

The Records of the Waldensians in Exile

Soon after the Waldensians who had survived the extermination attempt, the long imprisonment that followed it, and the forced march into exile arrived in Switzerland, the Swiss government realized they needed some means of keeping track of how many additional people they needed to feed and house. They had supposed that the exiles would be able to work and to help support themselves; it had been expected that they would be a boon to the Swiss economy. It was quickly discovered that the exiles were so emaciated from their ordeal that few of them were able to work. Instead, most needed a great deal of care.

The Swiss authorities therefore had the exiles register with city officials to help them cope with the magnitude of their challenge in sustaining so many exiles.

Two modern Waldensian scholars, A. Armand Hugon and E. A. Rivoire, devoted a great deal of time to studying the Swiss and German archives to compile an exhaustive roster of those exiles. This roster was published as:

Gli Esuli Valdesi in Svizzera (1686-1690) (The Waldensian Exiles in Switzerland (1686-1690), Torre Pellice; Subalpina, 1974 by A. Armand-Hugon & E. A. Rivoire)

With the permission of the Waldensian Church Tavola (Board), we are pleased to be able to include on this site a copy of the pages of this book listing all of the Exiles.

Because the Swiss also recorded the age of most of the exiles—again, in order to determine how many of them were of an age to join the work force—this published roster of those exiles fills a great gap in the other records.

When you have traced your Waldensian ancestry to the beginning of the parish registers (generally, the early 1700s) and are ready to begin searching the notary record abstracts to extend your family tree, it will be important for you **first** to check this list of exiles for your Waldensian ancestors.

The exiles are arranged alphabetically by surname, then alphabetically by first name. Children in a family, however, are listed in birth order after the parents.

Because this is such an important source, let's analyze some examples:

Example 1: The Family of Barthélemy Odin

From page 137, exiles # 2378 – 2386:

ODIN

Barthélemy, S. Gi. – Los. 17.2.87. S. Ga. 87/88. Sc. Ott. 88. Sc. 88/89. Parte 23.4.89.

Marthe, mo. Come il marito.

Pierre, fi. – Moudon 16.2.87. Poi come i genitori.

2380 Marguerite, fi, - Come i genitori.

- Marie, fi., n. 1668. Come Pierre.
 Jeanne, fi., n. 1670. Come i genitori.
 Catherine, fi. – Come i genitori.
 Michel, fi. – Come i genitori fino a S. Ga. Ivi + 2. 6.87
2385 Barthélemy, fi., n. 1684. Come i genitori.
 Marthe, fi., ,n. 1686. Come i genitori.

Using the key to abbreviations on page 39, we can interpret the entry:

The number 2380 in the left margin by Marguerite and 2385 by Barthélemy means she is the 2380th exile and he the 2385th exile listed in the book. A number is provided with every fifth person.

Their father, Barthélemy, the head of the family, is exile number 2377. There are a total of 3948 exiles listed in the book.

Barthélemy, the father, was born at San Giovanni (French: St. Jean), but the date is not given [meaning that his age was not recorded in the Swiss record]. He was first registered (as an Exile) at Lausanne [Switzerland] on 17 Feb 1687, spent the winter of 1687/1688 at San Gallo; was at Schiafussa in October 1688 and wintered there in 1688/1689; and departed 23 Apr 1689.

Notice that the dates use the *European system: day first, month second, year last.* If you don't usually use that system, *don't confuse the dates.*

His wife was Marthe, also with no birth year given. She was with her husband each place he went (as noted for him above).

His children are given as:

- Pierre, his son; no birth year given; registered at Mondon 16 Feb 1687, then with his father.
- Marguérîte, daughter; same as above.
- Marie, daughter, born 1668; like her brother Pierre.
- Jeanne, daughter, born 1670; like her parents.
- Catherine, daughter; no birth year; like her parents.
- Michel, son; no birth year; like his parents through San Gallo, but died there 24 June 1687.
- Barthélemy, son, born 1684; like his parents.
- Marthe, daughter, born 1686; like her parents.

Suppose you had been seeking a Pierre Odin, son of a Barthélemy. You had already learned that much from the Piedmont Project (the **Parish Registers**). Studying the above Odin listing in *Gli Esuli*, you decide that the most likely Odin family in the book (there are several) is the above family.

Important Note: Subsequent research in the Notary Records showed that this is indeed the Pierre, son of Barthélemy, that we sought. However, those records also revealed a surprise: Marthe is Barthélemy's *2nd* wife, and the mother of *only the last four children!* Further research in the Notary Records identified the first wife and her ancestry. This is a good example of *the point we emphasize: You need to find all the available records in order to produce an accurate family history or genealogy.*

Example 2: The JANAVEL Listings

From pages 116 – 117, exiles # 1865 – # 1872:

1865 Jean, Val Luserna, n. 1657. Zu. 26.10.87 Be. e Neu. 87/88
Jean, Val Luserna. Be. 87/88. Sc. ott. 88. Parte apr. 89.
Jeanne (CHAMBON), mo. Come il marito.
Josué, fi., n. 1688? Sc. ott. 88. Parte apr. 89.
Joseph, fi. n. 1689? Parte apr. 89.

