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Commemorating the 280th anniversary of the Rising of the '45

THE JACOBITE – SPECIAL EDITION 2025F - NUMBER 1

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Article: ‘Lascaris and the Stuart-Radziwiłł circle, Rome-Poland (1719-1795)’

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Dear Friends,

Welcome to *The Jacobite*, Special edition 2025F, Number 1, a free access, special electronic edition to commemorate the 280th anniversary of the Jacobite Rising of 1745-1746 and explore the connections with the Stuart court in exile before, during and after the '45.

In this special *e-Jacobite* edition, Peter Piniński's third chapter in his research on Bishop Giorgio Lascaris, explores his role as a prominent mediator at the Stuart court in Italy. Lascaris built some important connections with influential Polish families in the mid-18th century. In this latest article, he follows the many visits of Lascaris to Poland where he worked tirelessly to strengthen ties between Italy and the powerful Polish nobility and their wealthy bankers. Among these were the Radziwiłł princes, who had the potential to provide financial resources and military assistance to Prince Charles Edward Stuart in his quest for the British throne on behalf of his father, James Francis Edward Stuart (1688-1766). James, often referred to as 'the Old Pretender', was the son of King James VII of Scotland and II of England (1633-1701) and heir to the Stuart dynasty.

Peter Piniński is the author of several books on Prince Charles Eduard Stuart and aspects linking the Stuart Court in exile to Poland. He is also a strong advocate of the hypothesis that the daughter of Prince Charles Edward Stuart, Charlotte Duchess of Albany, had three, possibly four, illegitimate children with Ferdinand de Rohan, Archbishop of Cambrai, two of whom may be

Charles Edward, Count Roehenstart (from *Rohan+Stuart*) and Marie Victoire, the *demoiselle de Thorigny*. Over a period of two centuries, their true identities had remained largely unknown until research by Alistair and Henrietta Tayler in the mid-20th century revealed the existence of Charlotte Stuart's children.

The author's suggestion that Marie Victoire, the *demoiselle de Thorigny* (1779-1836), was the daughter of Charlotte Stuart has been challenged by the Jersey-based, genealogist Marie-Louise Backhurst, who argues that she was the daughter of Jules Hercule Mériadec, Prince de Rohan and older brother of Ferdinand de Rohan, Archbishop of Cambrai, according to Baptism records found in the *Château de Couzières* near Tours, France.¹

Since Ferdinand was a Roman-Catholic archbishop, he and Charlotte kept the existence of their children strictly secret so as to avoid a disastrous public scandal. This led to the suggestion that Ferdinand's older brother, Jules, stepped in to recognise their illegitimate children as his – or attempted to do so. Such elaborate schemes to recognise children between the Stuart and Rohan are bound to stimulate intense debates between genealogists and historians for the years to come.

The marriage of Marie Victoire with Paul Nikorowicz, the son of a Polish banker adds an interesting twist to an already intertwined Rohan-Stuart joint ancestry. How was it arranged and by whom?

¹ M.-L. Backhurst (2024), '*New material on the identity of Marie de Thorigny and Charlotte Stuart's children, the Roëhenstarts*', *The Jacobite*, Winter edition 2024-2025, number 176, pp. 27-35. Peter Pininski first discussed the baptismal record in '*The Stuarts' Last Secret*' (2002), Tuckwell Press, p. 130.

An answer to this question may provide further clues on how Marie Victoire, born in France, found her way to Poland to become *Madame Nikorowicz* in 1803.

Peter Piniński has claimed to have found sufficient evidence to suggest that Giorgio Lascaris' role was the key to finding a suitable husband for Marie Victoire, the *demoiselle de Thorigny*, even though he passed away in 1795, years before her marriage to Paul Nikorowicz. This would imply, according to Peter Piniński, that she had a stronger connection to Ferdinand de Rohan than Jules. The author of the present article informs us that Lascaris, a close confidant of the Stuarts in exile in Italy, worked tirelessly for decades on establishing an 'exchange programme' between the Stuart court, the Catholic Church and wealthy noble families in Poland for their mutual benefits. The network included the princes Radziwiłł and amongst their bankers, the Nikorowicz family. Over the last year, Peter Piniński has been searching through an extensive correspondence by Bishop Lascaris spanning the years 1719 to 1795, to unearth various appointments and alliances – Lascaris' legacy of diplomatic relations, which he has named *the Stuart-Radziwiłł circle*.

The editor hopes that the readers of *The Jacobite*, in appreciating Peter Piniński's extensive research, find the journey through Bishop Lascaris' personal correspondence both enjoyable and instructive, especially as it emerges that Prince Charles Edward Stuart could have found in Poland an alternative source of finances and troops needed for his Jacobite campaign in Scotland.

