

***THE VAUDOIS OF THE ALPINE VALLEYS
AND THEIR CONTRIBUTION TO UTAH AND LATTER-DAY SAINT
HISTORY***

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On the Italian side of the lofty Cottian Alps three valleys lead down from the mountains to the plains of Piedmont. These are the valleys of Lucerna, Perouse and San Martino, bordered on either side by inaccessible crags and cliffs. They have been known for centuries as Les Vallees Vaudoises or the Protestant Valleys of Piedmont. They comprise in all about sixteen square miles, or an area scarcely larger than the District of Columbia, yet the tragedy and triumph of the devoted people who made these valleys their home has touched the hearts and aroused the admiration of many nations.

Of these inhabitants one author has written:

Within this little area has...existed from remote times a peculiar race of people, rarely numbering more than twenty thousand. They have retained their primitive appearance and manners to a greater degree than almost any other European community. They have always been noted for the simplicity and purity of their lives, and their absolute freedom from the ignorance superstition and vice which have cursed the countries around them. The men are tall, well-made, graceful in section, vigorous and hardy. The women are fair, endowed with a native grace and refinement and have always been noted for their chastity and modest deportment. Both sexes are frank, hospitable Peaceful and forbearing in disposition.⁽¹⁾

Traditionally these Vaudois or people of the Valleys belong to a church which is held to be the direct result of the teachings of the Apostles of early Christianity, never having belonged to the Roman Catholic religion. Thus they were the forerunners of the Reformation, having preserved their ancient faith, through the centuries, "in the Vaudois Valleys simple, free, and pure, as in the time of persecution."⁽²⁾ They sent forth missionaries, two by two, and won converts in many lands. The Bible they took as their authority and inspiration, and their guide in Life and morals.

During all these centuries the Vaudois Church continued to exist, nestled under the shadow of its mountains, and safe in its obscurity. The Popes had greater things to think of than the subjugation of these Christians of the Valleys. They had kings and dominions to subdue. The Vaudois, on their part, beheld with horror the gradual departure of the Roman Church from its primitive purity and simplicity. Warned by the career of Rome, this mountain church clung with greater faith than ever to the authority and teachings of the Scriptures.⁽³⁾

The example of their lives attracted wide attention. Their simple truths of Christian living as taught by their missionaries everywhere exercised a powerful influence on the hearts of men. Naturally this attracted

the attention of Rome, and persecutions began against them. Force and the Inquisition failed to swerve them from their faith. In 1476 the Duchess of Savoy ordered her commanders to use any means in their power to compel the Vaudois to join the Catholic Church. In 1437 Pope Innocent VIII proclaimed a general crusade against them, and "summoned all the Catholic powers of Europe to take up arms for their extermination."⁽⁴⁾ Absolution was freely offered to all who should participate. A large army marched

toward the Valleys, but the poorly armed Vaudois valorously defeated the invading force with great slaughter.

From this time the Vaudois never knew any rest. Their peaceful valleys became the scene of a constant struggle. The monks and priests took care that the persecution thus begun by the command of the Pope should never cease. Many of them established themselves in the Valleys, under the protection of the civil authorities, and the Inquisition was, somewhat later, established at Pignerol and Turin. The Vaudois villages were visited with fire and sword. Several of the Barbas (pastors) were seized, condemned and burned at the stake, and the people were over and over again forced to abandon their pleasant homes and take refuge in the mountains, in order to escape the cruelty of the priests and the soldiers whom they brought with them. Yet scarcely any embraced the Roman faith. It was a season of fearful trial to them, but they endured it all.⁽⁵⁾

The coming of the Reformation pleased the Vaudois well; and the religious reformers showed them the greatest respect. But they had their part in the persecutions and wars over religion. Martyrs among them met death in every town of Piedmont. "There is not a rock in the Vaudois Valleys which may not be looked on as a monument of death, not a meadow but has been the scene of some execution, not a village but has had its martyrs."⁽⁶⁾

In 1560 a new crusade was organized against them by the Pope. All the villages were to be ravaged and destroyed, unless the people embraced Catholicism. Rather than do so, they collected their flocks and herds, and abandoned their valley homes for mountain retreats and fastnesses, hiding themselves in caves and fissures of the rocks. Winter came to their aid as they took up arms and fortified mountain passes, where a handful of men could hold at bay a regiment. In the ensuing war 50 Vaudois defeated an army of 1200 soldiers, hurling down upon them a furious avalanche of stones and heavy trees from the heights above. In February 1561 an attack was utterly defeated, the victors capturing much armor and ammunition. A second attack by 7000 soldiers was hurled back.

A so-called truce was followed by treachery on the part of the invaders. In their surprise attack six Vaudois marksmen held the whole army at defiance, until their people were ready.

