

**1881-1894: the first lay teachers
in the Brothers' schools
in Paris and in the world
(2/2)**

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The names of 63 lay teachers have come down to us

At St Nicolas des Champs (3rd/4th arr), where the community runs several schools in the Marais district, M. Gil Albert was in charge of form 3 in a school of 4 classes (in future, this information will be given as 3/4), from 1888 to 1891; and Jean Baptiste Pulby had a similar class in another school in the Marais district. It is worth noting that Jean Baptiste Pulby was employed in the neighbouring school of St Denis du Saint Sacrement (3rd arr) in 1887. It looks as if a number of teachers took advantage of the Lasallian "network" of schools in Paris.

It is not clear whether Mr Bricault (4/6 at Notre Dame de la Gare in 1891) is the same person as Bricaut Émile (3/4 in 1892-93) who took over from Gil Albert at St Nicolas des Champs. Mr Keller (3/6 at St Médard in 1890) is no doubt the same person as Mr Keller Em. (4/5 at St Germain des Prés in 1892, and in St Denis du Saint Sacrement in 1897). Mr Bois Victor (7/7 in 1881 and 6/6 in 1883 at St Christophe de la Villette) is surely also the V. Bois de la Villette who sends in answers to competitions run by the Youth Club Bulletin. V. Schneider from Aubervilliers who writes to this Bulletin in 1883 is probably the same person as Mr Schneider Victor (6/6 at St Joseph-st Martin in 1887). These cross-checks do not give us enough information. Our research would have to extend to 1905 if we wanted a better idea of who these lay teachers were.

Mr Denis Jean, who qualified in 1880, was one of the first lay teachers at St Christophe de la Villette, since in 1881 he was in charge of 4/7 and in 1882 of 6/6. It is tempting to make a connection between him and Brother Agolin Denis (Denis Joseph Médard), born in 1850 in the Somme, choir-master at St Christophe from 1879 to 1904, and brother of Brother Bérain Denis, who died at the age of 21 in the odour of sanctity. All the more so, as the November 1884 issue of the Bulletin mentions the death of a member of the La Villette youth club, a certain Joseph Denis, at the age of 21...

And does the person indicated as "Boyer, lay person" (4/5 then 2/5 at Notre Dame de Lorette in 1887-91) belong to the same family as Brother Onuphre (Boyer Jean Baptiste), an "employed novice" at Ste Marguerite in 1891, born in the Lozère in 1861? Mr Joseph Wagner teaches without a break at Ste Marguerite from 1888 to 1894, going from 4/6 (with 50 pupils) to 3/6 (with 55 pupils), then 3/7 (with 46 and then 54 pupils), followed by 2/7 (with 57 pupils), then by 2/8 (with 70 pupils). It was relatively rare to find more pupils the higher the class. Joseph Wagner was no doubt a teacher who proved his worth. Perhaps he was recommended by Abbé Wagner, the ecclesiastic in charge of the school youth club.

Is Mr Pillet Hippolyte (3/6 or 4/6 at St Christophe de la Villette in 1889-94) the same person as Pillet, the member of the St Labre association who took part in the 1884

pilgrimage to Lourdes? In 1897, he was still teaching at La Villette.

We have the names of 65 lay teachers. The name of Vallet Pierre is written only in pencil (6/6, 5/6 and 4/6 at the parish school in Passy in 1886-88). Some names are listed on the front side of the "yellow form" after the list of the Brothers in the community, together with the date of their qualification: Lay person Perlaux Henri (4/6 at St Germain l'Auxerrois in 1887, qualified in 1885); Delion Paul, lay teacher (5/6 and 3/6 at St Denis du Saint Sacrement in 1886-87, qualified in 1886); Faivre Eugène, lay teacher (6/6 and 3/6 in another school in the same parish in 1886-88, 1890-91 and 1893-94, qualified [primary] in 1885 and [secondary] in 1887). The Brother Director of Ternes mentions that in 1887 that L., qualified in 1886, was in charge of 3/5.

Some lay teachers remained for some time in the same school. There is mention of Mr Duroure Michel (4/4 at La Madeleine in 1888-94, with first 89 then 70 pupils) and of Mt Duterme, lay teacher (4/5 at St Vincent de Paul in 1888-94, with first 59 then 71 pupils). When only the word "lay person" is registered without the surname, it is not possible to calculate the length of service. This happens in the following cases: at St Roch, St Philippe de Roule, St Marcel de la Maison Blanche (1886-94); Notre Dame des Champs, Ste Marie des Batignolles (1884-94); and St Georges (1882-94).