1870 Jeanne, ved., V. – Morges 24.2.87. Be. 87/88. Va in Brand. Ago. 88. Stendal 88.
Anne, fi. n. 1682. Come la madre torna ott. 90. Chivasso lu. 91.
Josué fu Joseph, nip. del Cap. – Vevey mag. 86. Ginv. 86. Ivi sold. 89.

These records provide the following information, again using the key to the abbreviations:

The first Jean (# 1865) was from Val Luserna [Luserna Valley] and was born in 1657. He registered at Zurich on 26 October 1687 and was at Bern and Neuchâtel for the winter of 1687/1688.

The next Jean, also from Val Luserna, wintered at Bern in 1687/1688; he was a Schiaffusa in October 1688 and departed in April 1689. His wife was Jeanne; the CHAMBON in parentheses means that Armand-Hugon and Rivoire (authors of the Exile book) knew from other records that her maiden surname was Chambon; no birth year is given for her, and she went with her husband throughout their exile. They had 2 sons with them: Josué and Joseph, perhaps born in 1688 and 1689 respectively, and the sons also left in April 1689.

Next is listed a widow, Jeanne, from Villar [Pellice], but also with no birth year given. She registered at Morges on 24 February 1687, wintered at Bern in 1687/1688, went into Brandenburg in August 1688 and was at Standal, also in 1688 (both of the latter places being in Germany). Her daughter Anne, born in 1682, was with her mother, but returned in October, 1690 and was at Chivasso (a town northeast of Torino) in July 1691.

Finally, there is a Josué son of deceased Joseph, described as “nephew of the Captain,” referring to Captain Josué Janavel. (The captain did have a younger brother Joseph.) No year or place of birth is given for this Josué son of deceased Joseph, but he was at Vevey in May of 1686 (so before the exile) and at Geneva in 1686, where he was a soldier in 1689. (Captain Janavel had been exiled to Geneva as part of the peace agreement and died there in 1690.)

As you can see, none of the Janavels listed is described as being of the family of Captain Josué Janavel. But according to Reverend Jean Jalla, exile # 2359 Jean Revel, who was at Moudon on 25 February 1687 and died at Payerne on 5 March of that year, was the Captain's son-in-law [husband of his daughter Jeanne Janavel].

Example 3: The Family of Barthélemy Durand-Canton

Let's consider one more family from *Gli Esuli* and see what we can discover:

From page 91, exiles # 1200-1204:

1200 Barthelemy, R., n. 1638. Prig. Trino. + 87 a Bussoleno nel viaggio di esilio.
Marguerite, fi., n. 1662. Prig. Trino. Be. .2.87. Ivi 7/88. Sc. ott. 88.
Jeanne, fil, n. 1669. Prig. Trino. Be. 9.2.87. Zu. 87/88. Sc. ott. 88
Daniel, fi., n. 1676. Come la sor. Marguerite.

From this entry, we learn that Barthélemy Durand-Canton was born at Rorà in 1638. He was a prisoner at Trino and died in 1687 at Bussolino during the forced march into exile.

His wife is not listed and therefore had undoubtedly died before the exile. They had three children who were exiles as well:

- Marguerite, born 1662, also a prisoner at Trino; at Bern on 9 February 1687 and wintered there 1687/1688; by October 1688 she was at Schaffhausen.
- Jeanne, born 1669, same as sister except she spent winter 1687/1688 in Zurich.
- Daniel, born 1676, with his sister Marguerite.

Bereft of both parents by the time they reached exile in Switzerland, the 3 children were unable to remain together all the time in exile.

In the *Esuli* book, children in a family were born in the same town as their father unless otherwise listed.

We also learn some interesting things about this family by comparing *Gli Esuli* facts to the Piedmont Project record (from the Parish Registers). The Piedmont Project also revealed three children for Barthélemy Durand-Canton—but two of the three are different! Jeanne is there, with a birth year of 1668, based on her age at death (83 in 1751). The other two children found in the Piedmont Project are Antoine, born about 1668 (later an elder in the Waldensian Church, and so listed on the family group record), and Catherine, born about 1678. In addition, the Piedmont Project identifies the spouse of these three children. To learn more about Antoine's later personal experience with the Duke of Savoy,

It is interesting that this is the only Durand-Canton entry in *Gli Esuli*, and there are survivors in exile of only three other Durand families. This family, once so extensive it required at least two

compound surnames (Durand-Canton and Durand-Ruet) in addition to the main-line Durand families themselves to distinguish among the various branches of the family, was reduced to only 4 partial families among the exiles.

Once again, it's crucial that you carefully document everything you find about your family history. For *Gli Esuli*, as an example, this means recording the authors; the book title, publisher, and place and years of publication; the page number; and the number of the person(s), as noted in the margin of the book; and how you accessed the source (on this PFO site? in the Salt Lake Family History Library or on microfilm at a Family History Center? through Interlibrary Loan? [if so, note which library loaned the book].

Important: If you do **not** find the ancestor you seek in the list of Exiles, don't be discouraged. Remember that some of the Waldensians escaped into France and others became temporarily Catholic. The next step in your search for your ancestor will be the **Notary Records**, where, if you have traced your Waldensian ancestors back through the **Parish Registers** (through the Piedmont Project or the microfilmed original records), you will surely find your ancestors. **The Notary Records are much more comprehensive than the Claims or the Exile Records.**

We again acknowledge the Waldensian Archives and the Waldensian Church Tavola for permission to post on this site the out-of-print roster of exiles.