Suddenly, at a given signal, the sides of the mountain seemed to quiver, and from either hand there descended upon the soldiers a mass of huge rocks and logs, which crushed whole companies where they stood. The Catholics were seized with a sudden panic, hundreds were swept over the cliffs into the abyss below. The army wavered, and turned to flee, followed all the way along that dreadful path of death by the fatal shower of stones which filled the whole Valley with its thunderous sound. The rout was complete, and the Vaudois, springing forward in pursuit, chased the crusaders into the lower Valley. The Vaudois lost not a man; but the Catholics were terribly cut up.⁽⁷⁾

By a treaty dated 5 June 1561 the Protestants of the Valleys were granted amnesty, liberty of conscience and freedom to worship in their own way; prisoners were released and fugitives were permitted to return home.

For nearly a hundred years there was practical peace in the Valleys, with no general persecution. But there were many vexatious restrictions and annoyances.

The next great attack came in 1655. The Duke of Savoy commanded the Vaudois to attend Mass or remove to the upper Valleys, giving them twenty days in which to sell their lands. In a most severe winter these targets of persecution old men, women, little children and the sick "waded through the icy waters, climbed the frozen peaks, and at length reached the homes of their impoverished brethren of the upper Valleys, where they were warmly received." There they found refuge and rest. Deceived by false reports of Vaudois resistance, the Duke sent an army. On 24 April 1655, at 4 a.m., the signal was given for a general massacre, the horrors of which can be detailed only in small part.

Little children, Leger says, were torn from the arms of their mothers, dashed against the rocks and cast carelessly away. The sick or the aged, both men and women, were either burned in their houses, or hacked in pieces; or mutilated, half-murdered and flayed alive, they were exposed in a dying state to the heat of the sun, or to flames, or to ferocious beasts; others were tied, in a state of nakedness, into the form of balls, the head between the legs, and in this state were rolled down the precipices... "And let it not be said," adds the historian Leger, "that I exaggerate things upon account of the persecutions which I myself personally have endured; I have traveled from one neighborhood to another to collect the authentic testimonies of the survivors, who deposed what things they had seen before two notaries who accompanied me...Dead bodies lay scattered about, or were planted upon stakes...everywhere misery, terror, desolation and death. These are the things which I can tell."⁽⁸⁾

Such fiendish brutality aroused an outcry of horror and indignation throughout Europe. Oliver Cromwell, then ruler in England, took spirited action in behalf of the Vaudois, and wrote a letter by the hand of his Secretary, John Milton, the Poet, to the Duke of Savoy, containing these accusing words:

"We have learnt also, that regardless of their humble petitions to your highness, praying that you would be pleased to revoke the said edict,...your army fell upon them, cruelly slaughtered great numbers, imprisoned others, and drove the rest to fly for refuge to desolate places, and to mountains covered with snow, where hundreds of families are reduced to such extremity, that, it is to be feared, they will all shortly perish with cold and hunger."⁽⁹⁾

Touched with "extreme grief and compassion for the sufferings and calamities of this afflicted people" he called upon the Duke to abrogate this edict and put an end to their oppressions. As Protestant champion he also called a general fast in England, and raised a national contribution of 140,000 to aid the sufferers. He called upon the heads of other Protestant states to join him in voicing condemnation of those outrages. To the rulers of the United Provinces of the Netherlands, Milton wrote for Cromwell:

But if he (the Duke of Savoy) still persist in the same obstinate resolutions of reducing to utmost extremity these people (among whom our religion was either disseminated by the first doctors of the Gospel, and preserved from the defilement of superstition, or else restored to its pristine sincerity long before other nations obtained that felicity), and

determines their utter extirpation and destruction; we are ready to take such other course and councils with yourselves, in common with the rest of our reformed friends and confederates, as may be most necessary for the preservation of just and good men, upon the brink of inevitable ruin, and to make the Duke himself sensible that we can no longer neglect the heavy oppressions and calamities of our orthodox brethren.⁽¹⁰⁾

It was at this time that Milton in righteous and indignant remonstrance, penned his great sonnet:

ON THE LATE MASSACRE IN PIEDMONT

Avenge, O Lord, thy slaughtered saints, whose bones
Lie Scattered on the Alpine mountains cold;
Even them who kept thy truth so pure of old,
When all our fathers worshiped stocks and stones,
Forget not. In thy book record their groans
Who are thy sheep, and in their ancient fold
Slain by the bloody Piedmontese, that rolled
Mother with infant down the rocks. Their moans
The vales redoubled to the hills, and they
To heaven. Their martyred blood and ashes now
O'er all the Italian fields, where still doth sway
The triple tyrant; that from those may grow
A Hundred-fold, ho having learnt thy way
Early may fly the Babylonian woe.

(The reference in lines seven and eight, we are told, is to an actual incident.)

