

28 December 1993

Dear Waldensian Cousin:

In response to my first letter, some expressed interest in a periodic progress report. That is the purpose of this letter.

The first letter was mailed to some 150 people who had contributed Waldensian pedigrees to the Ancestral File. To conserve funds, this one is being sent only to those who responded to the first one. I'm including a list of those receiving this letter so that you will know who has received it.

1. Extraction of notarial records

I have had to ask the researcher to halt further research until we raise sufficient funds to pay him.

I have received research reports extracting all notarial records with any kind of genealogical information for the village of Rorata. The two volumes in the State Archives required two short and three long research reports to complete.

I have also received one research report extracting the first part of the Fenile notarial records. That represents the first of three volumes in the State Archives. Because of time delays in receiving the research reports, the researcher began Fenile before I received the final Rorata report and wrote back suggesting he then begin work on the Angrogna records.

Through a phone call to him about a different question, I learned that he has sent two additional reports, both of early Angrogna notarial records. The difficulty is that we do not have funds to pay for the research represented by these two reports. (Just today I received the first of those Angrogna reports, 298 pages representing 180 hours of research, or \$3600 plus postage.)

To facilitate communication in the future, I have asked the researcher to provide all further reports on computer disk **only**, thus avoiding the long postal delays (roughly six weeks; a report can reach 200 pages in length, so first class airmail is inadvisable).

You may recall from the first letter that we began by sending a deposit to the researcher, which he was to exhaust and then send a report. But he found this too restrictive; to be effective, he needs to stop research at a logical break in the records, and our deposit never coincided with such a break. Our present difficulty stems from a spurt in his research activity and our expectation that financial response to the project would be faster and greater than it has been.

As our researcher is a professor, his research for us can be accelerated when school is not in session. This results in uneven research through the year, but once we get used to his schedule

and he gets used to our fund-raising abilities, we will each understand the expectations and possibilities.

We appreciate very much the financial contributions since our first letter, totaling just under \$900.

But to maintain this research project, we are asking each surname family to do the following:

Identify a family fund-raising chair. This person needs to be energetic and dependable.

We are trying to identify a PFO-wide fund-raising chair to coordinate the efforts of the surname family chairs.

If each of the 150 people on the original mailing list donated \$15 per month, we could sustain the researcher without interruption. But some of those people have passed away, some have moved without leaving forwarding addresses, and others are unable to participate.

But we need to establish a base of those who can contribute a consistent amount each month. We also need to identify those who are able to contribute a large amount if such is needed—as in our current situation.

Based on prior postal service, I expect the second Angrogna report should arrive late January to early February, and we will need to raise the entire amount required by that research.

To preserve our individual and organizational integrity, I cannot in good conscience authorize further research until we have funds to pay for that research.

This means that we need to raise at least \$8000 before research can resume.

We are not at all pessimistic about this prospect. We simply need to hasten the organization of surname fund-raisers and coordinate our efforts.

2. Reconstruction of Rorata families

The first diskette of TempleReady names will have been sent by the time you receive this letter, and diskettes to others who expressed interest in participating in temple ordinances will follow very shortly. Dozens of families not previously identified have been reconstructed from these notarial records.

3. "Registri dei Beni di Particolari" (Register of Individuals' Goods)

During a trip to Torino some years ago, Marriner Cardon learned of a series of documents called

"Registri dei Beni di Particolari." After the 1690 return from exile (the Glorious Return), Waldenses trying to reclaim confiscated property were required to provide evidence for their claims. In many cases, entire families had been exterminated and thus the evidence filed should provide significant insights into the rights, often obscure, of those who survived.

Because these records should provide an excellent guide to the pedigree of the survivors, we would like the researcher to locate and extract these records before proceeding further. But, as noted, we cannot proceed until we have sufficient funds.

4. Vital records of Pragela

Yvette Longstreet, the French/Italian specialist at the Family History Library, stumbled across a volume in the Library containing vital records of Pragela, 1674-1685. There are 909 entries in this series, plus 192 records of forfeited properties by Pragela Waldenses who fled rather than convert to Catholicism. Both Yvette and I have independently checked a random sample of these records in the Piedmont Project and other Archives records; neither of us found a single duplication.

This area was under French domination at the time, and the French government required that all vital records be reported to the civil authorities. Thus, although the Waldensian **parish** records were destroyed, the copies filed with the French civil authorities survived. A German professor of Waldensian extraction published those records in 1911. The copy in the Library has apparently been ignored because the title page is in German; perhaps it was assumed that the entire volume was in German. But the entries themselves are in the original French.

I am now beginning to enter these records into PAF.

Those with ancestors from Pragela (or others interested in doing temple ordinances for these people) should inform me of this interest, indicating specific surnames of interest (if any). If you have access to TempleReady so that I can simply send a PAF or GEDCOM file, please indicate that. Also, **please** include \$1.50 to cover the cost of the disk and postage.

This summarizes the current status of the organization. *Please remember that PFO is duly registered with the IRS as a tax-exempt organization. And please share this information with those who can contribute.*

Again, we appreciate very much the support to date and look forward to even greater progress.