

In Search of the Soul of the Afrikaner

by

Harry Booyens

We stopped to ask the farmer a question, but he held his hand up in the universal “stop” gesture. When he turned back to us he handed us a huge bunch of red grapes. It was late August and it was Provence. More specifically, we were right next to the little hamlet of Belle Etoile, just a few hundred yards north of Saint Martin de la Brasque. For those who have spent time tracing their Huguenot ancestors the name Saint Martin de la Brasque will ring a distinct bell. This is where the families Malan, Minnaar and Jordaan of South Africa trace the “Stamvaders” of the families.

We had stopped with the farmer a few days earlier to ask about the kind of grapes and had told him our ancestors came from here in 1687. Without batting an eyelid he had responded, “Ahh....Louis XIV...Protestante!”, which was greeted by much vertical nodding of heads on our part. This time we asked as to the whereabouts of the *Chemin des Huguenots*, the road of the Huguenots. He downed his clippers, walked to his car nearby, opened it up and took out a map. After a few moments he shook his head and said that his map was not detailed enough. He told us to fetch our car and he would lead us to the road which was a considerable number of kilometres away. This helpful open friendliness is a characteristic of the people in that part of the world. Some minutes later we stood at the start of the *Chemin des Huguenots*.



The Chemin des Huguenots south of Saint Martin de la Brasque, headed for Pertuis near the Durance (2009)

But what were we doing there? The story starts in 1688....no, actually long before that, but we shall pick it up in 1688. To be precise, on Saturday, 20 March 1688.

Goeree – Saturday, 20 March 1688

A group of excited Dutch orphan girls watch from the deck of the ship as the huge sails are unfurled and the VOC ship *China* starts on its 4 month and ten day voyage to the far distant Cape of Good Hope. Our attention, however, is not on these eight young women, nor on the two regular passengers, but on the group of 28 distinctively shorter people elsewhere on the deck. They seem to be very apprehensive. As we move closer we realize that they are not speaking Dutch, Frisian, Platt or German, as so many soldiers and sailors on the ship. They are speaking a peculiar language. It sounds almost like French but not quite. It is distinctively choppy and not at all the flowing northern French that the other people on board would normally recognise.

In fact, they are speaking Occitan – some call it Provençal. This is the language of the southern parts of France, such as Provence and Languedoc – the latter region being named for the Language of Oc – Occitan. Languedoc is the part of France adjoining Spain where the horrific Albigensian Crusade was sent against the inhabitants early in the millennium. In that case the crusade was to destroy the Cathar religion that was almost the default faith of the region.

Ship of the line of the VOC – the Batavia replica (2009)



The result was some of the most terrible and mindless bloodletting that Europe ever saw, culminating in the last Cathars of Montségur simply walking into the flames to be consumed. Languedoc, particularly the rugged Cevennes area, is at this particular time a haven for Protestants and King Louis XIV has sent more troops here than anywhere else.

Our group of people are refugees from a very specific and rather small region in next door Provence where Occitan is also the default language. The area known generally as the Lubéron is situated at the foot of the Lubéron mountains which lie in the great bow of the Durance River, the major eastern tributary of the all-important Rhône. In fact, the majority of this group comes from three mutually adjoining villages in the Aigues Valley, named Saint Martin de la Brasque, La Motte d'Aigues and Cabrières d'Aigues. Their family names are Jourdan, Mallan, Meinard (all from Saint Martin), Joubert, Rousse and Long (from La Motte) and Courbon and Grange (from Cabrières). One more Jourdan is also from Cabrières. We also have Frachasse from Lourmarin, Verdeau from La Roque d'Antheron across the Durance River and Pelanchon from Sivergues, the mysterious little town in a "lost valley" in the Lubéron mountain. All these places are within the community of people known as the Vaudois. The Italians call them *Valdese*; the Germans call them *Waldensen* or *Talleute*; the Dutch call them Dalluyden – People of the Valley. Their ancestors are from Piedmont in what will one day be Italy.

