

SUMMARY

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Editor-in-chief:
Br. Paul Sester

Publishing Director:
Br. Lluís Serra

Contributors to this edition:
Bros. Alain Delorme, André Lanfrey
and Paul Sester

Coordinator of translations:
Br. Henri Réocreux

Translators:
English: Sister Constance Perreault,
p.m., and Br. Guy Morel
Spanish: Bros. Fabricio Galiana,
Teodoro Barriuso
and Francisco Castellanos
Portuguese: Br. Claudio Girardi

Formatting and Photolithography by:
TIPOCROM, s.r.l. – Rome

Editing and Administrative Center:
Piazzale Marcellino Champagnat, 2
C.P. 10250 - 00144 ROME
Tel. (39) 06 54 51 71
Fax (39) 06 54 517 217
E-mail: publica@fms.it
Web site: www.champagnat.org

Editing by:
Institute of the Marist Brothers
General House – Rome

Printing by:
C.S.C. GRAFICA, s.r.l. – Rome

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Computerisation of our Archives

Brother Paul SESTER, FMS

Now that our most important documents have been computerised, we can pause, take stock and give those who achieved that work what is due to them.

After the 1976 General Chapter, our General Secretariat computerised itself. The archives office followed suit. That was the opportunity to realise more easily our desire to acquaint the Brothers of the Institute with the Founder's writings that had remained buried in drawers, except the **Letters** that had just been published. Many and various important manuscripts remained. There were those written by M. Champagnat, those written by Brothers François and Jean Baptiste known by a few researchers only. The publishing of these documents through the electronic arts will enlighten all the members of the Marist family on their origins.

Thus, not long after that chapter the General Council decided to appoint a group of researchers to study the Founder and the Congregation's origins. That group's publication became "les Cahiers Maristes". It was agreed that each issue of these books would be made up of three parts: information, studies and documents. Ipso facto, this third part became a stimulus to set us to the transcription of documents, i.e. of the Founder's writings, of those whose purpose was to transmit his thought and spirituality: Brothers François and Jean Baptist.

As I was in charge of the publication of the "Cahiers Maristes", the transcription work fell on me. Not having any available secretary I got

down to the task. Having first tackled the Founder's letters, I then wanted to transcribe all his other manuscripts. Thus I entered on the computer: 1) M. Champagnat's resolutions; 2) thirty sermons and lectures; 3) the twelve books of notes and essays and the accounts book.

My work was copied onto floppy disks. By now, the recorded items have been updated with modern tools. Besides, they were published in the first ten issues of the "Cahiers Maristes".

When the General Secretariat undertook to file the living brothers' details onto an electronic programme, the archives people set themselves to record some 35 000 files for all the brothers starting from 1817 up to now. Brother Fernand Ouellet, replaced by Brother Joseph Chang, then by Brother Ernest Censi successively, made a lot of careful work that spread over many years. That work is still in process. We aim to complete it; we will even fill in the reverse side of the files with the brothers' various assignments.

The mobilisation of available brothers at their retreat allowed us to undertake the transcription of Brothers François' and Jean Baptiste's writings. While some brothers worked in the archives offices, we profited from the collaboration from other brothers who accepted to transfer some material onto their computers from their home residences. Here are the details of these operations:

DOCUMENTS FROM BR. FRANCOIS	TRANSCRIBED BY
301 Miscellaneous Items	Br. Jean-Marie Girard, Bourg de Péage (France)
302 Retreat book, 1	the Archives office
303 Retreat book, 2	the Archives office
304 Retreat book, 3	Br. Louis Richard, Marseille
305 Religious notes, Trip to Rome	the Archives office
306 Instructions Projects	the Archives office
307 Instructions, 1	the Archives office
308 Instructions, 2	the Archives office
309 Instructions, 3	Br. Jean-Marie Girard

COMPUTERISATION OF OUR ARCHIVES

310 Notes, 1	Br. Jean-Marie Girard
311 Notes, 2	Br. Jean Rousson, Lagny
312 Quotations	Br. Paul Sester
313 Various writings	the Archives office

DOCUMENTS FROM BR. JEAN BAPTISTE	TRANSCRIBED BY
21 Meditations on the great truths	Br. Jean Rousson
22 Examination subjects	Br. Jean Rousson
23 Writings, 3	Br. Jean Rousson
24 Writings, 4	Br. Jean Rousson
25 A Marist Brother's apostolate	A Brazilian brother

Obviously, many years of labour have been needed to attain this result. The documents transcribed on diskettes at first have now been transferred onto a CD ROM by the secretariat. In this way, they are available to those who want to commune with the Founder's thoughts or to those who are making a research on the Institute's origins.

A vast and very informative source of information on our Institute's origins is the total work of Brother Avit, viz. the Annals. One part of these recorded the annals of each establishment running before 1890. The second part is called, "Abbreviated Annals", i.e. an original synthesis of the houses' annals to make up the Institute's Annals in general. The transcription onto computers of the houses' annals was soon undertaken, beginning with the houses Father Champagnat had founded. That work was realised by the archives service, viz. by a religious sister hired by the archives' secretariat for a while. Later, Brother François Escallier continued the task from Bourg-de-Peage and from Saint-Paul-Trois-Châteaux. His friend, Brother Jean Marie Girard corrected his copies. After his death, Brothers Louis Richard and Jean Rousson concluded the work. However, the Institute's Annals were transcribed by the archives' service that obtained Brother Jean Pierre Cotnoir's service during the leisure time of his first Roman stay. This last document was then printed in Rome into three volumes entitled, 1. The Rough Ascent; 2. The Blossoming and 3. Blocked Road

For a systematic information purpose, there still remained a good number of documents of which several were already printed: Life of M.J.B. Champagnat; “Avis, Leçons, Sentences et Instructions”; Letters to M. Champagnat and Various Documents. All these were computerised by the Study Centre’s Services on the Patrimony, directed by Brother Aureliano Brambila at Guadalajara, Mexico.

This computerisation work is still going on. Brother Louis Richard at Saint-Paul-Trois-Châteaux continues the immense task to feed the computer with the seventeen volumes of administrative letters of our Superiors and the circulars of the superior generals.

That is a considerable enterprise that has been realised thanks to the good will of brothers who accepted to contribute a lot of their time that could have been used for some leisure. Their labour was made even more meritorious because they had to decrypt some complicated hand-written manuscripts whose authors had jotted down for their personal use. Therefore, these brothers, who were seconded by experts applied themselves so much that they could offer the readers and researchers the most exact possible text and let transpire all the particularities that handwriting entails.

It is clear that for a researcher the transcription of a document will never replace the consultation of the original version, but the copy will allow everyone to access the documents and to grasp the author’s idea. Besides, thanks to more advanced techniques, our work will be able to improve due to the efforts of experts in this field. And this is the very purpose of this project: to make the archives’ documents more accessible to the brothers and researchers. You will be aware that one may obtain photocopies of any of our records. Many of our documents were bound specially Brother Avit’s “Annales des Maisons” and Brother Francois’ and Jean Baptiste’s personal letters. Isn’t our documents’ computerisation a greater guarantee for their preservation?

As archives’ computerisation is a very ordinary affair nowadays everybody will agree that our own archives should be organised with modern means. The task is not over yet; there is still a lot to do. At least, the brothers should remember all the work, patience and time that are required. Therefore, considering all that has been accomplished so far, the congregation is surely grateful to the pioneers and to those who are currently continuing the work.

*Brought in by Mary
Presentation
of the
“Entries Register”*

“I don’t dare send away anybody who wants to join us; I look upon them as sent by Mary herself.”

Champagnat, Letter to Mgr De Pins, Lent 1835.

In his Institute Annals (Vol. 1, The Rough Ascent, p. 82), Brother Avit indicated that Father Champagnat in 1829, had requested the opening of three registers: one for the taking of the habits, the second one for the temporary vows and the third one for the final vows. Brother Avit does not mention another register that seemingly originated in 1822 that contained the names of the postulants and the sums these had paid for their novitiate expenses. This register was inaugurated in 1822 when an ex-Christian Brother introduced a group of postulants from the Haute-Loire.

Father Champagnat kept this register until 1838 as proven by the handwriting. Father’s aim was to keep up to date the novices’ and boarders’ fees. To be admitted as a novice at Notre-dame de l’Hermitage one had to pay 400 francs. But, it was rare that novices could pay the whole sum as they entered; generally, the payments were staggered. In spite of the society’s poverty, the Founder accepted this situation. He was convinced, as he wrote to the bishop, that Mary herself was sending him postulants. However, he did not accept to change the agreed fees without which he could not have run his house. Thus, he had to keep an accurate record of what was initially paid and of what was still due. Very soon, the Founder added more data, such as the candidate’s address, his age, the state of his family, his capacities, etc. Nobody chose a proper title for this book that was always called ‘Record of Entries’.

This book does not have any official character like those that record the vows, for many who were entered into the Record of Entries did not remain with us; they left before their first vows. Yet, that book of records retains a special interest because of the information it contains on the recruiting of brothers and the qualifying conditions.

As this presentation wants to depict the Founder's concern when he chose new subjects, we will work on the pages entered by him only, i.e. until 1838. During the last two years of his life, somebody else made the inscriptions. Consequently, we will consider the first 116 pages only. Besides, the subsequent inscriptions carry on with the same pattern.

