

Microfilmed Original Parish Registers

As you already know, good research practice dictates that you should not be satisfied with merely finding a family group record, or any other compiled record, of your ancestors. After all, compiled records are a secondary source only. Beyond good research practice, you'll undoubtedly *want* to obtain copies of original entries that deal directly with those you descend from. For most, that carries a deeply spiritual dimension; for others, it's at least an emotional one. There's something intrinsically moving about gazing upon an actual copy of a record about an ancestor, made in his or her lifetime.

The later Parish Register entries were made on pre-printed forms, the pastor filling in the blanks with the individual details; but earlier records are freehand, simply written out, one after another. Examples are provided in the **Parish Registers** section on this site.

As always in family history research, you should begin with the *latest* event (death or burial, unless the person is still living) and move systematically through the earlier events (normally, marriage, then birth or christening).

You will find that the records in the parish registers are grouped: christenings or births together, covering a given period of time. Marriages are also listed together, for a given period of time, but separately from the births. And burials are listed separately from both births and marriages. Usually, the groupings are by year: the christenings for the year and then for the next year, and so on.

When you come to the earliest generation of your ancestors covered by the parish registers, you'll want to check the original entries for clues to extend your pedigree. This time, you should check the entries for *all* the children on the family group record, not just the entries for your direct ancestors. To continue your research, you will need all the clues you can find.

The Parish Register Film Numbers

The table below provides the microfilm numbers of the Waldensian parish registers.

If you first obtained a copy of the typed Family Group Record(s), using the filmed parish registers will be much easier for you. Instead of having to skim every record on the microfilm roll in search of your ancestor, you can instead use the **birth date** you found to quickly scan for the year and then the month before looking more closely for the name you desire.

Note: The smallest hamlets are included in the nearby larger parish. For example, to find Villasecca (French: Ville Seche; "Dry Town"), you would need to search in the parish of Perrero (Perrier).

In the following table, the French form of the parish name is given in parentheses, as you may encounter that form in your family traditions or the records. "Time" indicates the earliest entries in the parish register and the latest year included in the microfilming. "Reels" indicates the total number of reels of microfilm for the parish. The final column shows the FHL microfilm numbers

by event type. A "V" in this final column signifies that the microfilm is in the vault. This means the film will have to be retrieved for you if you visit the FHL in Salt Lake City; there will be a delay (at least one-half day) in getting it. If you order the microfilm through the internet, there will be no such delay, as it is mailed from the Vault area to your Family History Center.

The Microfilmed Waldensian Original Parish Registers

Parish	Time / Reels	Event Type	Film No.
Angrogna (Angrogne)	1691-1948 / 7	Births, christenings 1691-1828; marriages 1691-1828; deaths, burials 1691-1828; confirmations 1806-1820	193399
		Births, christenings 1828-1841	193400
		Births, christenings 1842-1865	193401
		Births, christenings 1867-1911; marriages, deaths, burials 1892-1911	193402
		Marriages 1828-1948	193403
		Deaths, burials 1817-1865	193404
		Deaths, burials 1866-1890, burials 1912-1880	193405
Bobbio Pellice (Bobi)	1706-1947 / 5	Births, christenings 1706-1738, 1800-1842; marriages, deaths 1706-1738	193407
		Births, christenings 1842-1909	193408
		Marriages 1814-1944	193409
		Deaths, burials 1800-1865	193410
		Deaths, burials 1866-1947	193411
Luserna San Giovanni (St. Jean)	1707-1946 / 6	Births, christenings 1707-1841; marriages 1709-1777; communions 1709-1716	193437
		Births, christenings 1842-1865	193438
		Births, christenings 1866-1938	193439
		Marriages 1763-1946; confirmations 1836-1895	193440
		Deaths, burials 1744-1892	193441
		Deaths, burials 1866-1938	193442
Pomaretto (Pomaret)	1715-1892 / 3	Births, marriages, deaths, burials 1715-1837, 1866-1867; confirmations 1824-1890; removals 1889-1892	193422
		Births, christenings 1838-1865	V 193423
		Marriages 1838-1865; deaths, burials 1838-1865	193424
Pral	1838-1865 / 1	Births, christenings, marriages, deaths, burials 1838-1865	193431
Pramollo (Pramol)	1708-1903 / 4	Births, marriages, deaths, burials 1708-1837, 1866	193426
		Marriages 1780-1830; deaths 1780-1837; births, christenings 1838-1865	193427
		Marriages, deaths, burials 1838-1865	193428
		Deaths, burials 1867-1903; births, christenings 1867-1875	193429