In 1495 the ancestors of our group of Vaudois were invited by the local Catholic landowners of the Lubéron to move from the Freisinnières Valley, south of Briançon at the foot of the Cottian Alps to work their lands. The Vaudois reputation for hard work and dedication had preceded them. However, there has always

been one issue around these folks that made the Catholic Church rather apprehensive. These good folks have always maintained that they represent the true Christian religion in its form dating from before the Catholic Church formulated the tenets that characterise it at this time. Most particularly, they recognise no party to intercede on their behalf with God. They are also the people who sponsored the first ever Protestant Bible in France. In 1547 this led to the most horrific massacres being perpetrated against them by a man named Maynier, the Count of Oppède. Maynier completely destroyed the town of Merindol. Ironically, in the few decades before the Revocation of the Edict of Nantes, the Vaudois were allowed to practice their faith only in Merindol and nowhere else in the Lubéron.

Most of the Vaudois do not historically live in the Lubéron, but rather in Dauphine along the upper reaches of the Durance. Even more of them, the vast majority in fact, live across the border in the Duchy of Savoy, an independent country pressed upon heavily by Louis XIV. Both in France and in Savoy the Vaudois are now heavily persecuted and our group has elected to flee. They have made their way up the Durance and through northern Savoy to Geneva and from there to Frankfurt via Schaffhausen, the northernmost Swiss town on the Rhine. In fact, all of them except Frachasse arrived in Frankfurt in the same four day period, the vast majority on 31 October 1687. Most of them committed their names to a list with the VOC for being transported to the Cape to start a new life there.



The shattered remains of the old 16th century Vaudois stronghold on the hill at Merindol (2009)

It is unlikely that these humble and apprehensive farmers can imagine that their descendants will:

- a) build an entirely new nation in Africa,
- b) be up against yet another Maynier,
- c) include the only military leader to formally win a war against Queen Victoria of Britain, and
- d) include key future political leaders

As the refugee passengers stare in trepidation at the open ocean ahead of them, they experience the deep ache in the soul of those who know they shall never see the sunny land of their fathers again. And so it is that the 60-year old Jeanne Marque, who has made it all the way from Belle Etoile in Provence to this point with the help of her two dedicated sons, looks at the setting sun and realises that she shall never set foot on land again. But she is resigned to her fate. She has saved her two youngest. That is all that really matters.

The experienced sailors look at the two senior ladies among these passengers and then just look away uncomfortably. They know what will happen when the fresh cheese supply is finished two months into the journey. That is when they shall have to break out the sickening brine-soaked meat, vinegar and “ammunition biscuit” on which they shall have to survive for at least a further two months. They know only too well.

....and here I stop their story for this moment, because the comprehensive article I am writing on this subject is to follow, subject to some answers to key questions; and this is how we get back to the helpful farmer in the peaceful winelands of Provence.

My Quest for the Soul of the Afrikaner

For the past few years I have been systematically following a number of South African families through the history of the country, sketching the progress of members of those families who are my own ancestors and those of my wife. It is very hard work and I am at this time drowning in historical texts trying to pry snippets of useful information about individuals from the dusty recesses of libraries and archives and from obscure and arcane texts in various places. This effort has taken me not only to the hugely organised establishments such as the British Archives, but also to obscure little villages in Europe; all this in order to glean a bit more clarity on life

in the towns of origin of the “stamvaders” of these families at the times they lived there. Through all of this I have been in search of something I can best describe as “The Soul of the Afrikaner”.

We explored the German Eiderstedt peninsula, birthplace of the father of Stamvader Pieter Boyens. Frau Marwig of Garding actually took us to the little church where Joen Peter Boyens must have been baptised in the 1650s. It was very interesting indeed, and extremely picturesque. But, while time has stood curiously still there, it did not strike me as the place to look for the soul of the Afrikaner.

So we moved on to Blokzijl, where the stamvader Pieter himself was born. But while it provided striking pictures and superb records, it still had no effect on my soul. This cute little town with its eateries right next to the lock in the canal also is not the source of the soul of the Afrikaner.

We proceeded to Broek-in-Waterland, origin of the Myburghs - my maternal grandfather's line, but we concluded that the Netherlands, despite providing some 40% of our ancestry, did not fit the bill. So we moved on to Germany again, this time visiting Wesel, the origin of the Bassons – my wife's people.

Blokzijl with its Groote Kerk in the background



But this too was curiously sterile. The St. Willibrord church, practically destroyed in WWII, was hugely impressive, but somehow this too was not the place where my soul sensed anything profound.