GENERAL ASPECT OF THE REGISTER

This register is a large book of 295 pages, 35 X 22.5 cm of rough paper. There is no cover; the text starts immediately on the first page. There are no title or introduction. The inscriptions start in 1822 and continue without interruption up to February 1848, at page 281.

Considering the lack of chronological order in the first thirty pages one can quickly notice that this register was not started in 1822 even though the first information given carries that date. The data of the first three years, 1822 to 1824, were transferred from another notebook. Among the 'Champagnat Notebooks' the one identified by the archives as '132.3 bis' resembles this register very much. The 'Cahiers Maristes' published it in their No 9 of July 1996. Unfortunately, the printing of the latter does not give the picture of the reality of the register. Clearly, Father Champagnat intended to inscribe in this book "3 bis" the names of those who applied to enter the novitiate and the amount of money the candidates had given. The names were supposed to appear in alphabetical order. Each page was prepared for three entries; hence the large blanks separated the names so as to have some room for future inscriptions. These start in 1822 and do not go further than 1825. It seems that Father Champagnat used this book for rough work. Thus, various notes, lists, remarks and memoranda are mixed up with the inscriptions. We can deduct that the Founder, not satisfied with his first record book, chose to start another one during the year 1825. This new book would contain the postulants' inscriptions only – an objective that he was unable to stick to completely since this register still contains whole pages of financial entries.

INTRODUCTION TO THE "ENTRIES REGISTER"

To avoid losing the inscriptions of the three preceding years, he transferred them into this new register in a non-systematic way. Thus the names that appeared in the notebook were reproduced into the register, as the following example will show:

BOOK 3 BIS, PAGE 20	REGISTER OF ENTRIES, PAGE 8
<p>18 Nov. 1822 Marcellin Saby aged 16 Received from his uncle... Plus received 300 Februy 1824 plus received 40 Pierre Dion...</p>	<p>18 Nov. 1822 Marcelin Saby, aged 16 Received into our house as a novice; From Retournac gave 340 in 2 instalments.</p>
<p>12 Oct. 1824 Benoit Exquis aged 21 from Stivareille, canton of St Bonnet-le-Château, entered on 12 Oct. 1824 to study and become a brother. Received from Esquier 232,10 I returned to him He took a bible 3,20 A catechism 9,25 A grammar book 0,40 A book of civics 0,50 Received for his clothes: 4 sheets; 8 shirts; 11 handkerchiefs, 6 towels; 2 pairs of shoes; 2 caps; 2 pairs of...</p>	<p>12 Oct. 1824 12 Oct. 1824 Benoit Exquis, aged 21 from Stivareille, canton of St Bonnet le Château, entered the house as a novice. Gave 232,10 I gave him back 3,20 He took a bible 1,25 And a catechism book 0,40 A grammar and a civics book 0,70 Received for his clothes: 4 sheets, 8 shirts; 11 handkerchiefs; 6 towels; 2 pairs of shoes; 2 caps; 2 pairs of socks. He took an office book 50</p>
<p>page 21 1 January Jean Villelonge Received from Jean Villelonge 40,60 He owes us 27 cents for a bible</p>	<p>1 January 1823 Jean Villelonge, from St Genest Malifaux, aged 28, entered the house as a novice as Br. Dorothee Gave 40 francs for his novitiate.</p>

17 Sept. 1823 Benoit Claude Roche	17 Sept. 1823 Benoit Claude Roche
For his boarding : 60	entered the house as a
Gave 80	boarder
Received from Roche 120	Gave 60 + 80
8 Aug. 1825: received from	Received for his boarding on
the St Martin Parish	8 Aug. 1825 de
Priest 120	Mr. Durbis 120 + 120

The page numbers may puzzle us at first. Since the year 1822 still appears on page 8 in the entrances register proves that the transcription was not done systematically. The other inscriptions dated 1822, 1823, 1824 and 1825 can be explained by the fact that they were entered in the “3 bis” book. They were probably entered into the register during August 1825.

For, we are dealing with a transcription that was concerned with the texts’ contents. The two texts referring to Marcellin Saby and Benoit Exquis converge towards each other and complete each other, leaving no doubt as regards their identities. One can observe that the Exquis’ text differs by a few details only. Besides, we want to point out that page 8 of the ‘Entries’ Register’ begins with inscriptions dated, March and April 1825. If they are followed by some 1822 and 1824 entries it means that there was a reason to transfer them in that order from the book ‘3 bis’ in 1825.

We must signal another fact in this transcription. Fifteen names entered in the ‘3 bis cahier’ were not transferred into the register. Since we don’t find them anywhere else that simply means that they had left the Institute at the transcription time. On the other hand, there are certain indications that this transcription was not quite faithful to the original entries. We observed that the first five names only had been entered in alphabetical order in the register. Moreover, of the first pages of the register, the dates don’t appear in a chronological order. Among the 1822 inscriptions, some carried 1825 and even 1826 dates. We may conclude that the new comers of these last two years were registered on their arrival dates whereas the first postulants had not all been entered as we can see from the very first page. The first inscriptions from 1822 and 1823 are immediately followed by the inscription of the boarder, Christophe Courbon, in 1825. The ten lines consecrated to him were surely written on the indicated date, i.e. in March 1825, proving that the register began on that date.

As regards the presentation, the pages are divided into three unequalled columns:

The first column contains inscription dates or financial operations. Occasionally, the religious name given to the postulant appears. Besides, at the bottom of each age the total amount of inscriptions is entered. Thus, page 26 ends with the number 100 followed by the remark, "including the 'former brothers' who do not appear in this register". Really, the total is 92, as there were former brothers still present before March 1822.

The second column presents the necessary explanations. Up to page 35 we find inscriptions mixed up with expenses. On a few of these pages the Father inserted financial affairs.

Further, pages 27, 28 and 30 - page 29 does not exist - offer a special view.

Page 27: two thirds of this page contains financial records dated 1825, whereas on the other third of the page Jean Baptist Dufour is entered on 1 January 1829. We think that in April or May 1825, Father Champagnat, having nothing handy to make his entries, used this register a few pages further on. Thus, he came to a block of blank pages that he used to enter the next inscriptions.

Page 28 to page 30: Here, the Founder entered stipends received during the years 1828 to 1834. But he entered the inscription of the boarder Nolin, on 21 September 1828.

The complexity of these pages confirms the hypothesis we presented above. However, what is really astonishing is to find in this Accounts Record Book of 1828 and a few more years there are two other Accounts books, one for the receipts and one for the expenses that start in 1826. The administrative procedures took time to function normally. Above, we indicated that the Founder had opened the different registers in 1829.

From page 35, only the postulants' inscriptions are found. The original procedure was used. In fact, these inscriptions that were first limited to sums of money deposited, rapidly evolved to become uniform procedures such as:

(Name, surname) from (place of origin) aged... legitimate son of (father's and mother's names) bearer of a good behaviour certificate, knowing (a little) how to read and write entered the house as a novice, gave (sum of money).

New elements were added now and then. From the start, the places of origin were entered but the candidates' ages appeared from 1825 only. The birth dates were taken into account systematically from 1828 only, but they were often left out. The expression, "legitimate son" followed by the parents' names appeared a few times only in 1826 and 1827. But from June 1828, it was regularly listed. We noticed that the good behaviour certificate was entered sporadically first, but its insertion soon became a regular practice. We can find the school attendance level once or twice in 1827 and 1828; more often in 1829 and from 1830 this became a permanent entry. It happened, although rarely, that a different formula was used like the following,

"11 January 1824 – Pierre Robert from St-Sauveur, 17 years old entered the Hermitage house to join the Little Brothers of Mary. Gave 73 for his novitiate".

We noticed that several lines or phrases from the first pages discussed above were crossed out with a big X. Did the crossing-outs mean that some payments were complete? 240 francs would have sufficed for Jean Baptiste Furet but Auguste Barrey would have paid nothing. We wonder whether somebody wanted to indicate those who had left the community. It is impossible to find out whether the mentioned amounts were posted somewhere else. However, we are quite certain that M. Champagnat did not mark those signs; they were made after him. This is why we left out these puzzling signs.

Finally, the third column was reserved for the amounts of money handed in. That column makes the Register look like an accounts book. The recording of those accounts seems to be the most important reason for the keeping of this register. Some pages contain accounts only. For example page 20 presents only the expenditures from February to June 1825; as regards the footnotes "See page 30" and "See page 29." we have been unable to decipher their meanings.

The Register's keeper(s) wanted to group the postulants' disbursements. Hence, a space was left below the first inscription to allow the other payments to fit in until everything would be paid. It happened that there was not enough room to enter all of one postulant's entries. Even one's disbursements were sometimes mixed up with somebody else's entries. That arrangement was not adopted from the beginning. The first page was loaded with fifteen entries without any separating space. On the following pages, the number of inscriptions decreases progressively until there is an average of three per page only.

Knowing that the Founder left two accounts books, one for the expenses and the other for the receipts, we may wonder whether there is a connection between those books and the Register we are currently describing. Indeed, we will see later that the receipts book sometimes copies the Register.

