

## Appendix One

This Appendix contains the sad history of Bernardin Jahier (5th GGF of Philippe Cardon, our immigrant ancestor), and also some details of the lives of his descendants in our ancestral line. The son of E. Jean Cardon, Philippe, through whom we are descended, married Jeanne Jahier. Her great grandfather was Capt. Jacques Jahier, whose grandfather, in turn, was the Capt. Bernardin Jahier whose sad history we recount here. If one looks up Capt. Bernardin Jahier's family group sheet, it can be noted that both Bernardin and his 14-year-old son Elisee are shown as having died in the year 1599. On my copy of this family group sheet the compiler had added a note: "... Elisee, 14 yrs. old in 1599, a martyr for refusing to go to mass (C.Ch.)."

I had noticed this entry, and wondered about the circumstances. On one occasion when I was looking through used and rare book stores in San Francisco, I asked the salesperson in one such store if they had anything dealing with the Waldensians or Vaudois. He went to their rare book case and drew out a small volume entitled "*Sketches of the Waldenses.*" No author was named. It was published by the American Sunday-school Union in Philadelphia in 1846. I stood, leafing through its pages, and noted that it contained the "Hymn of the Vaudois Mountaineers" by Felicia Hemans from which the words of the Mormon hymn, "For the Strength of the Hills" were adapted. Then as I told the salesman I would buy it, and continued to look through it while he wrote up the sale, I noticed the name Bernardin Jahier with which I was familiar, and read the following account which began on page 100 of the volume.

"The history of Bernardin Jahier, who was drawn over by the Romanists, should be adverted to. He was anxious to gain the favour of his sovereign, the duke of Savoy, before whom he was accused for some acts of ambition and avarice; when he promised not only to go to mass himself, but to induce his family and neighbours to do the same. Immediate promotion was his reward; he was made captain-general of the militia, in the vale of Perouse, for life.

"His wife, however, flatly refused to go with him to mass, as did two of his sons, who were grown men, and their families likewise; also his youngest son Elisha, a lad aged fourteen. He next applied to his neighbours, some of whom consented; particularly one whose name was Maurice Jaquet. He had been formerly a Romanist, and hoped to gain some temporal advantage by returning to that faith. This was in the spring of 1599. But when some of the Romish clergy visited Pramol, on June 26th following, with several of their followers they found Jahier almost their only convert in that place. The strangers attended the next sabbath morning's service; after which they prepared to solemnize the mass, in a booth formed of boughs of trees, by Jahier and Jaquet. The former attempted to compel his son Elisha to attend, and beat him so cruelly that he died a few days after. Neither could Jaquet persuade his family to go. The monks went to the afternoon service of the Vaudois, and heard some remarks especially suited to them; this had also been the case in the morning, owing to the portions of Scripture which came in order to be read on this occasion. But even this public service was attended by an armed force of the Waldenses, lest some act of violence should be attempted by the Romanists.

"Some quarrels seemed likely to occur when the sermon was over, but the whole passed off quietly; and no further pains were taken with Jahier, whose real insignificance was plainly perceived. He soon fell into a state of much mental and bodily uneasiness, became unable to stand, and was confined to his bed for six months, at the end of which he died, rejecting the attendance of the priests and the monks who came to hear him confess, and to anoint him. He turned to the wall, and would not reply, or even look towards them; so they refused to bury his dead body, and his sons interred it in the Protestants' place of sepulture. During his illness, he repeatedly told his wife that she was happy in having adhered stedfastly to her religion, and that he regretted being deprived of the consolations of her ministers, as he took no pleasure in the services of the priests and monks. He, however, had no opportunity of publicly returning to the

church which he had forsaken. Thus it received an increase of strength, whilst its enemies were planning to destroy it; and Gilles, the relater of these facts, was himself a witness of them, having been minister of Pramol at this period.\*"

If one feels that maybe Bernardin was a "black sheep" who popped up in the family line four centuries back, he certainly must have passed on some valiant genes, as the history of his grandsons Captain Jacques Jahier (our ancestor) and Jacques' half-brother, Captain Barthélemy Jahier (our remote great uncle) discloses. Jacques was about 53 years of age at the time of the "Pasque Piedmontesse" or great massacre of 1655, in which Piedmontese troops quartered in the homes of the Vaudois rose up and massacred the families who were sheltering them, on the Saturday before Easter. Barthélemy was about 35 years of age. In the following account, the emphasis is upon Barthélemy, because his valor and dashing, impulsive nature have captured the imagination of the historians. You will note, however, the reference to "the brothers Jahier" at one point, and the note at the end indicates the Duke of Savoy did not regard Jacques as any less than his brother or any other captain of the Vaudois defenders, offering an equally high price for his head as for those leaders picked out by historians as the exemplars of the resistance movement at this period. The following is quoted from Muston's *The Israel of the Alps*:

" ...

"Captain Jahier, a native of Pramol, had retired into the Val Pérouse, in the French territory, with the refugees of Bubiano and the people of Angrogna, who, on the 22nd of April had fled before the army of Pianesse. He returned a month after at the head of these exiles, supported by their brethren of Pragela, and settled them again in the valleys of Angrogna and Pramol. Then he wrote to Janavel to come and join him.