So great was the terror of Cromwell's name as a military commander, backed up by his threat to send forces to the rescue, that the persecution was stopped. Again the survivors were promised restoration to their homes and freedom of worship. A few years of

troubled peace followed. Then Cromwell died; and the rulers broke faith with the Vaudois once again.

In 1685 Louis V revoked the Edict of Nantes, which had guaranteed freedom of religion to his Protestant subjects. This was the signal for renewed persecution in the Valleys. A horrible edict decreed that all the inhabitants there should publicly announce their error in religion within fifteen days under penalty of death and banishment and the destruction of all the Vaudois churches. Armies of French and Piedmontese soldiers invaded the Valleys, laying them waste and perpetrating cruelties upon the inhabitants. These then numbered only 15,000, with 2,500 capable of bearing arms against the combined might of France and Savoy. But from the mountains rang their cry of defiance, "Death rather than the Mass." In solemn assembly, under the leadership of a valiant pastor, Henri Arnaud, they solemnly swore, with hands raised to the sky, to defend their homes and their religion to the death, as their fathers had done before them.

For three days the valiant Vaudois withstood the hosts assailing them from either side, and were victorious in every engagement. Pitted against overwhelming odds, and lured by false promises, they were persuaded to submit. Their surrender was followed by devastation in every hamlet and unheard of inhuman barbarities. The entire population of the survivors was thrust into vile dungeons, being crowded to suffocation in thirteen prisons. After six months only three thousand remained alive, due to the ravages of disease. These half-starved remnants were released and banished forever from their homes, to travel over almost inaccessible Alps to a place of refuge. Hundreds of children were forcibly torn from their parents to be reared as Catholics, never to see their families again. Hundreds of the destitute outcasts Perished of cold and hunger, and all suffered terribly, as they made their bleak way to Switzerland.

When, at last, driven from their homes, and exposed to the horrors of an Alpine desert, where many expired, and many sorrowed over their expiring friends, the remnant were still supported by the consoling thought, that they were exiles and martyrs, but not apostates. They felt also--for nothing less could have upheld them under such accumulated misery--they felt that, although many had sealed their testimony with their blood, an invisible hand was still leading them onward, and that the time of their restoration would yet arrive:...

Of this expatriated remnant, those who succeeded in effecting their escape were joyfully received by the Protestant states of Switzerland, Germany, and Holland, where the facts of their oppression and wrongs had long preceded them, and awakened that fraternal charity which had no place in the hearts of their countrymen. Here they were received with open arms, respected as men, adopted as citizens, honored as martyrs, imitated as Christians, and, where the expression of public favor was withheld, cheered and consoled by private sympathy. ⁽¹¹⁾

In their adopted homes they yet longed for their native valleys and the homes of their ancestors. Three years later occurred what is known in their annals as "The Glorious

Return". An intrepid band, eight hundred strong, led by Henri Arnaud, their soldier-pastor, assembled on the shores of Lake Geneva, re-crossed the Alps amid incredible hardships, and retook their native Valleys. They defeated a force of 2,000 French, inflicting upon them a loss of 700 men, to only 22 of their own. They later held out for two months against an army of 20,000. Forced to take refuge on the heights of the Balsille, they spent the winter on this lonely rock. By now there were only 400 left, resisting the combined armies of France and Savoy, yet this handful of mountaineers held out with unexampled valor. When their defeat or death seemed certain, they made a miraculous escape. But they were dying of fatigue and hunger when their deliverance came.

Spain, Austria and England had declared war against France. The Duke of Savoy joined them. Forthwith he granted peace and protection to his Vaudois subjects, and permitted them to return to their homes in the Alpine Valleys, promising them toleration in religion. Back came the Vaudois from distant lands where they had been scattered, Switzerland, Germany, Holland and England. Never again were they to be removed.

Napoleon conquered the Piedmont, but under him they enjoyed genuine religious freedom, and he protected them in their rights. Following his defeat in 1814, they were again cruelly persecuted. On 17 February 1848, the King of Sardinia granted his Vaudois subjects freedom of religion on an equality with

his other subjects. People spoke of our "Vaudois brethren", and they were now allowed civil and political rights, and to attend schools and universities. The whole country rejoiced together.

The long war of eight hundred years between Rome and the mountain Church was ended...In that freedom they have not since been disturbed...Still sheltered in its lovely Valleys, the mountain Church lives on, maintaining the same faith it received from the Apostles, using its ancient ritual, and affording to the world the most remarkable instance on record of the indestructibility of the truth. No human power could have carried this little flock so securely through the trials and temptations we have been considering, and from which we have seen it emerge unscathed. These men trusted in the Lord, and He delivered them. ⁽¹²⁾

The very next Year Apostle Lorenzo Snow was called to open a mission in Italy. Arrived in England he sought the Lord for guidance as to where to begin his missionary labors. He recorded these impressions:

As I contemplated the condition of Italy, with deep solicitude to know the mind of the Spirit as to where I should commence my labors, I found that all was dark in Sicily, and hostile laws would exclude our efforts. No opening appeared in the cities of Italy; but history of the Waldenses attracted my attention.