The last pages of the Register were used in the following way: pages 283 and 284 contained notes dated, 1828. Page 293 presents 22 February 1826 and 4 April 1827 notes. Page 295 shows the 6th of September 1825 entries; the last two lines of that page were surely entered later for they are dated, 4 August 1834. There is no doubt those notes were entered by M. Champagnat. We can observe that he started with the last page that he will finish nine years later, then he filled up the preceding pages. This is one more proof that at the beginning, i.e. in 1825, this register was used in cases of emergency.

THE CONTENTS

The number of postulants entered into this register up to February 1848, excluding a few boarders, totalled 1087. When the Founder died, in June 1840, they were already 523, bearing in mind the above remark concerning the former brothers.

Number of inscriptions per year:

YEARS	ENTRIES	YEARS	ENTRIES	YEARS	ENTRIES
1817	4	1825	13	1833	15
1818	2	1826	19	1834	38
1819	1	1827	20	1835	46
1820	1	1828	18	1836	30
1821	1	1829	15	1837	46
1822	12	1830	6	1838	70
1823	10	1831	15	1839	70
1824	11	1832	27	1840	34

Do these numbers correspond to reality? There is nothing to prove the truth of these figures. In the Institute's Annals, Brother Avit wrote, "The taking of the habits register reads that from 1 January 1817, the Founder

had given the religious habit to 401 novices. But, ... this register was used from 1829 only and the names of those who had already left don't appear. We can therefore raise the number up to 421. The deaths register reads that from the same date 49 brothers or novices had passed away. The Institute had to number 391 professed brothers and novices." But Brother Avit estimated the number at 280, meaning that 92 brothers had left the Institute during those 23 years.

Clearly, these numbers do not correspond with those found in this register. Besides, when we consulted other registers and documents we discovered 72 more names, bringing to 595 the total number of men who had joined the Society by 1840. Consequently this register is not exhaustive and does not give the exact number of postulants welcomed by Father Champagnat.

Anyway, we can at least attempt to find out whether the Founder was lucky regarding the number of recruits and regarding the rate of perseverance. We consulted the taking of the habits and the profession of the vows registers. According to Brother Avit, at the Founder's death, 174 applicants had not reached the profession day. But, if we believe the taking of the habit and the temporary vows registers, out of the 242 who left before making their first profession, 120 did quit before taking the habit and receiving a religious name. The difference between 174 and 120 seems considerable and leads us to wonder whether the Annals Writer possessed the Register of Entries. The fact that he never alludes to it leads us to think that he did not.

Forgetting about the numbers that Brother Avit presents, our study restricts itself to this Register's data that allows us to approximate reality quite sufficiently. However, we must immediately indicate that not all inscriptions inform us on all points; the ages are sometimes left out, or the parents' names don't appear, or the intellectual level of the candidates is not indicated. For as much as 35 out of 523 names, the entries inform us on names and places of birth only. The number of postulants that this study will be able to consider will therefore be inferior to 488.

Out of that number 315 only pronounced their first vows, i.e. 64%. We agree that these are approximations for, according to the data prepared by Brother Avit, the vows registers having been started in 1829 only, "each Brother was invited to enter the act of his habit taking, to register his temporary vows and the final ones himself on the appropriate registers. Several defrocked brothers never registered" while some filled in one register only. Nothing can correct this gap and we will have to resign ourselves to the fact that we will never have a complete list of the first members of the Institute.

Consequently any study of our first Institute's personnel will have to content itself with incomplete or vague data. There exist neither registers, nor lists that are absolutely accurate and reliable. The data that we have collected were intended for different purposes; hence, they aren't exhaustive. Unexplainable and numerous omissions and repetitions of names fudge our statistics. Accuracy does not seem to have been the major worry of the then secretariat! Besides, as we just said above, the main purpose of this register was to establish each applicant's financial situation.

Other peculiarities, notably repetitions, must be noticed. On page 9, the register reads, "Pierre Sabot is received as a novice. On the same day, Pierre Robert from St. Sauveur is also received as a novice." On the following page, an inscription reads, "11 Jan. 1824 – Pierre Sabot from St-Sauveur, aged 17 entered the house..." and right after this, "11 Jan. 1824, Pierre Robert, aged 17, from St Sauveur, entered our house..." As these two names appear in the 132.3 'cahier bis', their presence on page 9 is justified, but we can't explain the repetition on page 10.

Furthermore, some entries were left incomplete. Thus, page 13 reads, "13 April 1827 – received for three novices from Empuy: 143 francs". But, there is nothing to tell us whether those novices had already been registered. That would mean that those novices were Antoine Condamin registered on that day, plus François Toucheboeuf and Nicolas Landon registered on 1 September 1826; these last two seem to have paid nothing. But, we don't know whether the entries were not for three others who, having paid nothing, went and registered themselves. Lacking clear information, the first hypothesis seems the better one.

How should we interpret inscriptions entered on the same date? If we are considering two or three persons coming from the same place, we may deduce that their parish priest had triggered the process and that he might have volunteered this cooperation in view of obtaining some brothers to work in his parish. But, when the candidates come from far apart locations we may assume that in the Founder's absence somebody else temporarily jotted down the registrations and that the Founder entered them in the register when he returned.

The admissions requests follow an irregular ascending curve that drops in 1830 and, suddenly resumes its course with a steep climb in 1838 and in 1839. One can notice five periods: from 1817 to 1821, the Institute numbers nine members only; from 1822 to 1829, there are 118 entries – more than fourteen per year; from 1830 to 1833, there were 63 inscrip-

3 Annales de l'Institut, vol. 1, La rude montée, p. 299.

tions giving an average of more than 15 per year; from 1834 to 1837, the new comers totalled 156, an average of 39 per year; finally, from 1838 to June 1840, 174 new postulants were registered. Father Champagnat who had built for a capacity of 150 persons in 1824 had planned properly. With 70 new postulants, 58 novices and around ten brothers in charge of the maintenance in 1838, the house was almost full.

ORIGINS

The young people interested by the features offered at the Hermitage came mainly from the Loire department. We cannot explain what directed those who came from further locations to our modest society. The following tabulation indicates the recruits by department and the number of those who made the first vows.

Nearly half of the postulants came from the Loire department. From 1817 to 1823 ten new subjects only came in. From 1824 to 1833, there was an average of six yearly new recruits. From 1834 to 1840 the average nears 20 per year.

As for the localities, the most often named were: Lavalla: 18; Marlhès: 14; Saint-Genest-Malifaux: 12; Saint-Sauveur-en-Rue: 11; Pelussin: 7 and Charlieu: 6; Chavanay, Chazelles-sur-Lyon, Tarantaise, La Versanne: 5 each. The 18 Lavalla applicants, of which 14 pronounced their vows, entered in the following chronological order: the first seven came from 1817 to 1820; 2 joined us in 1825, then we must wait until 1832 when every year gave a new subject.

Our Marlhès school, founded in 1818, was suspended from 1822 until 1832. It was during this last period that three postulants entered the Hermitage.

On the other side of Mount Pilat, on the way to the Rhone River, we assume that M. Champagnat's friend, M. Gaucher, the parish priest of Chavanay made our society known. The first postulant from this village presented himself in 1823 but the Brothers opened a school there in 1824 only. From a nearby town, Pelussin, the first postulant presented himself in the same year.

⁴ Id. p. 82-83

INTRODUCTION TO THE "ENTRIES REGISTER"

NEAR-BY DEPARTMENTS	RECRUITS	VOWS	%
Loire	232	137	59.05
Haute-Loire	83	36	43.37
Rhône	66	42	63.63
Isère	79	54	68.35
Ain	27	17	62.96
Ardèche	17	10	58.82
Saône-et-Loire	14	6	42.85
Savoie	9	4	44.44
THOSE FROM FURTHER AWAY			
Allier	2	1	
Aude	1	0	
Aveyron	1	0	
Cantal	1	0	
Corrèze	1	1	
Côte d'Or	2	0	
Doubs	1	0	
Drôme	1	0	
Gers	1	0	
Hérault	3	0	
Jura	2	1	
Loire-Atlantique	1	0	
Pas-de-Calais	1	0	
Puy-de-Dôme	6	3	
Seine-Inférieure	1	1	
Var	1	0	
OUTSIDE FRANCE			
Spain	1	0	
Switzerland	2	1	
			<i>All the distant dpts.</i>
			28,27 %

The Haute-Loire Department presents a more coherent group of Marist vocations. But it is also by three periods as regards the annual number of applications. There were 15 for the two years 1822-1823; whereas from 1824 to 1833, there were nine only; but from 1834 to 1840 they reached a total of 52.

⁵ Léase "Ampuis".

⁶ Cf. Lettres de M. Champagnat, vol. 1, doc. 308, p. 556 ss.

The first period from 1822-23 begins with the arrival of eight postulants recruited by a young Christian Brother defector. From the 15 entries of that period, 13 came from the Bas-en-Basset Canton; 6 from Saint-Pal-de-Chalencou; three from Tiranges, from Boisset and 1 from Bas-en-Basset; and the two others came from the neighbouring canton of Retournac. The number of vocations from Saint-Pal may surprise anybody knowing that the brothers opened a school in that village in 1853 only.