...

"It was just at this time that Janavel effected his junction with Captain Jahier (on the 27th of May), on the banks of the Angrogna. These two warriors, uniting their forces, became more formidable and more powerful in their expeditions. The first enterprise which they attempted in common was against the little town of Garsiliano, which they endeavored to seize that very evening. But it happened, as at Lucernette, that, numerous troops coming at the sound of the tocsin from all the neighboring townships, they were compelled to retire, carrying off with them only some cattle and six pairs of oxen, which they had seized.

"Next day, at daybreak, having sought encouragement in prayer, and feeling the necessity of some energetic demonstration to save their country, they assailed the town of St. Segont [San Secondo], and made themselves masters of it. To preserve themselves from the enemy's fire, the Vaudois rolled before them great casks filled with hay and in this manner they approached the walls of the town, from which a shower of balls fell upon them, but the balls were lost in the casks, without striking the men, who were sheltered behind these rolling screens. Arrived at the bottom of the fortifications, they set fire to bundles of faggots and vine twigs, the smoke of which concealed them from the eyes of the besieged. Having then broken through a gate, they penetrated into the town and loaded themselves with booty. An Irish regiment was surprised in its barrack and cut to pieces. The number slain by the Vaudois amounted to 700 or 800 Irish, and 650 Piedmontese. The unarmed inhabitants were spared, and in part retained prisoners; afterwards the village was destroyed by fire.

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\* *Sketches of the Waldenses*, (American Sunday-school Union, Phila. 1846) pages 100-102.

"It was a terrible execution, and which, perhaps, it might not have been requisite to carry so far, but for the necessity imposed upon the Vaudois of making such a display of their force as should produce an impression against the enemy, who had not shrunk from butchering them when defenceless. Moreover, in time of war men do not reason with the coolness of a calm judgement. And the Vaudois valleys had been so cruelly destroyed, the blood which had been shed cried so loudly, the irritation had become so profound, that without attributing such reprisals to the spirit of vengeance alone, we may regard them as a necessary consequence. They had, indeed, the effect of leading the persecutors to see that they must treat this sacrificed people with more consideration. And if it be true that men have no respect for any but those whom they love or those whom they fear, the Vaudois, certain of not being loved, had no alternative, but in making themselves feared. They succeeded in a few days.

"The capture of St. Segont was already equivalent to a battle won. They had made 1400 of the enemy bite the dust; on their side the loss was only seven men; and these almost incredible facts were well known. The terror inspired by Janavel and Jahier seized all the neighbouring towns. They concerted schemes of mutual defence, and arranged a telegraph signal, which was to appear on the tops of the steeples, giving notice of the coming of the Vaudois, and indicating their position.

"The people, who suffered from the interruption of trade, the cantoning of troops, and the incursions of the Vaudois, began to express a very strong indignation against the cause, or at least against the effects of these troubles; and the public voice became still more urgent as the exploits of Jahier and Janavel, with their intrepid partizans, became more numerous. The Marquis of Pianesse endeavoured to cut them off by setting a price upon the heads of those amongst them who were of most note; but their troop, instead of being reduced, was augmented every day by new recruits or new refugees, who came to them from Queyras and Pragela. On the 2nd of June it consisted of four companies, commanded by the captains with whom we are already acquainted, and by captains Laurens and Benet. In their little council of war they resolved to make an attack upon Briqu eras. To execute this design the four companies marched by different directions, so as not only to be able to surprise the town, but also to oppose the approach of the troops whose assistance it might demand.

"In consequence, Janavel kept upon the borders of St. John and La Tayarea, in order to arrest the progress of the troops which might come from La Tour and Lucerna; Captain Laurens took the direction of the last spurs of Rocheplate, ready to intercept those which might be sent from St. Segont; for notwithstanding the recent burning of that village, it had been rendered habitable again by prompt repairs. Jahier descended into the plain of Briqu eras, and began to ravage the surrounding fields; but on a signal given the garrisons of the neighbourhood hastened to the assistance of Briqu eras with such rapidity, that no assault could be made upon that place.

"Jahier then retraced his steps towards the hills of St. John, where Janavel had kept in check the troops whose progress he had been appointed to arrest. Thus mutually reinforced by one another, the two captains attacked the enemy with such impetuosity, that one hundred and fifty of their number were left dead upon the field of battle. The Vaudois had only one man killed.

...

"Janavel then united his efforts once more with those of Jahier, and they formed the project of jointly retaking the Protestant capital of their valleys, the town of La Tour. In this they failed, but they slew more than three hundred soldiers.

"The combined troops of these two captains, at this time, amounted to more than six

hundred men. They established their headquarters on one of the heights of Angrogna, named Le Verné. But it was necessary to provide for the maintenance of these soldiers and this could only be done by putting the enemy to ransom.