We concluded that it had to be Oedt, the hometown of Jacob Cloete, given that he occurs an incredible 30 times in my son's ancestral pedigree. Here was a man whose DNA code is still significant in our family makeup today. This must be it. In Jacob's day the town of Oedt lay on the border of three different countries. But despite Herr Brocker of the Heimat Verein doing an excellent job of telling us the complex history of the little town, it still did not provide me with any sense of homecoming for the soul.

So we said goodbye to Germany and left via the Pfalz countryside to enter France via the Alsace. It was strikingly beautiful, but also full of tourists. From here we made our way down the eastern side of France. Eventually we reached Chambéry. We were now in the part of the country that used to be the separate Duchy of Savoy in the time of our stamvaders. From here we made our way down the Route Napoleon to a unique little spot on Earth.

And it was here, in the Lubéron area of Provence, that we were most deeply captivated by the history of our ancestors. Here we found a concept of historical time that by far outweighed anything that northern Europe can produce. Here time has apparently stood still. Yes, certainly there are cars, televisions, high technology and all the trappings of the 21st century, but somehow it exists alongside the history which almost oozes out of the very rock of the place. If one looks past the TV antennae, the electricity cables and the parked cars, one is still faced by towns in large part unchanged from 1650 when our ancestors lived there.



The Joubert estate across the road from Belle Etoile

We saw the Catholic church that the Protestants were forced to construct from the stones of their own forcibly demolished church. It is from the good folks in this town that the author obtained a copy of Virginia Chomat's text about the Jourdan family of the Lubéron area. Proudly featured¹ are our own Jean and Pierre

¹ Virginia Belz Chomat, *Cabrières d'Aigues et la Famille Jourdan*, Edition Cabrières, (2007); pp.207

Jourdan and their mother Jeanne Marque (NOT Marthe). Also featuring is Marie Rousse, who sailed on the *China* with her three daughters, Jeanne, Marie and Marguerite. Other individuals on the *China* also appear, such as Louis Courbon, Pierre Grange and Pierre Jourdan from Cabrières d'Aigues – the second Pierre Jourdan on the *China*. It was also in Cabrières that we came deeply under the impression of the Vaudois ancestry of our Lubéron forefathers.

It was in Cabrières d'Aigues that we were received by one of the local citizens who is interested in the Jordaans of South Africa. The “gasvryheid” was beyond description. We were served wine and cheese under a proper *prieël*. A tour of the town revealed the museum in which David Jordaan's bottle of wine from the Cabrières estate in South Africa is still on display.

It was while sitting on the stoep of Madame Cervera's bed and breakfast, right inside the 1600s Jourdan hamlet of Belle Etoile, just across from the Joubert estate, that it became quite clear to me that I simply had to find the answers to a number of questions surrounding our Lubéron French ancestors if I were to feel comfortable about what I am writing about them. And the reason for this conclusion is simple.

To walk around this part of the world is like a ramble through a South African telephone directory. Over here we see the farmlands named simply Joubert and over there we see the Rue des Jourdans. A little further is Les Roux and beyond it Bastide des Jourdans. Behind the mountain, near Lacoste, is Les Mallans. The cemetery in Saint Martin contains the names of Jaubert, Jourdan, Grange, Roux and Mallan from the 19th and 20th centuries – all names that occur in the ancestry of the author or his wife; and they are all on the ship *China* on Saturday 20 March 1688.



The Rue des Jourdans in Cabrières d'Aigues in 2009

If the Dutch of the Dutch East India company are to be thanked for the business decision of starting the post at the Cape, and if the Germans from the Lower Rhine are to be thanked for providing the first true committed settler in the form of Jacob Cloete, then it is the Vaudois of the Lubéron with their unique spirit that

must be thanked for providing the true soul of the new country that was hacked out of the unforgiving rock of the Darkest Continent.



Cabrières d'Aigues in 2009

It was to be the likes of Pierre Joubert who would provide the bloodline that would feature so prominently on the 18th century Eastern Frontier. This would include men like Josua Joubert who would again have to fight his generation's Maynier. It would be Jacobus, son of Josua, who would help rip the British flag off the flagpole in Graaff-Reinet in 1796 and shove it in the arms of the VOC magistrate that had been reappointed by the British. It would be Jacobus, having married the daughter of frontier leader Adriaan van Jaarsveld, who would be murdered with practically his entire progeny by the Zulu at Bloukrans in Natal.