Amid the ages of darkness and cruelty, they had stood immovable almost as the wave beaten rock in the stormy ocean. When the anathemas of Rome shook the world and princes fell from their thrones, they dared to brave the mandate of the Pope and the armies of the mighty. To my mind they appeared as the rose in the wilderness, or the bow in the cloud. The night of time has overspread their origin; but these dissenters from Rome existed ages before Luther was born. During the fierce persecutions to which they have been subjected, their limits have greatly decreased.

A few narrow valleys, which in some places are only a bowls shot in breadth, are all that now remain in their possession except the mountains by which they are engirdled. But a period of deep calm has at length arrived, and since the storm of persecution swept over Europe they have received many privileges from the Sardinian Government.. Thus the way was opened only a short period before the appointment of this mission, and no other portion of Italy is governed by such favorable lairs.

A few flood of light seemed to burst upon my mind when I thought upon the subject, and I endeavored to procure some information in relation to this people. The librarian to whom I applied informed me he had a work of the description I requested, but it had just been taken. He had scarcely finished the sentence, when a lady entered with the book. "O," said he, "this is remarkable; this gentleman has just called for that book." I was soon convinced that this people were worthy to receive the first proclamation of the Gospel in Italy.⁽¹³⁾

In a letter to President Franklin D. Richards of the European Mission, he reported his impressions:

Now, with a heart full of gratitude, I find an opening presented in the valleys of Piedmont, when all other parts of Italy are closed against our efforts. I believe that the Lord has there hidden up a people amid the Alpine mountains, and it is the voice of the spirit that I shall commence something of importance in that part of this dark nation.⁽¹⁴⁾

Again he wrote:

I felt assured that the Lord had directed Us to a branch of the house of Israel, and I was rejoiced to behold many circumstances that remanded me of those with whom I had been associated in the valleys of the west.⁽¹⁵⁾

September 19, 1850 was an impressive day for the missionaries, President Snow and his two companions.

We ascended a very high mountain, a little distance from LaTour, and having taken our position on a bold protecting rock, we sang praises to the God of heaven, and offered up the following prayer:

"...In Thy name, we this day lift into view before this people and this nation the ensign...of Thy kingdom once more to established among men...From the lifting of this ensign may a voice go forth among the people of these mountains and valleys, and throughout the length and breadth of this land, and may go forth and be unto thine elect, as the voice of the Lord, that the Holy Spirit may fall upon them imparting knowledge in dreams and concerning this hour of their redemption."⁽¹⁶⁾

Elder Snow proposed "that this mountain be known among the people of God, henceforth and forever, as Mount Brigham" and the rock upon which they stood "the Rock of Prophecy" In thinking of the Vaudois he wrote about this time:

The following hymn expresses the feelings engendered by their romantic situation:

For the strength of the hills we bless Thee,

Our God, our fathers God:

Thou hast made Thy children mighty

By the touch of the mountain sod.

Thou hast fixed our ark of refuge,

Where the spoiler's foot ne'er trod;

For the strength of the hills we bless thee,

Our God, our father's God.

We are watchers of a beacon,

Whose light never die

We are guardians of an altar,

'Midst the silence of the sky.

The rocks yield founts of courage,

Struck forth as by Thy rod;

For the strength of the hills we bless thee,

Our God our fathers' God.

It is now learned that this beautiful and stirring hymn was written by Felicia Hemans. With the words revised to apply to the mountains to of Zion in the West, it has long been printed in our hymn books with the words "Altered by Edward L. Sloan" in lieu of the name of the original author.

In the succeeding months and years, numbers of Vaudois families were gathered October 27, 1850, "opening a door which no man can shut", as expressed by Lorenzo Snow. Families of Cardons, Stalles, Beuses, Pons, Malans, Guadins, Chatelains, and many others followed. Branches of the Church were organized at Angrogne, St. Germain, Saint Bartholemi, Prarustin, etc. The record of members of these branches is preserved vol. 1338, Church Historian's Office, Salt Lake City. The names have been printed by Dr. Daniel B. Richards, in *The Scriptural Allegory*, pp. 297-312.

There are the names of 184 members entered on these rolls, and 27 children blessed; with 32 males ordained to the Priesthood. Forty-nine are stated to have emigrated during the years 1854-1863, most of them by the Perpetual Emigrating Fund. Most of them settled in Utah,, and are represented today by a noble posterity, many of them distinguished in various fields.

In September 1947, nearly a century after the opening of the Italian Mission, President James L. Barker and I set out by car from Paris. He was then President of the French Mission. His mother, Marguerite Stalle Barker, was a native Vaudois, born at Prarustin Parish in 1850. By assignment from President Alma Sonne of the European Mission, we were to visit the Vaudois people in their homeland amid the Alpine valleys.