Mr Husson worked for a long time at St Pierre de Chaillot (3/3 in 1889-94), and his name figures on the list also in 1897 and 1905. There are others who taught in a particular school in 1894 and figure again on the school list in 1897: Assel Mathias (Notre Dame de la Gare, 1892-94), Auribault (St Pierre de Montrouge, 1890-94), Labadie Joseph (Bercy, 1893-94) and Pelloux (Notre Dame de Bonne Nouvelle, 1890-94). This shows the value of pursuing research in this area.

The place of lay teachers in Brothers' schools

How are these lay teachers integrated into the life of the community? As we said earlier, they were sometimes added to the list of Brothers on the "yellow form". In one case, in 1881, the Brother Director of St Christophe de La Vallée answered the question: "If there was an increase in the number of Brothers during the year, say what this increase was" by saying: "Yes. One layman".

Some lay teachers seem to prefer to remain in the youngest classes, which are usually the largest in the school. At St Médard, the form master of 6/6, Mr Icard Léon followed by Mr Seure Émile had 110 pupils. The lay teacher in 7/7 at Ste Marie des Batignolles has 40 pupils in 1884, 84 in 1888, and 92 in 1892. Evidently, with time, he established his authority. On the other hand, at St Georges, the lay teacher's class (5/5 or 4/5) is the smallest class in the school, going from 35 to 52 pupils.

Most often, however, lay teachers moved up into the higher classes. Some moved up very rapidly, such as Mr Vieillefaut Joseph at St Louis d'Antin (4/4, 3/4, and 2/4 from 1886 to 1888), Vallet Pierre at the parish school in Passy (6/6, 5/6 and 4/6 in the same period), and Mr Joseph Wagner mentioned earlier.

In a number of places, a lay teacher is in charge of the class second from the top: at St Denis du Saint Sacrement 2/3 in 1881; 2/3 at St Séverin in 1890-91, at Notre Dame des Champs, choir-master, 1890-94; St Merry, 2/4 in 1884-94; 2/4 at St Paul, St Louis, St Séverin and Vaugirard in 1890-94; Ste Clotilde in 1890; les Ternes 2/5 in 1890-92; St Sulpice 2/6 in 1886-90; St Médard, 1893; St Pierre de Montrouge, 2/8, by "Auribault, lay person" (4/8 in 1890, 3/8 in 1891-2, 2/8 in 1893-94). It was only in 1894 that a lay teacher was put in charge of the top class 4/4 of 46 pupils at St Laurent.

Was the lay teacher, for all that, fully integrated into the Brothers' community? It is doubtful in cases where he is referred to by expressions which emphasise the gap that exists between him and the community, such as: "lay assistant" (St Ambroise), "the layman" (St Honoré d'Eylau), "Mr le Laïque" (La Chapelle St Denis). Perhaps the term "lay assistant" comes from the legal use of this term to indicate a young unqualified teacher in training (cf. auxiliary workers in kindergartens today). Many teachers must have been "employed novices" educationally speaking, learning how to teach thanks to the supervision and advice of the Brother Director.

In a number of houses, on the other hand, where 2 classes out of 5 are run by lay teachers (this is the case in 7 schools), and even more so when they are in charge of 3 classes (St Thomas d'Aquin), these teachers are probably more than "assistants". In 1 case out of 7, the "yellow form" gives the name of the lay teacher - a way of referring to him which probably reflects everyday relations.

If we are to believe the Rule of the Brothers, lay teachers do not go to the community house to eat with the Brothers. Do they take part in the Brothers' pedagogical meetings? What we do know is that these lay teachers are interested in their pedagogical, catechetical and spiritual formation (the Easter retreats at Athis), as well as in their financial security (the solidarity fund). In 1894, at Notre Dames de Lourdes (Tourcoing, Nord), "1 layman replaced 1 Brother", and the bursar is also a layman. In 1881, at Biella (Italy), "a secular, 68 years old, very good and faithful, has the job of a serving Brother, and receives a 10 month's salary plus accommodation and laundry".

Economic status of the schools and of the teachers

After 1861, an indult from the Holy See authorised the Brothers' schools to receive fees from non-poor families, something that was imposed by law on public schools in France and in other countries. Having become private schools, the Brothers' schools had been obliged at times to accept fees. The "yellow forms" list these as "subscriptions". In 1881, a number of Directors cross this word out and replace it by "retribution" (Oran), "scholastic retribution" (Rangoon, Burma), "the pupils" (Vinay, Isère). And in 1894, the Brother Director of Vesoul replaced "benefactors" by "retributions".

In 1894, in Tunis, there are "3 public schools" run by the Brothers: at La Goulette ("our school is public; it is funded by the Tunisian government"); there are 4 "public schools" in La Réunion (public school at St Denis de La Réunion) in 1881). And in Monaco, 18 teaching posts (there are 16 Brothers and a lay teacher) "are funded by the Prince". This information about the origin of the financial resources of communities comes from the "yellow forms".