It would be Pieter Georg Jordaan, a descendant of Jeanne Marque, who would be impaled at Umgungundhlovu by Dingane on 6 February 1838. It would be Jacobus Joubert's sons Abraham and Jan who would help to break Dingane's power at Blood River. It would be Josua's great grandson, Piet Joubert, who would lead the Transvaal to victory over Great Britain in the First Anglo-Boer War – the only war formally lost by Great Britain during the entire reign of Victoria.

The soul of the Afrikaner comes from these simple Lubéron villages and from these open, friendly helpful people. It is from here that we have to trace their epic story – not from the Dutch business offices of Amsterdam or the German cathedrals of the Bishopric of Cologne.

The Questions about the people on the ship *China*

If we are then to sketch the story of our Lubéron ancestors properly, then there are some things we need to know. I am using this opportunity to list some of these, some of which I have managed to find the answers to, while yet others are nowhere near being resolved. In some of these cases I could really use some help.

- Who were the actual individual refugees on the *China*?
- Who among the refugees died on the ship?
- Which towns did they really come from?
- When did they flee their towns and when did they reach the different churches along their way?
- By what route did they reach Frankfurt?
- Did they flee individually or did they do so in groups?
- What were the relationships among them?

I attempt to address some of these questions in the following sections.

1. Who were the actual individual refugees on the *China*?

I have made some considerable progress in answering this question despite more than a century of confused and misleading information. The known documents that exist and that can possibly help us appear to be the following:

a) A letter written by the Rotterdam Chamber of the VOC on 23 December 1687 listing the names and ages of 34 refugees who had stated their intent to go to the Cape on the *China*. The letter is reproduced in C. Graham Botha's work² of 1919. The ship only sailed three months later, but somehow author after author has taken this list as the alpha and omega of who was on the ship.

b) The minutes of the VOC³ dated 1 April 1688, 12 days after the ship had sailed and they presumably now knew who had departed on it. They state that the Chamber of Rotterdam had shipped the following French refugees: 15 men, 6 women and 7 children, for a total of 28 people, rather than 34. Since Bruijn's authoritative text⁴ on Dutch shipping in the 17th and 18th centuries shows that the *China* had been the only refugee ship sent specifically by the Chamber of Rotterdam up to that point, it means that the *China* carried the relevant 28 refugees. This is useful historical intelligence that has not, to the knowledge of the author, been properly applied to date.

c) The "Dagregister" of 4 August 1688 at the Cape reputedly has a statement relating to passengers on the ship and deaths on the ship.

- **I do not have access to this dagregister and I do not know how to get that access.**

d) There reputedly exists a letter written to Batavia from the Cape on 16 August 1688 that also addresses the matter.

- **I do not have access to this letter and I do not know how to get that access.**

2. Who among the refugees died on the ship?

According to authoritative Bruijn the ship had 38 passengers. We also know there were 8 Dutch orphan girls on board, all of whom survived and we have their names. Of the remaining thirty, two therefore have to be non-refugees. In other words, they were ordinary passengers. Bruijn says 29 passengers disembarked at Cape Town and one continued to Batavia. On the assumption that both ordinary passengers survived, it implies one of them disembarked at Cape Town. This implies 20 refugees disembarked at Cape Town for the result to be

2 C. Graham Botha, *The French refugees at the Cape*, (1919), pp.140

3 C. Graham Botha, *The French refugees at the Cape*, (1919), pp.135

4 J. R. Bruijn, F. S. Gaastra and I. Schöffer. *Dutch-Asiatic Shipping in the 17th and 18th centuries*, (1987)

consistent with the information from the VOC minutes of 1 April 1688.

By making a detailed analysis of the individuals and tracing them all the way from the Lubéron, it is possible, subject to a few entirely reasonable assumptions, to conclude who died on the ship. However, again it would be vastly better if we actually had a proper passenger list, and not just the 23 Dec. 1687 “list of intent” that everyone seems to use as gospel in the matter. We largely know who survived, but we cannot just subtract their names from the 23.12.1687 list because that list is not descriptive of who actually sailed.