As the car sped across France, President Barker refreshed my mind on the history of this unique and valorous people. His mother's parents and their family had been among the early converts, and emigrated in 1855, becoming members of the first Handcart Company in 1856. On the journey disease sapped the strength of the father, Pierre Stalle. He became helpless and had to be put in one of the wagons. One morning he told his wife he would never live to reach the Valley, but predicted that once the others arrived, no one of them would ever lack for bread; and some day their daughter Margaret (later the mother of President Barker) would be in easy circumstances. When they looked in upon him in the wagon later in the day, he was dead. His body was wrapped in a sheet and placed in a grave between two layers of sagebrush, and then covered with earth.

On September 11 we crossed the St. Gothard Pass through mountain s of imposing grandeur, over winding, zigzag roads and hairpin curves, thence speeding along the level roads of the fertile Po Valley. Our itinerary called for us to remain that night in Milan. But both of us felt the urge to pass on, and in the

event it was well that we did. Let me here quote from my journal for those days:

After a brief look at the ornate and magnificent Milan Cathedral, we drove on to Torino. Both of us had the impression we should push on. We took a specially constructed straight autostrada highway and drove rapidly through the level country...and now to bed in preparation for our big adventure tomorrow among the Vaudois parishes.

Sept. 12. We drove early from Torino to Pinerolo, and from there to Torre Pellice. This was the chief village of the Vaudois, and the "La Tour" of Pres. Lorenzo Snow's Journal. It was a market day and the crowds were out on the street. There were many blondes among the people, some with light hair, some red hair, and many with hair of a light brown. Among them also were the dark-skinned and dark-haired. Before leaving Torino Pres. Barker and I had knelt down and prayed for help and guidance from the Lord. We then planned to go first to Prarustin, where his mother was born. The old Pastor, whom he had met twenty years before on his fourth visit here, and who had helped him compile his genealogy, might still be living. So, we reasoned, if he were alive and still- friendly, perhaps he would accompany us to any official who might have authority to say "Yes" to our plan, for copying registers of all the different parishes.. If there was no central authority, then we were prepared to visit at least a number of the pastors of the scattered parishes. At Torre Pellice, therefore, we inquired the way to Prarustin (or Prarustino in Italian). We had to retrace our route part way and go to San Secundo. From here we followed a narrow cart trail up the steep hillsides, until we were almost at the crest of a mountain-like hill which gave a commanding, view of the valleys, beautiful to the view, and the steep hillsides with their terraced fields and gardens. Pres. Barker had told me how his mother's folks had been forced each space to carry their soil back up the hill in baskets on their back, because of the constant erosion.

Everything here was on a primitive scale. Our car was a novelty, and the sight of it set one little girl to screaming. Plowing and all field work was by ox team. Two-wheeled carts were used. Grapes hung in luscious clusters from the vines everywhere. We watched the women come with their bundles of soiled clothes to the community wash-house, and wash them out by hand. Women passed with huge baskets on their back, laden with vegetables or fruit or firewood. Well, we bumped along slowly up the rough, steep road, with Pres. Barker frequently inquiring the way in Italian.

At last we arrived at Santo Bartolomeo, a little cluster of houses about the Catholic and Protestant churches and the home of the Pastor. (The people in the past have been compelled to pay a tax to support the Catholic church, which is always large and on the choicest location, even though 95 per cent or more worshiped at the Protestant (or Waldensian) church). Here we were cordially received by the Pastor, Umberto Bert, the "Pastore Valdese". He invited us into his simple and rather bare office, and listened sympathetically to our appeal to film the records; and was highly interested to learn that Pres. Barker's mother had been born in his parish. He thought it would be a good thing to film the records. Each of the eighteen parishes had its own records.

We asked, "Is there a central official having authority over all the records?" Right at this time, fortunately, the Moderator or primate over all the Vaudois churches missions in Italy, was at Torre Pellice. It would be advisable to see him. The former Pastor of Prarustino, Auguste Jahier, lived in Torre Pellice, near the hospital.

Pastor Bert brought to us about eight thin volumes of the parish registers. The first volume covered the years 1715-1770. Earlier ones had been destroyed in the persecutions. They were written entirely in French, on good paper and with black ink. So it is certain they will film well. In a later volume, containing the year 1850, we saw the chastening record of President Barker's mother. The Pastor climbed the hill with us at Prarastin, to the lofty place near the summit, where the ruins of the old home of Pierre Stalle could be seen. It was a striking contrast from that spot where the family must have eked out a meager and toilsome existence, to her situation in later life in North Ogden where she lived in comparative affluence. Walking back to the Pastors home, we bade him goodbye and guided the car down the narrow tortuous and rough trail to the main road.