We have no direct information about the lay teachers' salaries in Paris. Regarding other towns in France, we have some information for 1894. The "yellow form" from Arras (Nord) speaks of a "lay person paid by the parish priest", but the amount is not given. At Montluçon, the salaries agreed for 6 Brothers and 2 lay teachers (Pertet Jean Marie and Heuriot Louis) amount to 750 F for each person. In Nice, each of the 17 Brothers and 2 lay teachers is paid 800F. At Caen Vaucelles (Calvados) the 5 Brothers and 2 lay teachers (Mr Polvérel and Mr Fatras) receive 900F each. At Chinon (Indre et Loire), the lay teacher receives 800F, and the remaining money for 4 Brothers and a lay cook comes to about 600F each (which is not enough to live on). In Bayonne (Basses Pyrénées), the Brothers receive 800 F, and the 2 lay teachers 1,000 F each. At Lisieux (Calvados), the Brothers receive 900F each, and the two "lay gentlemen" 1,000F each. It is the same at St Maclou de Rouen (Seine Inférieure): 900F for each of the Brothers and 1,000F for the

lay teacher. At Notre Dame de Lourdes (Tourcoing, Nord), the 5 brothers receive 1,000F each, and the 3 lay teachers 1,200F each. The best paid is Mr Declercq (a lay teacher) in charge of 2/3 who receives 1,3000F, while the 7 Brothers of the same fee-charging school of St Maurice (Lille, Nord) each receive 800F.

In Paris, life is noticeably more expensive than in the other towns. In 1881, the communities received between 900 and 1000F per Brother. At St Merry, with 6,000F for 5 Brothers, the means exist to take on a lay teacher. With 8,400F for 5 Brothers, Ste Clotilde seems to be better off than most schools. We are justified in thinking that lay teachers were probably paid more than the Brothers, as elsewhere, but it was still not enough to bring up a family.

Were these lay teachers married? Many of them seem to be young when they take up their post in a Brothers' school. It is likely that the Brothers, with their clearly defined teaching method and Christian manner of conducting their classes, preferred to take on beginners as their assistants, rather than teachers who were already used to using other methods. The only indications regarding age concern a young man from Armentières, who was 20 years old (1873), and the "child" at Santiago de Chile (1881). With so little information available it is not possible to draw conclusions. Some of the lay teachers became qualified shortly before taking up their post, so these would be young. Others had worked previously in the youth clubs, and a number made their Easter retreat with the senior pupils. These too would have been young teachers. Mr Pillet Hippolyte, "lay teacher" at St Christophe de La Villette since 1889, is older, having become qualified in 1876. One case is worth pointing out: in Armentières (Nord), in the school of Notre Dame du Sacré Coeur, Mr Sigrist Joseph and Mr Sigrist (son) look after the lowest 2 classes out of 5 and in addition run a course for adults (1894).

450 lay teachers in 1894, 243 of them in France

Let us end this article by putting it into the context of the 40 countries where the Institute was present in 1894. In France, in the Paris area, there were 76 lay teachers in the Brothers' schools, in the département du Nord, 72 lay teachers, in Bordeaux 12. The rest were divided up between the départements of La Manche and of the Seine Inférieure and in other towns. In all, there were 243 lay teachers teaching a class in the Brothers' primary schools in France. If we remember that the Brothers at that time had 1,300 schools with 5,200 classes, that is not much.

In the rest of the world, the situation was as follows: 1 "lay teacher" in Monaco; 6 (lay) "teachers" in Madagascar; 8 "seculars" in Italy; 1 "native teacher" in Bulgaria; 71 "lay teachers" or "seculars teaching" in Belgium (especially in Bruxelles St Georges, with its 35 classes, 29 lay teachers and 23 Brothers); 7 "secular teachers" in Moulmein (Burma); 73 in Canada (St Gabriel and St Laurent de Montréal, where the lay teachers outnumber the Brothers); in the United States, 35 "seculars" and 25 Sisters (1 from Our Lady at Chicoper, Mass.; 1 Mercy Sister at Dover, N.H.; 4 Urselines in Toledo, Ohio...); 2 lay persons at Riobamba, Ecuador. This means that 204 lay persons teach a class in one of the 450 Brothers' schools outside France (115 classes in the colonies and 2,150 abroad). This represents 1 lay teacher for every 11 classes (in 1881, the figure was 1 for every 14). This evolution is much more noticeable in France, and especially in Paris.

It is interesting to see that the United States is the only country to mention Sisters on its school staffs. There is hardly any increase in the number of non-Brothers since 1881. A study is needed of the "feminisation" of school staffs. The "yellow forms", however, are of no help. •