- **Again we need the documents (c) and (d) in section 1.**

3. Which towns did they really come from?

I have succeeded in locating the registrations of almost all the parties of interest on the ship at Geneva and Schaffhausen in Switzerland, and at Frankfurt in Germany. One or two also register at towns like Lausanne or Neuchâtel. At least one, Pierre Joubert, turns up only at Frankfurt. In most cases the precise origin is provided. The information is most complete at Frankfurt, where the relationships between people were often clearly captured. From this it is possible to confirm the following:

Saint Martin de la Brasque is the origin of Jeanne Marque and her two Jourdan sons, the entire Meinard group and all the Mallans, including Isabeau Richarde and Isabeau Verdette.

La Motte d'Aigues is the origin of Pierre Jaubert (his name is entered as Taubert), Isabeau Long and Marie Jour-dan with her three daughters.

Cabrières d'Aigues is the origin of the four bachelors, Pierre Jourdan (the second one on the *China*), Paul Jourdan, Louis Courbon, and Pierre Grange, as well as the married couple, Pierre Gouiran and his wife Françoise.



Saint Martin de la Brasque

Lac Roque d'Antheron is the origin of Suzanne Rey(ne) and the brothers Hercule and Jacques Verdot. Louis Barret, son of the late André, who arrived at the Cape on the ship *Wapen van Alkmaar* also came from here.

Two Suzanne Reynes fled from the same home town of La Roque d'Anthéron and I find them making their way through Switzerland in late 1687. This info comes from the church books of the Protestant churches in that country. I have now found the abjurations of the seven Rey families of La Roque d' Anthéron. Two of them indeed had young Suzannes in 1685.

The following information comes from the records of Jean Bonnet, a Notary Public in La Roque d'Anthéron in 1685-1688, which are labelled "AD13 Marseille 420 E 429, Jean Bonnet 1685-1688, Notaire de La Roque d'Anthéron." The transcription was made by Bernard Appy : <http://appy.histoire.free.fr>

The Catholic Church in La Motte d' Aigues >



On page 4 of that document start the abjurations (in La Roque d'Anthéron) of specifically 21 October 1685. One of those reads as follows:

" Jeanne Parisse, vefve de feu Jean Rey, Estienne, Suzanne, et Malthes Reynes son enfent et filles, "

[Eng: Jeanne Parisse, widow of the late Jean Rey, Estienne, Suzanne, and Malthes Reynes his child and daughters] Parisse is the feminine form of Paris and Reyne is the feminine form of Rey.

On page 5 we find

" Suzanne, Olimpe, et Marye Reynes, filles de feu Jacques Rey, "

[Eng: Suzanne, Olimpe, and Marye Reynes, daughters of the late Jacques Rey]

The Suzanne who was NOT "ours", traveled through Switzerland in the company of a Marie Reyne. That identifies her as the second one, sister of Marie and Olimpe.

< La Roque d' Antheron, near the Rue de Vaudois



We therefore conclude, by process of elimination, that the Suzanne Reyne who married Pierre Joubert was the daughter of Jean Rey and Jeanne Paris(se) of La Roque d' Anthéron. Her birth or baptism have not been found yet.



Lacoste (2009)

Lacoste is the origin of Antoine Gardiol with wife Marguerite Perrotet and three children. From Cape records it is clear they were Suzanne, Marguerite and Jean. Even though the Mallan family was represented at Lacoste, and there is still a hamlet named Les Mallans outside the town, the Mallans of the Cape came from Saint Martin de la Brasque.

An Antoine Martin also fled from Lacoste and arrived at Frankfurt on 29 October 1687, two days after the Gardiol family, and an Antoine Martin of no specified origin was with the Gardiols at Geneva on 24 September 1687. This raises a question as to whether the “Antonie Martin” that C. Graham Botha lists in his work⁵ really did come from Uzes in Languedoc. The church books identify no such person.

Peypin d'Aigues, near St. Martin, is the origin of Jean Furet(s) (labourer)

Lourmarin is the origin of Mathieu Frachasse and his brother Pierre, along with the wife of the latter, Marguerite Barrale, and also André Rey (labourer) with wife Jeanne Mille and sons Jean and Jacques

Sivergues is the origin of André Pelanchon

5 C. Graham Botha, *The French refugees at the Cape*, (1919), pp.78

4. When did they flee their towns?

The main Saint Martin group, forming the centre of gravity of the flight of the Lubéron Huguenots, arrived at Geneva on 12 September 1687. Eighteen days later on 30 September 1687 they were at Schaffhausen, 250 miles to the northeast. They reached Frankfurt another month later on 31 October 1687. Calculating backwards from their arrival date in Geneva (12.9.1687), comparing that with the time they take to move through Switzerland and allowing for the ages of the folks involved and the difficulty of the trip from the Lubéron, I arrive at a departure date around the middle of August 1687.