From the 9 of the second period, only one originates from the above cantons.

The third period is especially bountiful since we received 53 new postulants in seven years, from 1834 to 1840. The fact is all the more surprising when we consider that the village is far from the Saint Etienne region and that the brothers did not teach in that area. Other parishes from that department shone with numerous vocations: Saint Pal, 11; Boisset, 8; Tiranges, 5; Saint-Just-Malmont: 5. Again, we wonder how those young people were directed towards a newly born congregation and why their perseverance rate was below the average.

The events followed a different course in the Rhone Department. Sixty vocations came from it from 1825 to 1840 at the rate of 3 or 4 per year. Here it is evident that our brothers working in the schools of that region exercised their influence. The first postulant who joined us in 1825 came from Saint Symphorien-sur-Coise where our brothers had administered the school since 1823. Ampuis, however, where the brothers had been working since 1825, sent five young ones to the Hermitage novitiate in 1826. From Neuville-sur-Saone, not fewer than 9 young men knocked at our doors.

In the Isere Department, Marist vocations appeared from 1831.

From reliable, information, we learned that M. Douillet, a teacher at La Côte-Saint-André Seminary, initiated a favourable movement that supplied Father Champagnat with 60 youth. In the annals of the same school, Brother Avit wrote, "During its 24 April 1830 session, the Education Council authorised the establishment of a training school to be headed by M. Douillet." Louis Philippe's accession to power prevented the opening of this school. Heartbroken, Mr Douillet consulted our pious Founder who answered with his frequent refrain, *Nisi Dominus...* The former gave up his project of founding a teaching congregation, sent many of his disciples to the Hermitage and asked for brothers to administer his boarding school and

7 Llamado "Ruthiange".

his free school. After the 1831 retreat, four brothers were sent to him. Mr Douillet took care of bringing eleven of his young people to the Hermitage. From these eleven subjects, seven did not persevere.

The brothers were working at Boulieu in the Ardeche region. As soon as during their first year, 1823, they sent a postulant to the Hermitage. Other youngsters of the area imitated him during the following years. From the start, the brothers attracted the population's esteem as the following annals' excerpt explains, "Brother Jean Pierre (Martinol) led a very rigorous life and he was very zealous in his work for the pupils. Two years were sufficient to exhaust his strength. On leaving the Founder at the end of the 1825 retreat, he told him that he would not see him again at the Hermitage. In fact, he died soon afterwards. The people had such an esteem for that virtuous brother that they insisted that a child who had died on the same day be buried in the same coffin as Brother Jean Pierre".

Because of the healthy relationships of Father Champagnat with the Belley diocese, plentiful vocations were expected from the Ain department. But it was not to be so. The Saint-Didier School founded in 1836 did prompt seven vocations from 1837 to 1839 while fifteen postulants came from various distant places.

It is very difficult to know what influenced the aspirants who came from far-away places where there were no brothers' schools and no written correspondence with either the parish priests or the mayors. The Hermitage was known far and wide as a teacher training school. Besides, it is very possible that our house was considered as a religious house more or less opened where anybody with a sudden infatuation for religious life would come and see! The great number of departures either before the taking of the habit or during the novitiate would prove this hypothesis. Those who behaved that way were generally older; we guess they were hopping from religious house to another searching for a centre that might satisfy their aspirations!

THE AGE

Don't we consider the date of birth as an essential element for an applying candidate? But in the current studied cases the age is often left out. From May 1838 it was indicated. But this does not mean that it was subsequently entered regularly. Here are a few examples:

Page 90: 14 August (1838) Antoine Colard, born at La Combe, St Genest-Malifaux (Loire) municipality on ... 1823, etc.

14 August Michel Bertail, born at Bruchet, St Genest-Malifaux... legitimate son..

On the following page a similar case of two candidates from the same locality:

Page 91: 8 Sept 1838: Jean Marie Pontadie, born at St-Didier-sur-Rochefort
8 Sept. 1838 : Pierre Coavou, born at St-Didier-sur-Rochefort

In other cases, leaving the birth date blank – what had not been done before 1838 the age is given just the same:

Page 98: 23 January, 1839: Auguste Mathevet, born at Tence (Haute Loire) on , aged 21

28 January, Pierre Poncet, born at St-Didier-sur-Chalarnonne, on ... aged 23

The following case may surprise us by the imprecision that could have easily been corrected:

Page 112: Brother Fulgence:

20 April: Claude Cheynet born at Lavalla (Loire) le..., about 17 years of age

How can't we question the fact that the person in charge of the inscriptions could not precise the birth date? It is unthinkable that a young man of 20 could not give his age. We have to deduce that the inscription was not done in front of the subject. But, how could one forget this detail when he could remember the parents' name? Really, the birth date did not seem important, an indication of one's age was considered sufficient and nobody seemed to regret the omissions! In fact in this register of 523 inscriptions entered in Champagnat's time, 431 only indicate the subject's age. Yet it is interesting to know at what age the young ones presented themselves and how serious their projects were. Hence the following table:

INSCRIPTION TIME AGE	TOTAL CANDIDATES	LEFT BEFORE THE VOWS	MADE THEIR VOWS
13	15	8	7
14	27	8	19
15	54	19	35

INTRODUCTION TO THE "ENTRIES REGISTER"

INSCRIPTION TIME AGE	TOTAL CANDIDATES	LEFT BEFORE THE VOWS	MADE THEIR VOWS
16	51	22	29
17	36	13	23
18	42	19	23
19	20	10	10
20	20	9	11
21	16	11	5
22	22	9	13
23	17	6	11
24	19	8	11
25	20	7	13
26	17	4	13
27	8	3	5
28	6	4	2
29	4	3	1
30	6	4	2
31	3	2	1
32	0	0	0
33	4	3	1
34	3	1	2
35	3	1	2
Older	14	6	8

Nearly 50% of the applications were made by youngsters who were 14 to 18 years of age with a light preference for the 15 year-old ones. From 1833, the 15 and 16 year-olds were more numerous. Beyond 27 years of age the attempts to embrace religious life are not too successful but those who remained with us proved to be very useful to the Institute.

THE PARENTS

The inscription formula that never left out the first money deposit was gradually updated. Soon, after the name, age and the department of origin, the family situation line indicated whether the postulant came from a united family, whether he was a legitimate son. This expression appeared for the first time on 24 March 1826.

Doesn't this elaboration in the formula indicate that the authorities were looking for quality? That quality had no relationship with the applicant's financial situation. Thus, the register became a different book; it was no longer a simple accounts book but it had become a personnel register of a religious society.

Cahier Champagnat, No 132.01 reads, "The young people who wish to embrace our state of life join our Society at the age of fifteen, must come from a legitimate marriage. They are expected to know how to read and write, must hand in a certificate of good behaviour, and their birth and baptism extracts." From the third page of this register we can observe that the superiors applied this programme.

But the canon law in its section on religious life does not require one to be a legitimate son to enter religious life. Then, why did Father Champagnat insist so much on that clause? This same book 132.01 starts with the translation of the first chapters of the Jesuits' Constitutions. Chapter 3 of this translation reads, "To know the persons better, we must ask certain questions that must be answered in a true and sincere way. First, we will ask the aspirant for his name, his age and his region or city of origin. We will also ask him whether he is from a legitimate marriage or not. We can deduce that Father Champagnat inspired himself from this questionnaire.

As regards the parents' names, we must make a few remarks. It happened that the space for the parents' name was left blank. This fact corroborates once more the fact that the inscription was not made in front of the postulant. Another detail caught our attention, i.e. the number of parents who had already passed away at the inscription time: 29 fathers and 34 mothers were already deceased. A last interesting remark concerns the frequency of Mary's name borne by the postulants' mothers. Does this last remark reveal a strong marial devotion of the people of those times and can we guess Mary's intervention in sending us vocations?

10 Frère Avit, *Annales des maisons de la Province de Notre-Dame de l'Hermitage*, vol. 1, p. 72-73.

THE GOOD BEHAVIOUR CERTIFICATE

As it has already been mentioned, one of the conditions to be accepted into our society was the good behaviour certificate. This requirement can be understood because of the general behaviour of the teachers of those times. Many teachers were notorious for their ignorance, drunkenness and their vulgarity. Only chance or their lack of funds had made them 'pedagogues'. Thus, the Toulouse Academy issued a decree in 1810 that compelled each teacher to undergo a competence and morality examination before resuming their functions. M. Champagnat then did not invent anything by exacting such a certificate. However, leafing through the records, this requirement was fulfilled progressively. Few 1825 postulants handed that document, but half of the 1826 applicants did give it. From 1828, all the applicants were carrying that certificate.

INTELLECTUAL LEVEL

Wasn't it normal to exact a certain level of intellectual capacity and knowledge from future teachers? Yet, the "Brothers of Mary's Statutes" exacted only, "that he might know how to read and how to write passably well". Why this difference between reading and writing? Is it more difficult to learn how to write than to learn how to read? Or was it more important to know how to read than to know how to write? The social situation at that post revolution epoch can give an explanation. From everywhere people condemned youth decadence. One could read in different education department reports, "The children have been left either in the most dangerous idleness, or in the most alarming vagrancy; they know nothing of divinity, they have no notion of justice or injustice. Hence, we are dealing with fierce young people of barbarian behaviours." To remedy such a situation the best response seemed to be the teaching of religion, of catechism. But it is necessary to know how to read to accomplish this task. And by teaching catechism the teachers initiated their pupils to reading.