"The inhabitants of Crussol, a village situated in the valley of the Po, having done much harm to the Vaudois at the time of the last massacres, Jahier resolved to lay them under contribution. He set out during the night with one hundred and fifty men; and next morning, at break of day, before the people of Crussol could take any steps for their defence, their village was attacked. The inhabitants retired in consternation to a deep cavern; and the Vaudois carried off, without resistance, more than four hundred cows or oxen, and six hundred sheep. This booty was conveyed for division to the Alp of Liouza, which, by a very ancient charter, was granted to the abbey of Staffarde.

"Whilst this expedition was accomplished on the banks of the Po, the Catholics of St. Segont, and the neighbouring villages, attacked the one hundred and fifty Vaudois who remained at Angrogna. Captains Laurens and Benet, with the brothers Jahier, repulsed these assailants, who, in their retreat, surprised a defenceless man, and satiated their cruelty upon him.

"However, Captain Jahier had gone to Pragela to sell, or place in safe custody, a part of the booty which he had made at Crussol. Janavel having in vain expected him for eight days, resolved to attack the town of Lucerna himself. This delay caused the failure of the expedition; for a new regiment, which had arrived in that town on the previous evening, repelled the attack.

...

"But all was not ended. Having purged the vale of Angrogna from its invaders, Janavel retired to his entrenchments. At the same moment Captain Jahier arrived from Pragela; their troops were fatigued -- the one party by the combat, the other by the march, and those of Janavel had had no food since morning. Whilst they took a hasty refreshment he went to reconnoitre the position of the enemy. He saw them rallying their bodies of dispersed troops in the plain of St. John, and far from thinking of any attack.

"This indefatigable warrior called again upon his men; caused them to descend by the borders of the valley, and fell like a thunderbolt unexpectedly upon the army, which was a second time put to the route [sic] before him. The Vaudois killed more than 100 men; but the death of Janavel had well-nigh proved at that juncture a greater calamity to his compatriots than a defeat, for that leader, to whom they could not have found a successor, was struck by a bullet which passed quite through his body, entering by the chest and coming out by the back. His mouth filled with blood; he lost consciousness, and was thought to be on the point of expiring. The grief of those around him was extreme. He gave over the command to Jahier, to whom he also gave his instructions, amidst tears, prayers, and liveliest testimonies of affection on the part of his soldiers.

"However, Providence was pleased not permanently to deprive the valleys of their intrepid defender, and after six weeks' suffering the cure of Janavel was completed. He had caused himself to be carried to Pinache, in the French territory, to recover or die there. His last advice to Captain Jahier had been, not to attempt anything for that day by reason of the fatigue of their troops; but an emissary having come to apprise Jahier that he might take possession of the town of Ossac, that too impetuous captain, as Léger calls him, whose intrepidity always got the better of his prudence, burning to signalize himself by some grand exploit, took with him 150 soldiers and set out under the guidance of the emissary.

"The emissary was a traitor. He led Jahier into an ambush, where a squadron of cavalry surrounded and defied him. In this moment of extremity Jahier rose above himself by his extraordinary valour; seeing himself betrayed he killed the traitor, invoked God, caused his soldiers to take to their swords and pikes, rushed upon the cavalry of Savoy with an intrepidity worthy of a better fate; and there, thrusting and striking, disembowelling horses, killing their riders, and breaking through the ranks of his adversaries he made terrible ravages all around him -- killed with his own hand three officers of the enemy, and at last, overcome by the number of his wounds, fell dead upon the spot. His son, who fought by his side, died with him. All his soldiers, with the exception only of one, were cut in pieces. The survivor hid himself in a marsh, and passed the Cluson at night by swimming, to bear this deplorable intelligence to his compatriots.

"That 15th of June was a fatal day! The Vaudois were deprived at once of Janavel and Jahier. 'The latter,' says Léger, 'had always shown a great zeal for the service of God and the cause of his country; having the courage of a lion, and, moreover, meek as a lamb, always giving to God alone all the praise of his victories; extremely well versed in the Holy Scriptures; perfectly familiar with controversy and a man of high ability, who might have seemed to possess every estimable quality if only he had been capable of moderating his courage.'"

While our ancestor Jacques Jahier seems to have been eclipsed in the views of the historians by his younger and more impetuous brother Barthélemy, his participation in these exploits, and his troublesomeness to the enemy is shown by a note added by Muston, at the point in the foregoing account where he mentions a price set upon the heads of "those amongst them who were of most note." He says:

"In this way we may learn the names of the most distinguished of these last defenders of their country. They are thus given in the edict of 23rd May, 1655. The figures which follow indicate the sum promised for the head of each of them: -- Joshua Janavel, 300 *ducats*; Bartholemew and James [Jacques] Jahier, 600; Paul Vachère, of Lucerna, 300; Francis Laurent ... 200;... [all of the remaining prices are 200 ducats or less].

"The edict is signed by Charles Emmanuel [the Duke of Savoy], and countersigned Morozza. ..."

The descendants of Bernardin Jahier continued to distinguish themselves over the following centuries as captains and as pastors and elders of the Vaudois people.

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\* Muston, Alexis, *The Israel of the Alps* (Glasgow, 1858) Vol. 1 pp. 365-372.