Back at Torre Pellice after inquiry, we found the home of Pastor Jahier, now retired. He received us with every mark of courtesy and deference. When he recognized Pres. Barker as the one who had called on him twenty years before and whom he had helped with his genealogy, he was extremely delighted and called in his whole family to be introduced...We explained to the whole group our project of microfilming the records of the Vaudois parishes. He informed us that the Moderator, M. Virgilio Somani was right then in Torre, and could give us permission to film all of them. M. Jahier agreed to go with us to see him.

Sept. 13. Arriving at Torre Pellice, we stopped the car and read over the excerpts from the Journal of President Snow. We then scanned all the surrounding hills...and decided there could be no doubt at all that the high mountain back of Torre Pellice, named locally Monte Vandalino, was the "very high mountain, a little distance from La Tour" on which Pres. Snow stood when he offered the dedicatory prayer, and that the "bold projecting rock" easily discernible in the pictures, was the square-shaped rock which the people call Casteluzzo - the little castle. We felt as though we were continuing the fulfillment of Pres. Snow's prophecy, and that unseen forces were aiding us mightily. Pres. Barker thought that, after the records were filmed, here would be a fertile field for missionary work.

We picked up M. Jahier, and ascending the steps of the headquarters of the Moderator rapped on the door of the room where the executive board of the Vaudois church were in

session. M. Somani was radiant with smiles as he led us into his office, where he had a document all typed and ready for his signature. He sat down, signed the document, stamped it -with his official seal, and handed it to us triumphantly. We read this in French:

TAVOLS VALDESE
Torre Pellice

Authorization is given Mr. Archibald F. Bennett, Secretary and Librarian of the Genealogical Society of Salt Lake City, to photograph the Registers of Baptisms, marriages and Deaths of the Vaudois parishes, with the approbation of the Parishes themselves.

This concession has not only the aim of favoring the establishment in America of a Library which will receive the vital records of all the Evangelical Churches of the world, but also that they may furnish us with positive copies of all the Registers, so that we should be able to reproduce them entirely, in case the originals should be destroyed, for any cause whatever.

Le Moderator de l'Eglise Vaudois

We thanked each other profusely, and we went on our way, happy in the complete success of our undertaking.

With M. Jahier we drove to the home of the Pastor of San Giovanni (St. Jean)...We went inside this church also. It is famous because in the persecutions so many of its pastors suffered martyrdom. We also bought postcards and histories of the Vaudois. Back at the Jahier home we said our goodbyes and au revoirs, amid every manifestation of warm friendship. Mrs. Jahier (who speaks English) is the daughter of a pastor, the granddaughter of another, and for five generations back her ancestors have been Vaudois Pastors. Finally we got the doors of the car closed and drove away, with "many a thanks and many a backward bow" on their part and on our own.

The daughter rode with us to Torino. In response to our questions she told us thrilling incidents from her people's history how young Enrico Arnaud had led the desperate migration of the Vaudois refugees from Switzerland to their mountains in Italy, and how,

against outnumbering hosts, they had triumphed and Maintained themselves in the fastnesses of their mountains. Frequently, when great armies had marched against them, they had retreated with their families into great caves and caverns, where their singing could be heard by the invaders, but they could not be found. At other times the Vaudois soldiers had rolled huge stones down the mountain side to the destruction of the armies of the Persecution marching against them.

One year later we returned to the Piedmont with James M. Black, a microfilm operator, who had been flown with his camera from Italy, and in three weeks filmed 1,476 volumes of births, baptisms, marriages and deaths from sixteen different Vaudois parishes, or a total of 80,390 pages. There were difficulties, for these registers were dispersed in three narrow Alpine valleys and in little communities aloft on the steep sides of mountains, or perched upon well-nigh inaccessible heights. A letter from the Moderator addressed to the Pastors, recommended that they permit us to take their parish record books to a central place, the Hotel du Parc, to be microfilmed.

Tribute must be paid to President and Sister Barker for taking their car, even in pouring rainstorms, up and down narrow, winding mountain roads and hazardous trails, to gather up and return these books. At times the road had to be leveled off with shovels before the car could pass. Often on a narrow road we might meet a cart or a car and be compelled to back up until there was space for one or the other to pass.

The rain fell in torrents as they delivered the records to Rora, high up on a hillside. The car road ended at Tournim, half way up to Pramol, and a Vaudois elder came winding his way down the mountain trail, leading a patient sure-footed donkey. Slung in gunny sacks packed securely on its back were the ninety-eight Parish books. These had to be returned the same way.

At Rodoretto, poised high on a steep declivity above the San Martino Valley, I had to leave the car on the main route, and climb in a pouring rain for twenty-five minutes up and around a mountain to a little cluster of houses perched perilously on the mountain side. The Pastor brought seventy-eight volumes. These were wrapped and tied in the second rain coat I carried, and then down that steep road I struggled in the rain and mud. They had to be returned after filming in the same laborious fashion, this time minus the rain, and with a Vaudois laborer to assist.