We analysed the inscriptions that mention the reading and writing capacities. 324 knew how to read while 310 knew how to write. Currently, the question is not "to know" or "not to know" but "to know" and "to know a little", for very few knew nothing. It is difficult to gauge the "a little" in the expressions "he knows how to read" or "he knows how to write". We can assume that a young man who went to school knew how

to read and how to write. Consequently, those who knew just a little did not often go to school, if at all. It will be suitable to make sure that the mention “a little” is true and not too easily attributed. Just imagine! The young Henry Billon, our future Brother Avit taught his own father how to read and how to write. Yet, his inscription read, “He knows how to read and write a little.” “A little” was later corrected by “well”. A mention that appears nowhere else in the register. It is true that M. Champagnat did not make this 1838 inscription. Nevertheless, it is enlightening to become aware of this situation while remembering that the judgement risked being arbitrary. School attendance had progressively increased since the revolution. Thus, it was normal to find more readers among the young ones than among the adults. On the other hand, the elderly people did not come last in the reading or writing capacities. We can therefore distinguish three age sections in our early candidates’ culture:

AGES	REEDING			WRITING		
	YES	A LITTLE	NO	YES	A LITTLE	NO
13 to 19	120	59	9	81	76	21
20 to 30	56	60	1	41	54	18
31+	11	6	2	9	4	6
TOTAL	187	125	12	131	134	45

Since school attendance varied according to the departments, it might be interesting to list the different culture levels according to the applicants’ localities. Hence this second table:

AGES	KNOW HOW TO READ		KNOW HOW TO WRITE	
	YES	A LITTLE	YES	A LITTLE
Loire	74	56	47	56
Haute-Loire	13	22	7	15
Rhône	27	12	20	17
Ain	38	13	25	17
Out of	187	125	131	134

Evidently, we must pay attention to the ratio between the different figures only. For each of them means nothing except that it is the total of

the investigated candidates and no reason was given for not having kept a tab on all of them. Hence we cannot classify the departments. We only want to reflect the intellectual calibre of the groups that passed through the Hermitage. Most of the postulants came from the countryside where a religious atmosphere favoured vocations. Professional situations of the candidates:

- Were holding a teaching certificate: 5 of whom only one persevered.
- Had studied up to the secondary level: 3 of whom 2 remained.
- Were pupils at La Cote Saint Andre: 3 of whom 2 became brothers.
- Had been tailors: 2, shoemaker: 1; bookbinder: 1; cabinet maker: 1;
- Had been engaged in manual work: 2
- From the above, one of the tailors and the shoemaker died during Champagnat's time. One of the two who had come to do manual work persevered. All the others left.

Wasn't the teaching preparation very long? It was not the case for the 23 brothers who pronounced their vows during the very year they entered the congregation; neither for the two who made their final vows during the year they had joined us. We are led to believe that religious fervour and apostolic ardour were considered as a sufficient basis to continue the brothers' training on their working grounds.

THE INSCRIPTION CHARGES

We already saw that the early recruits were adolescents coming mainly from the countryside. They were from modest families as their initial disbursements prove. M. Champagnat enumerated his charges for the benefit of Jean-Claude Colin:

All the candidates must deposit at least a quarter of their boarding costs and twenty-five francs for stationery when they come in. The religious habit cost 200f. Those who can't give anything must promise that they will work in lieu of payment in the event of their departure. It was not rare that debtors could pay only when they collected their inheritance shares.

In spite of all the efforts to collect the dues, the general picture was not so cheerful! Out of 292 inscriptions, 67% paid less than 125 francs when they came in; a few never paid anything. On the other hand a few paid 400 francs as soon as they joined us.

How did the Founder manage to cope? His biographer gives a bit of information on that matter. "The young people who joined Champagnat were poorer than he. To make his group subsist, the Founder had only

his modest curate salary and the Sunday collections. For eight years, these collections were the greatest resource of the community.”

The brothers made do with little. Brother Laurent reported,

“We were very poor, our bread had an earthen colour, but we never ran short of the essential necessities. Father Champagnat often spoke of the Divine Providence that takes care of those who trust in God. When he spoke of God’s kindness and of his love for us, he communicated his divine fire that helped us to pass through life’s difficulties and labours.”

We must remember that these young people came from a modest social milieu whose people almost lived from hand to mouth, people who could set little aside for emergency cases. Yet, the Founder was very at ease with those people for this is where solid faith could be found. Other characteristics of those people were their absence of pretensions, their appreciation of education: literary, social or religious. They were willing to sacrifice themselves for their families and neighbours.

However, regarding the finance administration a question came up concerning the relationship of this Register with the Receipts Accounts Book. Were the sums received from the postulants also entered in the Accounts Book? Researches revealed that few disbursements were transferred to the Accounts Book. Here is a typical case in extenso in spite of its length.

THE VINCENT CASE

ENTRIES REGISTER	BOOK OF ACCOUNTS
<p>PAGE 33 29 Sept. 1829: J. Bapt. Aged fifteen joined the society as a novice. His father promised to pay for his novitiate He gave 52,20 Received once, 30 25 March 1830, received: 94,80 and 124,80 31 May 1830: received from Vincent’s father: 60 Plus, received from Marion through Vincent’s father: 80</p>	

AT THE BOTTOM OF THE PAGE:

31 May 1830: : Mr Vincent paid
for everything: 435
29 June 1830: received
as partial payment: 60
Nov. ...: Received from
Vincent's father: 100

PAGE 34

8 Sept. 1830: Received from
Vincent's father: f. 400
As per this date
everything is paid for.
Petty expenses: the brother
who is a tailor and the other
one who is teaching: 400
Received the four hundred;
two are for the little Jean
Francois' boarding;
we will see how we organise
ourselves next year.

AT THE BOTTOM OF THE PAGE:

4 April 1831: Received
from Vincent's father: 125
30 May: received from
the same: 115
20 August 1832: received from
Vincent's father from
Chambon: 100 for boarding,
the remainder being
for other expenses
2 Febr. 1832: Received from
Vincent's father: 50

30 May: received from
Vincent's father: 100

page 67

2 Febr. 1832 Received from Vincent
from Chambon: 50

page 72

30 May 1832: Received
from Mr. Vincent 100

ENTRIES REGISTER	BOOK OF ACCOUNTS
	PAGE 74
20 August 1832: Received from same: 50	20 (August 1832): received from Mr Vincent 50
Received from Vincent's father: 50	
	PAGE 80
PAGE 44	15 Febr. 1833 recibido del Sr. Vincent 100
Jean Bapt. Vincent from Chambon..	
30 March 1834: Received from Vincent: 100	PAGE 81
16 August 1834: Received Vincent's father: 100	18 April 1833: received from Mr. Vincent from Chambon: 40
	PAGE 83
	30 July 1833: Received from Vincent's father the sum of 1.000, money that must be returned in the event the children leave this house.

For a better understanding of this case we must deduce from the above data and the takings of the habit Register that the Vincents are two brothers: Jean Baptist and Jean François. Both are received at the Hermitage on 18 November 1829; Jean Baptist is received as a novice and Jean François as a boarder. The former was given the religious name of Brother Gregoire on 25 March 1830 and passed away as a perpetually professed on 20 September 1839. Jean François took the religious habit with the name of Brother Basile on 7 October 1832 but he never made his first vows.

Furthermore, we must specify that the Accounts Book reports the January 1826 to May 1827 receipts only; then it discloses those from January 1832 to 15 August 1835. Finally, from January 1837 to the end of December 1839. Besides, during the last two years 1838 and 1839, it contains the disbursements for the novitiate only. Therefore, it is not easy to have a clear view of the finances as a whole. Regarding the Hermitage's receipts, it is just impossible to calculate the total of the disbursed sums. One has to have recourse to the Accounts Book, which is also incomplete.

We can query whether the entries are wholly reliable because of the examples that we could extract.

SPECIAL CASES

These cases present uncertainties as regards the identification of the persons either because the bookkeeper forgot to mention certain indispensable data, or because he badly spelled names, or again because the details of a same postulant are dispersed on several pages. Most of the cases given below prove our point.

THE SOUCHON CASE

As soon as one starts reading the following entries he cannot but notice the discrepancies that are difficult to correct without analysing different elements. The first inscription is found in the book 132.3 bis on page 40:

14 Oct. 1824 – Pierre Souchon aged 27 from Boisset can give five hundred francs;

Received from the said Pierre Souchon 200
received that same day (see page 43)

Page 43 of the same book reads, "22 Sept. 182? –
Pierre Souchon one hour from Lyon and a civics book..."

In the table of contents at the end of the book
the name appears with the indication: "see p. 40"

The Entries Register first mentions him on page 4:
(Brother Pierre) October 1824 – Pierre Souchon,
aged twenty-seven entered the house as a novice;
gave 520 francs for his boarding.

