

# Persecution in the Valley of Piedmont, in the Seventeenth Century

... Gigovanni Pelanchion, for refusing to turn papist, was tied by one leg to the tail of a mule, and dragged through the streets of Lucerne, amidst the acclamations of an inhuman mob, who kept stoning him, and crying out, He is possessed with the devil, so that neither stoning, nor dragging him through the streets, will kill him, for the devil keeps him alive. They then took him to the river side, chopped off his head, and left that and his body unburied, upon the bank of the stream.

Magdalen, the daughter of Peter Fontaine, a beautiful child of 10 years of age, was ravished and murdered by the soldiers. Another girl, of about the same age, they flayed alive at Villa Nova; and a poor woman, hearing the soldiers were coming towards her house, snatched up the cradle in which her infant son was asleep, and fled towards the woods. The soldiers, however, saw and pursued her, when she lightened herself by putting down the cradle and child, which the soldiers no sooner came to, than they murdered the infant, and continuing the pursuit, found the mother in a cave, where they first ravished, and then cut her to pieces.

Jacopo Michelino, chief elder of the church of Bobbio, and several other protestants, were hung up by means of hooks fixed in their bellies, and left to expire in the most excruciating tortures.

Giovanni Rostagnal, a venerable protestant, upwards of fourscore years of age, had his nose and ears cut off, and slices cut from the fleshy parts of his body, till he bled to death.

Seven persons, Daniel Saleagio and his wife, Giovanni Durant, Lodwich Durant, Bartholomew Durant, Daniel Revel, and Paul Reynard, had their mouths stuffed with gunpowder, which being set fire to, their heads were blown to pieces.

Jacob Birone, a school-master of Rorata, for refusing to change religion, was stripped naked; and after having been very indecently exposed, had the nails of his toes and fingers torn off with red hot pincers, and holes bored through his hands with the point of a dagger. He then had a cord tied round his middle, and was led through the streets with a soldier on each side of him. At every turning the soldier on his right-hand cut a gash in his flesh, and the soldier on his left-hand side struck him with a bludgeon, both saying, at the same instant, Will you go to mass? Will you go to mass? He still replied in the negative to these interrogatories, and being at length taken to the bridge, they cut off his head on the balustrades, and threw both that and his body into the river.

Paul Garnier, a very pious protestant, had his eyes put out, was then flayed alive, and being divided into four parts, his quarters were placed on four of the principal houses of Lucerne. He bore all his sufferings with the most exemplary patience, praised God as long as he could speak, and plainly evinced, what confidence and resignation a good conscience can inspire.

Daniel Cardon, of Rocappiata, being apprehended by some soldiers, they cut his head off, and having fried his brains, ate them. Two poor old blind women, of St. Giovanni, were burnt alive; and a widow of La Torre, with her daughter, were driven into the river, and there stoned to death.

Paul Giles, on attempting to run away from some soldiers, was shot in the neck: they then slit his nose, sliced his chin, stabbed him, and gave his carcass to the dogs.

Some of the Irish troops having taken eleven men of Garcigliana prisoners, they made a furnace red-hot, and forced them to push each other in till they came to the last man, whom they pushed in themselves.

Michael Gonet, a man of 90, was burnt to death; Baptista Oudri, another old man, was stabbed; and Bartholomew Frasche had holes made in his heels, through which ropes being put, he was dragged by them to the gaol, where his wounds mortified and killed him.

Magdalene de la Peire being pursued by some of the soldiers, and taken, was thrown down a precipice, and dashed to pieces. Margaret Revella, and Mary Pravillerin, two very old women, were burnt alive; and Michael Bellino, with Ann Bochardno, were beheaded.

The son and daughter of a counsellor of Giovanni, were rolled down a steep hill together, and suffered to perish in a deep pit at the bottom. A tradesman's family, himself, his wife, and an infant in arms, were cast from a rock and dashed to pieces; and Joseph Chairet, and Paul Carniero, were flayed alive.

Cypriania Bustia, being asked if he would renounce his religion, and turn Roman Catholic, replied, I would rather renounce life, or turn dog: to which a priest answered, for that expression you shall both renounce life, and be given to the dogs. They, accordingly, dragged him to prison, where he continued a considerable time without food, till he famished; after which they threw his corpse into the street before the prison, and it was devoured by dogs in a most shocking manner.

Margaret Sarotta was stoned to death, and then thrown into the river; Antonio Bertina had his head cleft asunder; and Joseph Pont was cut through the middle of his body.

Daniel Maria, and his whole family, being ill of a fever, several papist ruffians broke into his house, telling him they were practical physicians, and would give them all present ease, which they did, by knocking the whole family on the head.

Three infant children of a protestant named Peter Fine, were covered with snow, and stifled; and elderly widow, named Judith, was beheaded; and a beautiful young woman was stripped naked, and had a stake driven through her body, of which she expired.

#### **Taken out of *Wright's Martyrology*, 1784**

*Editor's Note: Often times in early history books the word "Protestant", as explained by the historians, did not mean those who protested and came out of the Roman Catholic church. But rather anyone who protested its beliefs which explain why Ana-Baptists were also referred to as protestants. Baptist never came out of the Roman Catholic church. They were never in it.*

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