Prarostino (Prarustin)*	1715-1948 / 7	Births, baptisms 1715-1801; marriages 1715-1824; deaths, burials 1719-1801	193414
		Births, baptisms 1715-1801; marriages 1801-1946	193415
		Births, marriages, deaths, burials 1805-1814	193416
		Births, baptisms 1838-1865	193417
		Births, baptisms 1866-1948	193418
		Deaths, burials 1827-1865	193419
		Deaths, burials 1866-1948	193420
Rodoretto (Rodoret)	1838-1948 / 1	Births, christenings, marriages, deaths, burials 1838-1948	193436
Rora (Roratà before the Exile)	1694-1948 / 4	Births, baptisms 1694-1764; marriages 1730-1867; deaths, burials 1730-1802; communions 1741-1819	193432
		Births, baptisms 1764-1805, 1838-1948	193433
		Marriages 1838-1947	193434
		Births, baptisms 1805-1849, 1866-1867; deaths, burials 1804-1948	193435
San Germano (St. Germain)	1752-1948 / 6	Births, baptisms 1752-1803, 1813-1834; marriages 1753-1802, 1813-1837; deaths, burials 1752-1837; births, marriages, deaths 1804-1814	193443
		Births, baptisms 1838-1865	193444
		Births, baptisms 1866-1948; marriages 1855-1874; deaths, burials 1866-1875	193445
		Marriages 1834-1865; confirmations 1835-1863, 1879-1889	193446
		Deaths, burials 1838-1865 Deaths, burials 1875-1948	193447 193448
Torre Pellice (La Tour)	1692-1932 / 6	Births, christenings 1692-1698, 1701-1866; marriages 1728-1804; deaths, burials 1728-1733, 1751-1754, 1777-1803, 1814-1838; confirmations 1735-1771; communions 1766-1777, 1803, 1832-1833	193449
		Births, christenings 1838-1865	193450
		Births, christenings 1866-1932	193451
		Marriages 1804-1924	193452
		Deaths, burials 1838-1865	193453
		Deaths, burials 1866-1932	193454
Villar Pellice (Villar)	1679-1947 / 6	Births, baptisms 1698; marriages 1679-1698	V 193455
		Births, baptisms 1699-1935	193456
		Births, baptisms 1842-1865	V 193457
		Marriages 1719-1865, 1889-1947	193458
		Deaths, burials 1719-1910	V 193459
		Deaths, burials 1842-1865, 1911-1944	V 193460

* Includes Roccapiatto (Rocheplate)

Additional Hints for Reading Microfilms

Some microfilm readers have a zoom lens or other means for enlarging the image. This often makes the document easier to decipher. Many researchers carry a magnifying glass with them, using it to study details of a document more closely.

But sometimes the film image is so light it is difficult to discern much at all. That usually is because the original writing is so faint it doesn't photograph well. I carry a few blank pages of colored paper—blue or gold work well—with me when I will use a microfilm. I have found that placing the colored paper on the screen where the image is projected—right where I'd read the document—helps clarify the document considerably.

How to Decipher Key French Words and Dates in the Original Records

We can provide here only a brief overview of key French words, phrases, and numbers.

Example 3

The document below is a death certificate (from FHL film 193404), chosen from the later records, using a pre-printed form. That permits you to see what the forms look like, as well as to begin becoming familiar with the handwriting.

ACTES DE DÉCÈS (1846)

N^o 54
Malan
Jean
Daniel

Le *vingt-trois* du mois de *Novembre*
en la Commune de *Angrogne* nous soussigné Pasteur
du Calte Protestant avons reçu la déclaration de décès suivante.

Le jour *vingt-un* du mois de *Novembre* à *six* heures *du soir*
en cette Commune est mort *Jean Daniel Malan* fils *Jean Daniel*
âge de *vingt-quatre* ans, *cultivateur* de profession, natif
de *Angrogne* y demeurant à *Prad* veu en
premier nocé de _____ en secondes
de _____ en troisièmes de _____
marie avec *Catherine Gubal* demeurant à *Angrogne*
si _____ de profession
demeurant à _____ et d _____
de profession, demeurant à _____

Declarans *Jean Daniel Malan* âgé de *quarante-deux* ans,
demeurant à *Angrogne* et *Etienne Combe*
âge de *vingt-sept* ans, demeurant à *Angrogne*.