The area of the Col des Festreaux along the presumed Lubéron Huguenot escape route (2009)

5. By what route did they reach Frankfurt?

It is tempting to suggest that they went down to Marseilles and then found their way to Nice and then traveled up through Savoy. There are written accounts by people who did that. But these were small groups, such as a mother and two daughters. The key factor for the present author was to note where the refugees first entered Switzerland and registered for help. This turns out to be Geneva for practically all of them - Pierre Joubert is an exception who first appears at Frankfurt. This rules out the route through Savoy, which would have taken them through the Alps to Neuchâtel, bypassing Geneva, which lies quite far towards the southwest.

The conclusion is that they took the overland route up the Durance, past Gap, over the Col des Festreaux between the drainage divide of Durance and that of the the Rhône, and then along the glacier scoured valleys of Savoy and Switzerland. This is a distance of around 270 miles to Geneva. The later travel within Switzerland was along its flat valleys and would have been considerably easier. From near Schaffhausen the refugees most probably traveled the Rhine, given the help they had received from the Church. While the rulers of Würtemberg in southern Germany were favourably disposed towards the Huguenots, travel through that country was not

easy. There were few major centers and it was getting cold as it was already October. It therefore seems reasonable to have used the Rhine, even though Louis XIV had control of the major cities on the west bank.

It would seem that the last leg was again overland via Heidelberg to Frankfurt. Here they could get help, but were not allowed to stay. It is likely here that they finally decided on Holland as their destination. William of Orange was a great hero to these people and two years later he would provide much of the support that would allow 900 of the Savoyan Vaudois at Lausanne to return to Piedmont over the Alps and actually defeat both the Savoyan Army and Louis XIV's local army. This would be known as the "Glorious Return."

So they likely settled on heading for the country of their Protestant hero and saviour, who would also become King of England in 1689.

It is for this reason that, on our way down through Eastern France, we took the route we believed our refugee ancestors had taken in 1687 – but in the opposite direction. It certainly is dramatic countryside.

6. Did they flee individually or in groups?

They clearly fled in groups. The Saint Martin group was by far the largest at 18 people. They arrived as a group at Geneva, Schaffhausen and Frankfurt on the dates already stated. Other groups systematically coalesced with them as they moved. By the time they reached Frankfurt, the Cabrières, La Motte, Sivergues and Orange people had joined them. The exception was Suzanne Reyne who arrived a day earlier, and Pierre Joubert, together with the Gardiol family, the Furets and the Verdots, who arrived two days before her.

It is quite likely that they all knew one another, and that they made a collective plan to go the Holland upon meeting one another in Frankfurt at the Protestant Church.

7. What were the relationships among them?

The work the author has done regarding the church book information on the refugees, reveals the following relationships that were not necessarily completely clear before:

Jeanne Mille was the wife of André Rey, and the two men who are constantly referred to as being "Roi" in South African books, were actually their sons Jean and Jacques. There had been speculation in this regard before, but now we know it for a fact because they said it themselves to the Swiss churches.

Marie Rousse Jourdan was the daughter of Jeanne Marque, and thereby sister to the two South African Jordaan stamvaders. This makes Jean and Pierre Jordaan the uncles of orphans Marie and Marguerite Roux (Rousse) of the Cape. This information comes not from the church books, but from the work of Virginia Chomat.

Unlike speculated by Boucher in his paper about the church books at Frankfurt, Louis Courbon does not appear on the face of it to have been a brother of Louise Courbonne, the wife of Jean Meinard. In 1687 the VOC listed Louise as being 30 years old with six children. Virginia Chomat presents the list of names of Courbon abjurations in October 1685. At that time Louis was the oldest child of the family at 20 and had six siblings younger than himself. While the possibility remains that Louise was somehow a ten year older sister, the gap in ages and absence of any other older sibling Courbon names in the Cabrières abjurations are difficult to accept.