Of the people I wrote at that time:

Everywhere in these valleys we found worthy people living moral lives, who were sincere lovers of the Bible truth. It is a symbol with them always to keep the Bible opened in their churches (which they call temples). Their motto is: "The Light Shines in Darkness." Their homes are simple; their living is frugal; their lives are humble and filled with sincere devotion to their ideals. We attended their church services, two weddings, and a family marriage anniversary. Once we stopped the car to give a ride to a schoolteacher toiling afoot up an eight kilometer roadway carrying on her back a heavy parcel - one she had received from her brother, a Pastor in South America. We asked if she were a Vaudois. Eagerly she responded that she was. "I am consecrating my life to my church," she said, and there was happiness in her eyes, "and to helping the poor."

All of us have been highly impressed with the gracious courtesy and sincere friendliness of all the pastors and their families. Everywhere they were eager to help us in our objective. In no case did they evince the slightest hesitation or objection...Of the twenty or more Pastors we have met, we found all of them men of

innate culture and refinement, unselfishly devoting themselves to their ministry among their humble flocks. They are all well educated and most of them speak several languages.

We were fortunate to be in Torre Pellice when the centenary of the granting of religious freedom to the Vaudois was celebrated there. Church dignitaries were there from many Protestant lands, and especially from England. The presiding official was able to translate the addresses of speakers in English, French, German, Spanish and Italian. It was an amazing performance.

One day Brother Black and I climbed up Mount Vandalino to the steep and abutting rock famous in Vaudois history as Casteluzzo. From its summit we looked across the great Piedmont plain, even as President Lorenzo Snow and his missionary companions had done nearly one hundred Years before It was an hour of rich reminiscence. We remembered that they had renamed this mountain "Mount

Brigham", and this rock on which we stood, Casteluzzo, and the "Rock of prophecy." For here they had stood and dedicated the land of Italy for the he preaching of the gospel. We remembered too how many Vaudois families had been brought into the Church. In our hearts, as we stood there, was the prayer that the prophecies uttered on that hallowed occasion would soon come to fulfillment.

Deep in the heart of President Barker during those three weeks in Italy was the long felt desire to carry the gospel message to those noble people from whose lineage he and his mother had come. That was the fondest desire of his heart. At the funeral of President Barker, I rejoiced to hear President David

O. McKay announce that they had selected President Barker to head a new mission in Italy among the Vaudois people. Had he lived his lifelong desire would have been granted.

President Barker was typical of the best type of Vaudois descendants in Utah and in the Church. An indication of his greatness and his contribution is suggested in this letter from a non-Mormon admirer:

June 27, 1958

President David O. McKay

Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints

President McKay:

I hope you will excuse the liberty I am taking in writing to you, without having the honor of knowing you personally; I have heard the news without sudden death of Doctor James L. Barker, and I wish to pay a homage to the memory of a great man.

I met Doctor Barker thirty years ago, at the University of Southern California, where he was lecturing at the time. I immediately admired one of the most distinguished professors of the French language and literature and one of the Outstanding and most original masters in the science of phonetics. At the time of our first meeting, I had recently arrived from my native country, France; my heart was fast becoming Americanized, but alas! not my tongue. Doctor Barker gave me then, and many times ever since, his whole-hearted guidance, his help and his time.

On each Of his many visits to our campus, he gave guidance and help, to all those who needed it, to students and teachers alike. Everyone here who knew him, appreciated his understanding and patience,, enjoyed his enthusiasm and his humor, respected his honesty and his conscience with his wide knowledge, Doctor Barker was so generous, so simple, so kind.

Justly Proud to be a member of the wonderful Church over which you preside, Sir, he was a splendid representative of its high ideals. To me, who came from France, he was one of the finest Americans I ever met, one of the most admirable men I ever knew. In the name of my colleagues and of our students, I offer the members of his Church our sincere sympathy, and I pay fervent tribute to his memory.

I am, President, McKay, with my respectful regards, yours very sincerely,

(Dr.) Rene Belle

Chairman of the French Department

U. S. C.

Professor Barker was for years head of the Modern Languages Department at the University of Utah. He served as a missionary in Switzerland, and later presided over the Argentine and the French Mission. He served as a member of the Sunday School General Board almost continuously from 1928 until his death. He married Kate Montgomery, 30 May 1906, and she and the children were with him abroad for eight years while he studied in Switzerland and at the University of Paris. His son, James L. Barker, Jr., is now City attorney for Salt Lake City. His wife for several years was a member of the General Presidency of the Relief Society Organization.