Signature du 1^{er} témoin *Jean Daniel Malan*
Signature du 2^e témoin *Etienne Combe*

Le cadavre a été enterré le *vingt-trois* dans le cimetière de *Angrogne*

Signature du Pasteur
P. Morastier

To assist you in identifying key information in documents you find about your own ancestors, here is a translation of that document:

No. 54 Malan Jean Daniel The year one thousand-eight-hundred-forty-eight, the twenty-third of the month of November in the community of Angrogna we the undersigned Pastor of the Protestant Church have received notice of the following death.

The twenty-first day of the month of November at six o'clock in the evening in this community died Jean Daniel Malan son of deceased Daniel aged sixty-four years, farmer by profession, native of Angrogna and living at Prassuit, married to Catherine Costabel living at Angrogna. Informant Jean Daniel Malan aged forty-two years, living at Angrogna and Etienne Combe, aged twenty-seven, living at Angrogna.

Signature of the 1st witness Jean Daniel Malan [son of the deceased]

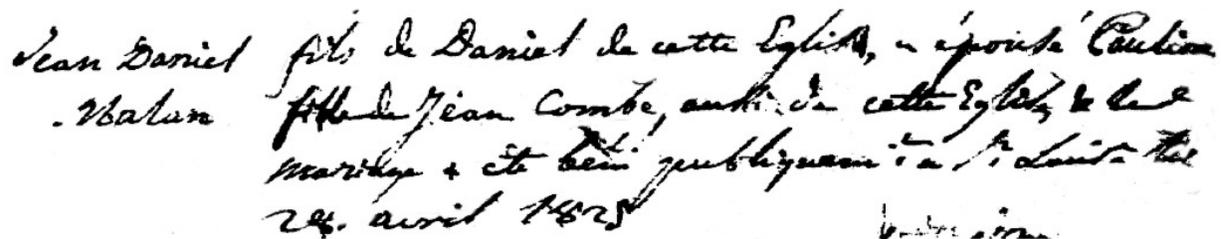
Signature of the 2nd witness Etienne Combe

The body was buried the twenty-second in the Angrogna cemetery.

This document gives us interesting additional details about Jean Daniel Malan: the date and hour he died, and where; where he was born and where he resided; his wife's and his father's names; and his profession.

Example 4

The next document shows a typical marriage entry, this one is from film 193399. It is an example of the earlier, freeform records.



The image shows a handwritten French marriage record. The text is written in cursive and reads: "Jean Daniel fils de Daniel de cette Eglise, a épousé Pauline fille de Jean Combe, aussi de cette Eglise, & le mariage a été béni publiquement à St. Laur[en]t le 28 avril 1825." There is a signature at the bottom right that appears to be "v. Combe".

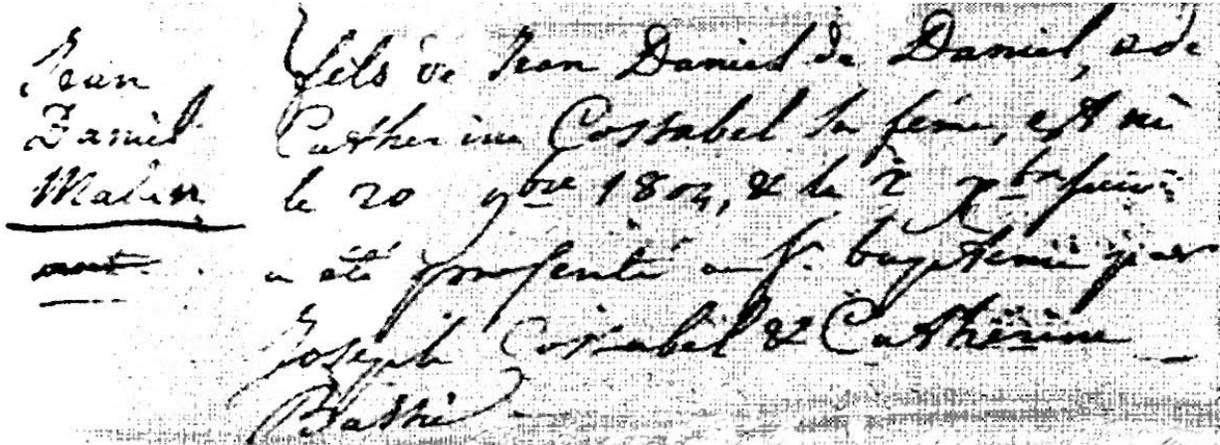
Because it is freehand, I include here a transcription (in French) as well as the translation:

Jean Daniel Malan fils de Daniel de cette Eglise, a épousé Pauline fille de Jean Combe, aussi de cette Eglise, & le mariage a été béni publiquement à St. Laur[en]t le 28 avril 1825.