Then one must go to the bottom of page 13
to take up again the same man's history:

16 April 1827 – received for Souchon's boarding 100

24 August 1827 – received for clothes and other expenses 39

31 August – received for Souchon's novitiate one hundred 100

8 February 1823 – received 200

Souchon (see page 14)

Effectively, on the following page, at the bottom of
page 14 one can read,

2 October: The father of Souchon gave 400 for the novitiate's board-
ing and 100 for clothes.

From the handwriting we cannot certify that M. Champagnat entered

this last section. Nevertheless, it was not easy for the accountant to understand the entries. It seems that Souchon paid twice for his novitiate, in 1824 and in 1827. We can wonder whether there wasn't another Souchon since on page 13 there isn't any first name. Indeed, turning back to page 22, we read,

“Brother Charles – Jean Claude Souchon from St Symphorien le Chateau (Rhône) born in 1810”

According to the temporary vows' register, this brother Charles would have pronounced his first vows on 25 March 1828. Hence he should have been at the novitiate in 1827. But why wait until page 22 to supply any information on that brother? The two consecutive lines at the bottom of the page can give an explanation:

16 July 1839 – received	200
5 May 1846 – received	140

Obviously, this is a much later addendum for the handwriting is different. Hence, our deduction that these entries were for a second Souchon already mentioned. The perpetual vows and death registers confirm that both of them made their final vows: Brother Pierre in 1832 and Brother Charles in 1835. Both of them died in the Institute: Pierre in 1868 and Charles in 1878.

We then have to conclude that the reading of this Register requires clarifications that we are sometimes fortunate to find somewhere else.

THE PESSONNEL CASE

When the religious name of Brother Ambroise is attributed to Pinçonneau and to Pessonnel simultaneously we wonder whether we are dealing with two different persons or whether we are dealing with one only, as different entries seem to indicate. The related details are far apart in the Entries Register.

Page 1: (at the very bottom of the page)

1825 Brother Ambroise – Jean Pinsonel from Chavanais, aged 16 promises to pay three hundred francs.

Page 16:

1 October 1824: Jean Etienne Pinsoneau aged 17 joined us as a novice. He carried a good behaviour certificate and gave nothing.

October 1827: received from Brother Ambroise Jean Etienne Pinsoneau 257.

It is clear that the page 1 inscription was transferred from Cahier 3 bis, page 9 that reads,

"Entered on 5 September 1824 – Jean Pinçonel from Chavanais, aged 16. He promises to pay three hundred francs 300.

He bought a book of Principles, a rosary."

In the perpetual vows register, he declared,

"I, the undersigned Brother Ambroise, born Jean Pessonnel, the legitimate son of Etienne Pessonnel and ... born in the parish of Pelussin, aged 23, was admitted into the Hermitage house on 7 September 1824,..."

This act was signed "the 17th day of October 1829". Aged 23 at that date, he had been 16 or 17 in 1824. The death register gives him 24 years on 12 May 1831, the day of his burial. The deceased brothers' list entered his birth as being 1807. Finally, the most plausible hypothesis leads us to think that we are in fact dealing with one person only, whose name is written according to the hearing perception.

BROTHER PIUS CASE

A similar error for the same reasons appears in Brother Pius' entries. In the Entries Register, page 30 we read,

Brother Pius – 21 September 131 – Benoit Arnoud, the legitimate son of Antoine and Marie Denise Crozet from Marbos, aged 25, knowing how to read a little and carrying a good behaviour certificate entered the Institute as a novice. He gave nothing and cannot give anything but promises to pay if he ever left us.

In the margin: "Left on 24 July 1849; gave back 140 f". But, it happens that the name 'Arnoud' cannot be found in any register. But the name Brother Pius is seen in many places in connection with Benoit Renon. A bit further, on page 52, in the Entries Register we found,

Brother Celestin – 18 May 1834 – Jean Renon from Marbos, the legitimate son of Antoine and Marie Denise Croset, aged 14 years and a half, carrying a good behaviour certificate, knowing how to read and write a little entered as a novice – gave nothing.

Visibly, because of the parents' names, Jean is Benoit's brother and the name 'Renon' was first heard as 'Arnoud'. And if it was the contrary? Probably not, because the temporary vows register stresses that "Brother Pius, Benoit Renon, the legitimate son of the late Antoine Renon and the still alive Marie Denise Crozet, born in Marboz, aged 26,..." was admitted at the Hermitage

17 Carta al Sr. J.-C. COLIN, 29 de marzo de 1835.

18 Vida, ed. 1989, p. 372.

19 P. M. 2, doc. 756, p. 762.

on 23 September 1831. He took the religious habit during the same year and made his temporary vows on 25 December of the same year. Then, there is no doubt that Benoit Arnoud et Benoit Renon are the same person.

Other examples reveal that inscriptions were made hastily without verifying the right spelling. Thus:

5 September 1824 - Augustin Bellin from Chavanois aged 13. We must pay for his boarding.

The corrected transcription from cahier 3bis:

Entry: 5 September 1824 – Augustin Boland from Chavanois aged 13. We must pay for his boarding.

THE CASE OF JEAN FARA

More than it indicates, this case shows clearly the passage from the boarder status to the novice state. The beginning of page 4 of the Register reads, 20 August 1825, Jean Fara from Lavallas, aged 13, received as a novice. He pays 10 francs per month.

He has been in the house for fourteen months – He paid his full boarding:

100

Other dues francs: 44

The information could not be more muddled: he is “received into the house on 20 August 1825” but he has been living in it for “fourteen months”. He pays “10 francs per month” but for the fourteen months he paid “one hundred francs” only. We have to turn to page 10 to obtain some enlightenment:

20 Feb. 1824 – Jean Fara from Lavallas, aged 12, a boarder, must pay 12 francs per month

Received from his mother: 100

Therefore, Jean Fara entered in February 1924 as a boarder at 12 francs per month and not 10. This is confirmed by the following excerpt from Cahier 3bis:

Page 28

20 February 1824 – Jean Fara aged 12 pays 12

Considering the above data, here is our interpretation. On 20 August 1825, Jean Fara enrolled himself at the novitiate at the age of 15. Then, one day, somebody endeavoured to transcribe from Book 3bis neglected inscriptions and page 10 is filled in almost completely. That explains the presence on that page of Pierre Odier registered in 1823; of Etienne Dumas, Pierre Sabot and Pierre Robert registered in 1824. But Jean Laurent Pause, Jean Praire, Jean Louis Rival and Andre Despinace who were together in Book 3bis were not transcribed. They must have left during the interval for we can't find them anywhere in the registers. To close this case, let

us read from the deaths' register:

In 1826, Jean Fara, in religion Brother Placide was buried at Laval-la. He passed away at the end of September in the same village. He was fourteen.

THE POINARD CASE

BOOK 3 BIS - PAGE 25	ENTRIES REGISTER - PAGE 9
<p>12 Nov. 1822 Claude Poinard aged 23 from Annonay Received: 30</p> <p>29 July: received from Poinard's father 60</p> <p>16 Oct. received from same 40</p> <p>Still due to us: 200: 100 will be paid in May and the other 100 in two years' time. As per 16 Oct. 1825</p> <p>16 Jan. 1825: Poinard still owes us for the elder son f 100</p>	<p>12 Sept 1824: Br. Etienne Claude Poinard from Annonay, aged 23 entered as a novice. He promised to pay for his boarding. He gave f 30</p> <p>29 July: he added 60 16 Oct.: he paid 40</p> <p>Poinard's father still has to pay 100 francs for his eldest son.</p> <p>16 January 1825: Jacques Poinard, aged 13 gives 200 per year.</p> <p>7 June 1825 Received from Poinard's father: f. 100 Still due to us: 100</p> <p>22 October 1825: received from Poinard's father: full payment: 100</p> <p>9 ... 1825: Mr Poinard still owes us f. 77</p> <p>See p. 26</p> <p>11 Jan. 1824: Pierre Sabot is received as a novice 00</p>
<p>11 Jan. Pierre Sabot Pierre Robert reçu 10</p>	

BOOK 3 BIS - PAGE 25	ENTRIES REGISTER - PAGE 9
A brave Sister by the name of Sr. Mary of the Sacred Heart promised to pay 50 Received from Sister: 13	On the same day, Pierre Robert from St. Sauveur is also accepted as a novice He gave 73
Jacques Poinard aged 13 gives 200 per yr. 1825, 6 Jan.: Account settlement with Poinard senior: he promises to give 200 f in May 1825. 7 June 1825: received from Mr Poinard 100 f. As per the agreement, still due: 100	Brother Jacques Poinard, aged 15 entered as a novice. 18 Sept. 1826: Mr. Poinard promised to pay 177 on St John's feast Received from Poinard, father: 24 Sept. 177

The note "See p. 26" indicates that at this page there is a follow-up to this business. Here it is:

2 Sept. 1828:	Received for Brother Isidore's (Jacques Poinard) boarding	100
4 July 1829:	Received from Poinard's father	100
9 Oct. 1831:	Received from Mr Poinard	30
	He will remit the remainder 'sometime'	270
30 Sept. 1832:	Received from Mr Poinard	100
3 May 1832:	Received from Mr Poinard	100

The above notes concern Jacques only who eventually left after his temporary vows. Pierre Poinard replaced him in 1832. Undoubtedly, he was Jacques' brother who died in the Institute.