Jacques Mallan of the Cape was the cousin of Pierre Mallan, Isabeau Richarde's first husband. The man who was listed as Anthoine Madan, married to Elisabeth Verdette, was in fact another Mallan cousin of Jacques and was indeed married to Isabeau Verdette. All of them were from Saint Martin.

While the VOC stated that Paul Jordaan, Pierre Jordaan (2) and André Pelanchon were first cousins, the church books are completely silent about any relationship among them.

The widow Marguerite Perrotet who received help from the Batavia fund in 1690 was in fact the wife of Antoine Gardiol, and the church books show they had three children, not two. This explains the arrival at the Cape of the three Gardiols; being the three children Jean, Marguerite and Susanne. At the time of the Batavian Fund disbursement, Jean was already living on the farm of the De Villiers brothers. His two sisters would marry those two brothers eventually.

Yet more questions

What is odd, is that, while the Gardiols traveled with the Verdoot brothers and they were all at Frankfurt at the same time as Pierre Joubert, it would seem⁶ that they arrived on the Cape not on the *China* but on the *Wapen van Alkmaar*, which departed from Texel in the far north of North Holland on 27 July 1688. Louis Barret, who was also on the *Wapen van Alkmaar*, was at Frankfurt with the main body of refugees from the Lubéron on 31 October 1687. It would also be most interesting to understand the reason why some of the Lubéron refugees departed from Amsterdam (Texel) on the *Wapen van Alkmaar*, while the main body left on the *China* from Rotterdam (Goeree). Some interesting event must have split them up.

And here we rest our report for the moment. The quest for clarity, however, continues.

In closing

This article is in the nature of an interim report on work I am doing on our Lubéron Huguenot ancestors. Much has been written about them and the ship *China*, but there seems to be continuous and perpetuated confusion on the subject. The need for clarity, combined with the perception that they, more than any other, contributed the soul of a new nation, has driven me to tackle this subject. Once that clarity is there, I shall publish the comprehensive paper on the subject, much like the work I did on Jacob Cloete and Fijtje.

Most of my genealogical effort is directed towards a book I am writing that weaves a small number of families, all in my or my wife's ancestral tree, through the history of South Africa in the nature of on-the-spot eyewitnesses. It is based on documented facts, real people and suitable factual references and footnotes to address any disbelief – for some of the events leave one incredulous. History is always more impossible than fiction.

On the one hand the ancestors are ordinary people, but they are subjected repeatedly to extraordinary circumstances, from the first Hottentot and Bushmen attacks, through the trials of the Eastern Cape Frontier and Slogtersnek to the Great Trek and the two Anglo-Boer Wars. They are from all over Europe and also from India. One is the first immigrant from America, and I have even identified the exact house where she grew up in New Amsterdam. And, yes, of course Eva and Pieterneelatie are there also. After all, Herrie die Strandloper turns out to be an ancestral uncle. My slave ancestors from India via Batavia, working in Van Riebeeck's household, are there as well. But, somehow all of these ordinary but intriguing characters weave their story around a central cultural thread that is brought by our Lubéron ancestors – men who brought much needed moral fibre to the Cape at a difficult time, and turned it from a rough and tumble para-military outpost with some associated farms, into a proper country with a culture and a nation and a soul.

This effort has taken me to what used to be Denmark, Cleves, the Bishopric of Cologne, The Duchy of Savoy and to Provence in my search for traces of the lives that these ancestors lived before being thrust into the harsh realities of Africa. But I have decided that our soul comes from Provence. A millennium of persecution, oppression and faith built that soul.

At this point in time I am dependent on whatever help genealogists or historical researchers in South Africa, France and the Netherlands can provide me. This includes, but is not limited to, information from the *Verbatim Copies* or the *Kaapse Dagregisters* in The Cape Archives or in the Dutch Archives on the subject of the ship *China*. I am hoping that someone in the Mother City or in the Netherlands will be so kind as to look into this matter so that we can finally, once and for all, have clarity in the matter of the souls who were on the *China*.

Who knows, maybe we can work together to rehabilitate the reputation of the Ship from Hell, and simply write, "*God bless the good Ship China*" - the working title of my paper in the making.

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⁶ See, for example: <http://www.olivetreenealogy.com/ships/sahug17.shtml>.