Jean Daniel Malan son of Daniel of this Church [parish], has married Pauline daughter of Jean Combe, also of this Church, and the said marriage was publicly performed at St. Laurent the 28 April 1825.

Example 5

Finally, here is a birth and christening record, also from FHL film 193399, with its transcription and translation as well. We'll discuss the dates shortly.



Jean Daniel Malan ~~mort~~ fils de Jean Daniel de Daniel & de Catherine Costabel sa femme, est né le 20 9^{vre} 1804, & le 2 X^{br} prst. a été présenté au St. bapteme par Joseph Costabel & Catherine Bastie.

Jean Daniel Malan dead [crossed out; an erroneous notation by the pastor] son of Jean Daniel [son] of Daniel, & of Catherine Costabel his wife, was born the 20 9^{vre} [November] 1804, & the 2 X^{br} [December] of the present [year] was presented for holy baptism by Joseph Costabel and Catherine Bastie.

We learn much from this document as well: the child's parents, his paternal grandfather, his birth and christening dates. In addition, we can expect that his sponsors, Joseph Costabel and Catherine Bastie, are close relatives—that was normally the case for Waldensians. Other documents should disclose whatever that relationship might be.

You should carefully study the translations provided above. They will not only help you recognize typical wording in these documents, but also learn to recognize the shapes of letters and numbers.

Notice in particular the abbreviations for the months in the last document. At that point in time, January was not the first month of the year; March was. Therefore, the ninth month was November; in fact the root of the word "November" means nine. December was the tenth month, and the root of "December" means ten.

*To accurately decipher the dates in the documents, you **must** use this system.* It affects the months of September (sept = seventh), October (oct = eighth), November (nov = ninth), and December (dec = tenth). The other months will either be written out or put in numbers, rather than a combination of number and letters as these four months often are.

In these documents, you will often find French numbers written out in words, rather than in numerals. Information about numbers in the next table is adapted from the former BYU Independent Study Family History course, *France: Reading French Handwriting*.

The Number Equivalents of Written-out French Numbers

The word for the numbers 11-16 is formed by adding the ending *ze* to the corresponding word in column one. Starting with 30, the word is formed by adding *ante* or *ente* to the root of the word in column one. For example, to form 50, take the root of 5, *cinq*, and add *ante*, resulting in *cinquante*. (The "u" is required to maintain the proper sound.)

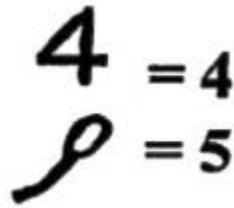
French Word	Number	French Word	Number
Un (or premier)	1 (or first)	Seize	16
Deux (or second)	2 (or second)	dix-sept	17 ("10-7")
Trois	3	dix-huit	18 ("10-8")
Quatre	4	dix-neuf	19 ("10-9")
Cinq	5	Vingt	20
Six	6	Vingt et un	21 ("20-and-one")
Sept	7	Trente	30
Huit	8	Quarante	40
Neuf	9	Cinquante	50
Dix	10	Soixante	60
Onze	11	Soixante-dix/septante	70
Douze	12	Quatre-vingt/octante	80 ("4-20")
Treize	13	Quatre-vingt-dix/nonante	90 ("40-20-10")
Quatorze	14	Cent	100
Quinze	15	Mil or mille	1000

The ordinal numbers (second, tenth, and so on) are written in French by adding *ième* to the root of the word for the number itself. For instance:

second = *deuxième*

third = *troisième*

You should also be aware that in the time period of these records, when numerals are used, you'll often see the following:



The following two aids will help with key words in French documents. The first shows various ways the letters could be formed.

To see the various ways the letters are formed, go to:
www.waldensian.info/research-documents/Handwriting.pdf

For the French word list compiled by the Family History Library, go to:
www.familysearch.org/learn/wiki/en/French_Wordlist

What to do next

As you trace your Waldensian ancestor in the Parish Registers, you will add more and more Waldensian surnames to your ancestry. In fact, you should generally increase your number of Waldensian surnames by one in each generation—unless the wife/mother’s maiden surname is not revealed in the records or else her maiden surname was the same as a surname already in your pedigree. (That happens quite often, for the Waldensians were restricted for very long periods of time to their small Valleys.)

When you have finished tracing your Waldensian ancestors—each of your Waldensian surnames—you should have each ancestral line back to about 1700, and perhaps even well into the 1600s. Your next step will be to continue your search, first in the two major sources of **Exile Records** and then in the **Notary Records**.

To continue your search, go to the **Exile Records** section, at:
www.waldensian.info/ExileRecords.htm