Can we doubt the documentary value of this Register because of these examples? There is no proof that the data are inaccurate, but their presentation simply reveals that the bookkeeper was very busy and did not have the leisure to set everything in a perfect order.

CONCLUSION

Nevertheless, the very defects of this Register show M. Champagnat's psychology. Always busy with numerous tasks and already a man of action as he was, he was not inclined to look for perfect accuracy. He knew how to organise a multitude of activities but he ran short of time and patience to make impeccable reports. He implicitly admitted this imperfection in his letters to the bishop to ask for help in leading his herd.

At all costs, he insisted in welcoming all the new comers himself. It is plain that his leadership qualities made him watch that his disciples toed the line. Besides, he knew he could understand the young ones and even guess their deep dispositions as the following example indicates. During a visit to Cote St Andre, as he was walking with M. Douillet, Father Champagnat described each postulant in the large room. In an aside, he told his friend, "The young man at such a spot in the room is a very poor subject." We can be amazed at the number of defections even in the Founder's time who accepted all those who came along. He expected unpleasant surprises but he hoped his influence and Mary's intervention would steady the undecided ones. The 18th chapter of Brother Jean Baptist's biography amply describes this particular aspect.

Through the Entries Register we can perceive that the Hermitage house must have looked like a hive filled with many lively young men animated with a generous ideal. That house that welcomed people who came and left.

But the main characteristic of the community must have been the modesty revealed by the low level of intellectual culture of its inhabitants and the scarcity of its revenues. Usually, such a situation engenders a sure kind of gloomy atmosphere but the nascent community felt a sense of happy freedom enlivened by its religious fervour and its challenging ideal. That M. Champagnat might have felt at ease in such an environment is certain, he who tried to communicate joy around him. This disposed him to the serenity he showed in his register. He was not punctilious, accepted any method of payment without neglecting the essential points.

That register might not teach us much new, but it concretely depicts M. Champagnat's personality. More than any other writing, it touches the core of his laborious life.

Br. Paul SESTER october 2002

Addenda

Here are a few cases that show the relationship between the Entries Register and the Receipts Account Book. You will note that they are sometimes on parallel computation but that neither one nor the other is complete.

* * * * *

THE JACQUES BADARD CASE, (Brother Amphiloque)

ENTRIES REGISTER, p. 65	RECEIPTS BOOK
<p>1 Sept. 1835: Jacques Badard from Lavallas, legitimate son of Fleury and Marie Françoise Matricon entered the house as a novice Received from his father: 220 This man will continue to pay at the rate of 200 f per year.</p>	
<p>7 May received from Mr Badard 200 25 October 1840 Received balance f. 131 The other dues were paid in kind.</p>	<p>(1838, May) 7: Received from Fleury Badard for the novitiate of his son 153.60</p> <p>Three lines further, apparently on the same date this book reads, Received from Fleury Badard chestnuts or in truffles for a value of 46,40</p>

In the Book 3 bis, pages 72-73, under the title “Novices’ Arrears’ the following appears,

Jacques Badard de Lavalla: 300

Then 7th May in the Entries Register must be completed by the 1838 entries. The sums indicated in the Accounts Book are supposed to make a total of 200. What disturbs the researcher is the 131 balance that does not correspond to 153,60, neither with the date of 25 November 1840 nor with the amount still due, viz. 300f. It is easy to conclude that the Book 3bis entry was made before November 1840 since we recognize M. Champagnat’s handwriting.

THE GINEST FRANÇOIS CASE, Brother Apollinaire

ENTRIES REGISTER, p. 40	RECEIPTS BOOK, p 66
The parents made an agreement with Brother Jean Pierre; They remitted on 50,75 23 January 1832.	1832, 23 January Received from François Ginest: 50,75 p. 71: 5 May, 1832: received from Ginest’s parents Brother Apollinaire 25

At that moment, Brother Jean Pierre was the director of La Côte St-André and the Ginest family lived at La Frette.

THE NAUTA, MICHEL CASE

ENTRIES REGISTER	RECEIPTS BOOK, p 81
	March 1833: Michel Nauta gave for his novitiate : 1. nine buckets of potatoes 2. three iron rod bundles 200 23 March: received in money 161 Returned to Michel Nauta 114 3 August 1833: All accounts settled with him

Michel Nauta is not entered in the “Entries Register” yet clearly he is entered in the “Receipts Book” as a novice.

THE MICHEL MONCHALIN CASE (Brother Basile)

ENTRIES REGISTER	RECEIPTS BOOK, p 91
28 Jan. 1835: Michel Monchalin from St Hostien received from him 200	
3 Sept. 1836 received 100	19 April 1837: received from Brother Basile for his novitiate 100
28 Sept. 1838: received 50	p. 109
	29 Sept. 1838: received from Brother Basile’s parents 50
	p. 126
14 August 1840: received 133	14 August 1840 for Brother Basile’s novitiate 133

THE EUGENE PETIT CASE (Brother Abraham)

ENTRIES REGISTER, p. 7	RECEIPTS BOOK, p 88
10 Sept, 1836, Simon Eugene Petit joined our society. His father in Jan. 1837: 200	
	19 Jan. 1837: received for Eugene Petit’s novitiate: 200

THE ORIOL CASE (Brother Joseph F. Theotiste)

ENTRIES REGISTER, p. 62	RECEIPTS BOOK, p 90
<p>19 June 1835: The parents promised to pay 500 for everything; The father will give at All Saints Day. 200</p>	
<p>25 1835: received from Mr Oriol 100</p>	
<p>31 March: received from Mr Oriol 100</p>	
<p>27 Oct. 1836 received 150</p>	<p>11 April</p>
<p>12 April 1837 received 150</p>	<p>Received from Brother Theotiste 150</p>

Document Entries Register N° 1

These are some of the first 53 pages of the “Entries Register” that are presented here because they are the most meaningful and because one can maintain, without too much of a risk of making a mistake, that they are exclusively from the hand of M. Champagnat. This is not the case for the following pages where the handwritings of others, even from his lifetime, are mixed in with his own.

As for the transcription of the text, we wanted it as faithful as possible, respecting the spelling even when there are errors. The punctuation, almost totally missing, has been put in when understanding required it.

For the curiosity that they represent and because they are certainly from the hand of the Founder, it was judged good to add the last pages of this “Register.”

N.B. *The French original of the selection follows this translation of some pages as an example.*

PAGE 1

28 March 1822 Claude Aubert from St. Pal Chalancon gave for his novitiate plus sixty francs for his habit

idem 1822 François Civier from Boisset, dept. of Puy gave for the novitiate four hundred francs

Br. Regis ~~of which the rest remains to be paid~~

idem 1822 Jean Fleury from Tyrange, received for his novitiate fifty francs

idem 1822 Jean Baptiste Furet from St. Pal Chalancon gave
Br. Jn Baptiste fifty francs

the remaining owed for his upkeep or for his habit for entering into religion ninety francs
More received

- idem 1822
Br. Joseph George Ponset from Tirange gave seventy two francs more received 13 April 1824 cf p. 4
- 8 August 1822 Joseph Girard from Solignac gave for his upkeep one hundred fifty francs
- 5 idem Matthieu Cossange from Bas-en-Basset gave two hundred francs cf. p. 2
- 5 idem Michel Marconnet from Boisset gave eighty francs.
- idem 1822 Antoine Monier from Boisset gave on the fourth of May 1823 eighty nine francs. The remaining owed one hundred eleven francs
- 3 7bre 1823 Jacques Furet from St Pal Chalancon gave fifty francs
50
- 9bre 1822 Antoine Gratalon from Yzieu gave two hundred francs
200
- March 1825 Received for the room and board of Christophe Courbon from Chirat, commune of Lavalla, thirty six francs. The father promised to still give thirty six francs for the entire room and board for the year 1825. He has yet to give for his upkeep two hundred francs in a year. His aunt from Sardière promised to make him from her earnings a pair of stockings and a shirt every year, and further the father promises and undertakes to pay for the room and board for his son. If he comes to take him from the house even for serious reasons he will be obliged to leave the Institute fifteen francs a month
- 7bre 1823 Jean Aubert from St. Pal Chalancon
- March 1823 Pierre Vertoie from Tirange left the novitiate on 1 June 1823. We have a note
- 7bre 1823
Br. Ambroise Jean Pinsonel from Chavanais aged 16 years. He promised three hundred francs. (12 entries)

PAGE 2

- 8 April 1825 Auguste Barrey from Lons-le-Sonier, department of Jura, aged 15 years, orphan, he made his first communion at Rive de Gier. The parish priest sent him to us.

