grateful.<sup>2</sup> Other Rondeaux were apprenticed to John and the registers of the French Church at Threadneedle Street show that these boys were also his sons.<sup>3</sup> John Rondeau, the younger, could well have been her customer.

John Rondeau, the elder, ‘natif de Paris’ and the son of Isaac Rondeau and Jeanne Barquet made his T moignage in the French Church in 1686. In the period immediately preceding the Revocation of the Edict of Nantes when Huguenots were being increasingly harassed by Louis XIV, those in Paris were treated with more humanity than those in the provinces. Consequently, there was some immigration to Paris from other parts of France.<sup>4</sup> Rondeau was, therefore, not necessarily a Parisian. He married Jeanne Marthe Chalons in November 1694 and lived in Brick Lane in Bethnal Green between 1699 and 1706. He then moved to Spitalfields, attending the Vestry meetings of Christ Church regularly from 1728 to 1729 and was an Overseer of the Poor in 1728. In 1723 he leased a house, 3 Wood Street, today 4 Wilkes Street, Spitalfields,<sup>5</sup> which later became the Protestant Dissenting School and was living there at his death when he bequeathed the lease to his wife. He must have been a man of substance to be trusted with the Poor Rate and, indeed, he was among those chosen to present the petition for the building of a new church which resulted in the eventual building of Hawksmoor’s Christ Church.<sup>6</sup> He could not write, however, and when he drew up his will in 1735 he signed it with a ‘mark’.<sup>7</sup> He died in 1740, his widow surviving him for some years since she insured her house in 1744 and the policy was renewed in 1751.<sup>8</sup>

John Rondeau was a silk weaver with eleven children of whom four sons and five daughters were living at the time of his death. His sons were: ABRAHAM, born 1696, apprenticed in 1710, free in 1720. By 1748/9 he was on the Livery of the Weavers’ Company and appeared on the lists regularly until the 1750s. ISAAC, born 1700, apprenticed in 1713. We do not know when he became free but he attended the Vestry of Christ Church, Spitalfields, regularly between 1743 and 1746. In 1740 the Clerk of the Weavers’ Company crossed his name off the commonalty but gave his address as ‘corner of Brown’s Lane, grocer’. JACOB, born 1704, apprenticed 1717 and free of the Weavers’ Company in 1728. His name was also regularly listed until the 1750s. Under the terms of their father’s will Abraham, Isaac and Jacob only received one guinea each for a gold ring (though they may have previously received their portion of his estate) and they shared in various reversionary interests. JOHN RONDEAU, THE YOUNGER. He was born in 1706, apprenticed in 1720 but never, apparently, took up his freedom. He attended Vestry meetings in 1747. Under the terms of his father’s will he received £200 and it seems probable that it was he who carried on the family business. John Rondeau offered fifty-seven men to the Crown to fight the Young Pretender, one of the largest offers. He is the only Rondeau on the list although his three elder brothers could have been the heads of the firm (Isaac was certainly living in Spitalfields and Abraham was to become a liveryman). John Rondeau’s date of death is unknown.

There were other families named Rondeaux in London at the time including a branch which had connections in Canterbury but there is nothing to connect them with the silk industry.<sup>9</sup> Those who appear in the directories do so as ‘merchants’, such as James and Cyprian Rondeau, and these do not appear to have had any connections with Spitalfields.

1 5981.9A 1742, T.391–1971 p. 14, T.392–1971 pp. 28, 74 1743, 5990.6 1754.

2 We are indebted to Mr C.F.A. Marmoy, Mr H.B. Thomas and Mrs I.S. Wells. Some of their ancestors were not from Spitalfields but the details they could give clarified which was the most relevant family.

3 *Registers of the French Church*, op. cit. v3, p. 30.

4 Warren S. Scoville, *Persecution of the Huguenots and French Economic Development 1680–1720*, Berkeley, Los Angeles 1960, p. 82.

5 Spitalfields Survey op. cit. p. 194.

6 Vestry Minutes, Christ Church, Spitalfields 31 January 1728/9.

7 PCC Browne fol. 183.

8 Hand in Hand Insurance Company, MS 8674/66 fol. 250, no. 47402.

9 We are grateful to Mr H.B. Thomas for this information.