

## The du Plessis family in South Africa

The founding father of the du Plessis family in South Africa, Jean Prieur du Plessis, arrived in the Cape in 1688. He was a French Huguenot who fled France to Holland before coming to South Africa with the Huguenets.

Probably the most famous (infamous?) of the du Plessis name was Armand Jean du Plessis de Richelieu, Cardinal-Duc de Richelieu (September 10, 1585 - December 4, 1642), the villain of a number of books and movies, including *The Three Musketeers*.

The du Plessis family name traces back to around 1200 with Guillaume du Plessis, seigneur (lord) of Breux and seigneur of La Vervolière.

While the first Duke of Richelieu was a member of the du Plessis family there is no indication that he (as a celebrated clergyman) or his brothers were direct ancestors of Jean Prieur du Plessis. In fact, the chances are slim as the title passed to his sister's grandson, Armand Jean de Vignerot was given the du Plessis de Richelieu family name and title with permission of the king.

Jean Prieur probably descended from an uncle or even further back down the family line.

Jean Prieur du Plessis, founding father of the du Plessis' in South Africa had three sons:

- Charl Prieur du Plessis (mother Magdalene Menantau)
  
- Jean-Louis du Plessis (mother Magdalene Menantau)
- Pieter du Plessis (mother Maria Buisset)

who established the family name in South Africa.

Most of the information traced relates to the descendants of Charl Prieur du Plessis. Very little is known of the descendants of Jean-Louis and Pieter.