- 11 April 1825 Gabriel Prat from Ysieux, aged 16 years, entered
Br. Xavier as a novice the aforesaid day his father promised 300 francs; received the same day 200 francs the other hundred will be paid either in money or in days. The father will contribute to his upkeep for entrance into religion.
- 1 9bre 1840 received 100 francs.
- Barthélemy Chomel entered as a novice and is only living in the house five months; received for him sixty francs. Remaining owed thirty francs.
- 21 April 1825 Jean Chomel from Boulieu, age 15 years, entered the house as a novice; I received eight francs for his small effects: he took a bible, a catechism, a prayer book from the Diocese of Lyon, a life of the Saints.
- 1 7bre 1825 received from the father Chomel (empty)
- 30 July 1825 received for the novitiate of Antoine Vialaron the sum of twenty francs
- 5 7bre 1824 Augustin Bellin (Bolant) from Chavanais, aged thirteen
Br. Macaire years, we have to support him
- 21 8bre 1825 I gave to Jean-Marie Payre the sum of nine hundred francs cf. p. 4 of the small book
- 21 Feb. 1825 Antoine Vialaron entered the house as a novice, at the age of sixteen years, gave balance owed one hundred forty francs payable in a year
- 2 9bre 1826 Jean Antoine Vere, a boarder from Rochetaillée gave

PAGE 3

- 12 8bre 1825 Antoine Furet St. Pal Chalancon, department Haute Loire, aged 16 years, possessing an attestation of good conduct, entered the house to be a novice, gave for his novitiate forty eight francs, seventy centimes
He made a note.
- 2 8bre 1825 Joseph Brebis from St. Pal Chalancon, age of fifteen years entered the house to be a novice. He is able to give nothing
- 7 June 1827 received from Simon Furet fifty francs
Pierre Frécon from Lavalla entered the house as a novice at Easter in the year eighteen twenty four has to give one hundred francs in the year 1826, in the month of may
The parents made a note payable at Easter

- 20 March 1826 Benoit Varenne from St. Germain Laval, age of 18 years, possessing good credentials, legitimate son of Louis Varenne and Louise Gambet, entered the house as a novice
- 24 March 1826 Michel Payret from Foeurs, age of twenty four years, legitimate son of Etienne and Claudine Verot, entered the house as a novice; not being able to give anything, Louis Dumas promises to give for him three hundred francs for the expenses of the novitiate
- 24 March 1826 Jean-Louis Dumas from St. Apolinard, age of twenty four years, legitimate son of Mathieu and his mother Jeanne-Marie Barbier, entered the house as a novice; he promises to give four hundred francs for his novitiate he ought to give one hundred francs in fifteen days
- 14 June 1826 Damien Varenne from St. Germain Laval, age of twenty one years, entered the house as a novice, possessing a certificate of good living and morals. His mother promises to give two hundred francs from here on St. Martin's Day (November 11)
Received 1 December 1827
He made a note.
- 2 Nov. 1827 received Jeanne-Marie Vire from St. Jean Bonnefond paid four months

PAGE 4

- 20 August 1825 Je(an) Fara from Lavalla, age of thirteen years, received in the house as a novice. He pays 10 francs per month; he has been in the house for fourteen months, he paid for the time that he lived in the house one hundred francs there remains owed forty-four francs
- 1 August 1826 Ausier from St. Jean Bonnefon entered the house as a boarder, he pays twenty-four francs per month and we have to furnish him with books, paper, all his bedding, laundry, clothes mending; instruction received from the mother Ausier on 29 August
- 1 January 1827 received cf. p. 13

PAGE 5

- 24 May 1825 Antoine Frédière, age 24 years, entered in the house, possessing a certificate of good conduct, his country Haute-Rivoire, promised one hundred fifty francs, gave one hundred of it and promises the remainder in two weeks; what's more he

- promises to make a note of two hundred fifty francs to complete the room and board of his novitiate at the end of two years he came to leave the house
- 27 June 30 I received from Frédière forty-eight francs, fifty centimes
- 16 July We put him out for the following reasons (disobedience, abuse) of others, very phlegmatic, I returned one hundred and ten francs to him
I retained the rest for board and other expenses
- 25 May 1825 Joseph Chalagner from Boulieu, age of fifteen years, entered the house as a novice; promises the cost in entirety; gave upon entering fifty francs; to receive the rest we will have recourse to Marianne Chalagner, aunt; see below
- Br. Gonzague* Jacques Sabatier from St. Hostien entered the house as a novice he has to give 400 francs for his novitiate and two hundred for his clothing; we have already received four hundred francs on 6 July 1825 The mentioned Jacques Sabatier has been in the house since the end of the month of August 1824 Received the 10 7bre 1827
- 28 7bre 1828 received from Louis Sabatier his older brother
- 5 August 1825 Joseph Bret, aged twenty-one, possessing a good certificate from his parish priest, M. Fessieux, priest of Pouly-les-Foeurs, was received in the house as a novice; he promises after the death of his father that he will give the sum required by our regulations for which he must give us a note.
- 16 8bre 18 31 Pierre Alexis Labrosse, legitimate son of Claude and Louise
Br. Louis-Marie Marie Thivinel, proprietor at Ranchal, he has a certificate of a good living and morals (48,80) (complete dowry) the parents will give the rest in the course of the year. (19 March 1849 paid from his legacy the board of 385) the 2 Xbre 1849 to the house
- 8 9bre 1831 Pierre Colombon, legitimate son of Jean and Rose de Soras from Motier, canton of La Côte St. André, possessing a certificate of good living and morals, aged twenty-two years, knowing how to read and write, entered the house as a novice; gave f. 3 and obliged himself to pay the four hundred francs if he comes to leave the Institute the proportional share of the time he lived here.
- 2 July 1835 Jean Baptiste Delorme from St. Laurent d'Agny, legitimate
Br. Marie Nizier son of Jean Antoine and Pierrette Renard, possessing a certificate of a good living and morals, aged sixteen years, knowing how to read and to write a little, entered the house as a novice. Monsieur Brosse Jean P, benefactor who gave two

- hundred francs, the remainder as soon as possible received from Bross
- 19 May 1834
Br. Saturnin Antoine Boute from St. Just Malmon, age of 18 years since the month of April, legitimate son of Pierre and Etiennette Montagnon, knowing almost nothing, possessing a certificate of good living and morals entered the house as a novice; gave His uncle, Antoine Montagono will give the sum of six thousand francs
- 20 August M. Montagnon from St. Just sur Loire
- 4 June 1834 received from Montagnon
- 1 May 1836 received
- 19 May 1834
Br. Marie Stanislaus Claude Souhat from St. Just Malmon, age of fifteen years since the fifteenth of March, legitimate son of Jean (Padel) and Marie Padel, possessing a certificate of good living and morals, entered the house as a novice; the father promised to give three hundred fifty at the rate of one hundred per year. In addition the father promises to oblige himself to pay
- 7bre 1850 N 8f to the house six hundred francs for two years at the rate of one hundred crowns per year if his son Claude comes to leave the house, made at Notre Dame de l'Hermitage, 19 May eighteen thirty four; received 1 Feb. 1835
- 26 7bre 1855 received ... St. Genis 200
- 1 7bre 1836 received
- 1 8bre 1837 received
- 1847, August 20, trip to his house, 15 f. – The 12 7bre for travel 5 the 18 June 1848
- 19 May 1834
Br. Ignace Joseph Jeury from Pélussin, age of twenty-two years, legitimate son of Pierre and Marie Drevart, possessing a certificate of good living and morals, knowing how to read and write, entered the house as a novice, gave 1837 His brother will give his treatment; he gave 3 kegs of wine
8bre 12 1838 received from Brother Ignace, 40
15 8bre 1839 received 200
- 12 April 1834
Br. Pacôme Jean Marie Reou from Lavalla, age of thirty-seven years, legitimate son of François and Marianna Valla, possessing a certificate of good living and morals, knowing how to make

- shoes, entered the house as a novice; gave a watch worth f. 35
- 18 May 1834 *Br. Célestin* Jean Renon from Marbos, legitimate son of Antoine and Marie Denis Croset, age of 14 possessing a certificate of good living and morals, knowing how to read and write a bit, entered the house as a novice; he gave nothing
- 5 January 1834 Bernardassy de Frasco, canton Tessin, Switzerland, legitimate son of André and Joséphine Ferini, age of 18, possessing a certificate of good living and morals, Hardly knowing how to spell, entered the house as a novice; he gave nothing (left on 16 June 1847, gave back 100f.)
- 11 August 1834 *Br. Marie Théodore* Jacques St. Cyre, from Fleurieux, legitimate son of Jacques and Simone Durant, possessing a certificate of good living and morals, age of ... gave for his novitiate which he will pay it all
19 8bre 1835 he gave again
- 5 7bre 1834 *Br. Modeste* Jean Marie Nevoret from Marboz, Bresse, age 24 years, legitimate son of François and Jeanne Blanc, possessing a certificate of good living and morals, knowing how to read and write a bit, entered the house as a novice; His father gave one hundred francs and promised to give to the extent of what we require;
Received
- 3 8bre 1835 received from Nevoretz
received besides
received 20 9bre 1836 – 16 May 1838
received as pay 3 July 180 100f.
- 9 7bre 1834 Jacques Firmin from St. Victor Malescour, aged about twenty years, possessing a certificate of good living and morals, knowing how to read a bit, tailor of suits, entered the house as a novice; he gave
plus a watch worth 17 f.
- 12 7bre 1834 Auguste Constant, Br. Juste
- 25 7bre 1834 received
- 12 Antoine Roudet received

On the following pages, we have presented the complete version of the Entries' Register number 1, in its original version written in French.