His brother, Frederick Barker, was Bishop of North Ogden ward, member of the High Council of Ogden Stake, and filled a mission to Great Britain. He was also a member of the School Board and held many secular offices.

John Paul Cardon was a native Vaudois, born 28 Dec. 1839, at Piedmont, Italy. His native place, called Cardon, can still be seen on the mountain slopes. He was the son of Philip Cardon and Marthe Marie Gourn. Theirs was the second family to join the Church when the gospel. was preached to them in 1852.

Paul himself was baptized 7 Feb. 1851. On 7 Feb. 1854 the family of four sons and two daughters left their native land and emigrated to Utah, arriving at Salt Lake City in October with the Robert Campbell company. Paul drove an ox team across the plains. They made their home in Weber County. He took part in the Echo Canyon operations as a member of Capt. Lot Smith's company. He married Susannah Goudin, another native of the Vaudois Valleys. After his removal to Cache Valley, he served as a minuteman against Indian attacks, being a First Lieutenant of Cavalry. He and his wife (a member of the first Handcart Company) had six sons and five daughters. By his wife Madelain Bous (another Vaudois of the first Handcart Company) he was the father of nine children. For many years he was Marshal of Logan City, and "was also prominently identified with the religious affairs of the Church, the social enterprises of the community and the civic management of Logan City." In 1899 he was called on a mission to Switzerland and carried the Gospel to his native land. At his death, 12 Feb. 1915, he was grandfather of more than one hundred.⁽¹⁷⁾

His son Joseph Emanuel Cardon, was born 23 Oct. 1874, at Logan, the son of the first wife, Susannah Goudin. He graduated from the Brigham Young College in 1894, taught school and went on a mission to the Northern States, where he served as District President and Secretary of the Mission. After his return, he held these positions: member of the Cache Stake Sunday School Board, Deputy City Recorder, Bishop of Logan First Ward and President of the Stake for many years. He was a manufacturer of knit goods.⁽¹⁸⁾

Another son of the same parents, Louis Samuel Cardon, helped his father build railroads in Montana and Washington. Then he completed a four-year normal course at Brigham Young College and taught school. In 1896 he married Rebecca Ballard, sister of Elder Melvin J. Ballard. She has been very active in Vaudois research. He was Assistant Postmaster in Logan and President of the Swiss Mission 1899-1901, under whom the mission made wonderful advancement. He died.

Susette Cardon, daughter of John Paul Cardon, and Susannah Goudin, married Joel Ricks. By 1957 they had 163 descendants, who had intermarried with such well known Utah families, as the Larsons, Maughans, Crocketts, Miners, Budes, Thathers, Steeds and Parkinsons. One daughter married Calvin Fletcher, artist and brother of Harvey Fletcher. Another descendant married J. Karl Wood, producer of Church pageants and official in the Church School administration.⁽¹⁹⁾

Another Cardon descendant was Thomas Bartholemey Cardon, Civil War veteran. He married Ella Glarinda Hinkley. A daughter, Ella Vida Cardon (Wife of Roy Lambert Adams) has been very active as genealogist of the Cardon family. Raymond Hinkley Cardon, veteran of World War I, was City Councilman of Logan. His sister Blondel Cardon Porter served as Assistant Librarian of the U.S.U.⁽²⁰⁾

Brief mention only can be given other Vaudois descendants and an indication of their contribution.

Joseph S. Cardon, son of Louis Philip Cardon and Susette Stalle, went with parents to Arizona by ox team, later moving to Old Mexico. He was a member of the High Council of Juarez Stake, and Counselor to the Bishop of Dublan Ward.

John Roy Cardon, Bishop of Inkorn Ward, 1923-1930 and later.

Ernest Elmer Cardon, 1st Counselor in the Bishopric of Turlock-Ward, San Joaquin Stake.

James Richard Bous, Bishop of Hooper Ward, son of James Bous and Clarinda Hill.

Kenneth Roundy Cardon, Bishop of Benson Ward, East Cache Stake.

Lawrence M. Malan, Weber County Clerk, Stake Patriarch, Mount Ogden Stake.

Dean Tracy Malan, Bishop of Copperton Ward, West Jordan Stake.

Clarence Walter Malan, 2nd Counselor, Ogden 48th Ward, Ben Lomond Stake.

These few samplings will show that the descendants of the Vaudois of the Alpine Valleys are today taking a prominent part and making a valuable contribution to the church and civic life of the communities in America where they now live.

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ENDNOTES

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4. Ibid. p. 35.
5. Ibid. p. 36.
6. Ibid. p. 40.
7. Ibid. p. 56
8. Ibid. pp. 72-73
9. William Stephen Gilley *Narrative of an Excursion to the Mountains of Piedmont*, pp. 218-219
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11. William Beattie *The Waldenses*, p. 4.
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13. Lorenzo Snow *Autobiography of Lorenzo Snow*, pp. 122-123.
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