LASCARIS AND THE STUART-RADZIWIŁŁ CIRCLE, ROME-POLAND 1719-1795

BY PETER PINIŃSKI

INTRODUCTION

This article follows two publications by the author in *The Jacobite*, Winter edition 2023-24, and Summer edition 2024.²

The first article describes the life of Bishop Giorgio Lascaris (1706-1795) in Poland and Rome, and his close relationship with the exiled Stuart royal family, as well as with their closest Polish cousins the princes Radziwiłł. It demonstrates that, through his relationship with the Radziwiłłs as well as his ecclesiastical ties to the Polish Armenian-Catholic community, Lascaris knew the Nikorowicz family. One of the article's conclusions is that the 1803 marriage between Marie Victoire, the *Demoiselle de Thorigny* and Paul Nikorowicz, a son of the Radziwiłłs' banker, was the result of Lascaris' helping hand and that the event would have occurred in Rome when the paths of Lascaris and the father of Charlotte

² P. Piniński (2024), '*Bishop Giorgio Lascaris and the Stuarts*', *The Jacobite*, Number 173, Winter 2023-2024, pp47-64. P. Piniński (2024), '*The Roehenstart Family and The Death of Victoire Adélaïde d'Auvergne née Roehenstart*', *Ibid.*, Number 175, Summer 2024, pp. 25-37. See also P. Piniński, '*The author's reflections on Bonnie Prince Charlie – His Life, Family, Legend*' (2023), <https://www.falkirkmuir1746.scot/library>; and P. Piniński (2024), '*The Roehenstart Family and The Death of Victoire Adélaïde d'Auvergne née Roehenstart*', <https://www.falkirkmuir1746.scot/2024Papers> (both accessed 18.09.24).

Stuart's illegitimate children, Archbishop Prince Ferdinand de Rohan, finally crossed in 1795.

The second article describes evidence to show that Charlotte Stuart probably had four, not three, children by Ferdinand. One conclusion is that, of the four siblings who are candidates to be Charlotte Stuart's children, greatest certainty that she was indeed their mother relates to the youngest, Charles Roehenstart (1784-1854), as well as the oldest, Marie Victoire, the Demoiselle de Thorigny (1779-1836). The article also summarises extensive evidence which indicates that it was Ferdinand de Rohan who was Marie Victoire's biological father, not his eldest brother Jules-Hercule, Duke de Montbazon, who accepted paternity at her baptism (which obviously Ferdinand could not) and who had been Prince Henry Stuart's *aide-de-camp* in 1745.

For a fuller appreciation and understanding of this third publication it would be beneficial to refer to the first two articles. Only after having published them and appreciated the role which Lascaris played in the lives of the last Stuarts, and how close he was to the Radziwiłłs, did this author start looking for further material, beyond the 115 Lascaris letters in *The Stuart Papers* referred to in the first article.

This search resulted in finding 1,482 Lascaris letters to the Radziwiłłs in the Archive of Ancient Acts in Warsaw, ³ as well as four

³ Archiwum Główne Akt Dawnych in Warsaw (The Main Archive for Ancient Acts), Archiwum Radziwiłłów (Lascaris/Laskarys):
https://www.szukajwarchiwach.gov.pl/seria?p_p_id=Seria&p_p_lifecycle=0&_Seria_id_serii=736717&_Seria_nameofjsp=jednostki&_Seria_syg

other relevant sources.⁴ They add important new information to that presented in the first two articles and significantly reinforce their conclusions.

These letters have not been seriously researched before. Their scope is very wide. This article does not attempt to analyse all of their aspects and focuses strictly on two themes: the first is what Lascaris' letters tell us about those people in the Radziwiłłs' immediate entourage who were related to the fate of the two children Charles and Marie Victoire. It should be noted, that of the four children, only these two had early lives which were associated with Poland. The second theme is what the letters reveal about the Stuarts and their relationship with their cousins Radziwiłł. References to the Stuarts begin in 1740 and end in 1775 when Prince Charles Edward was still in Florence.

Lascaris' significance lies in the fact that from 1735 to 1795 no-one was closer than he to both the Stuarts and the Radziwiłłs. The relationship of these two families (Appendix A – Family relationships) is important for several reasons. It began with the marriage in 1719 of King James VIII/III (1688-1766) to Princess Clementina Sobieska (1701-1735), the granddaughter of King John III Sobieski. The Radziwiłłs, on the other hand, were descendants of the king's sister Catherine Sobieska. This meant that after the

natura=1%2F354%2F0%2F5&_Seria_tytul=Lascaris&_Seria_data_od=1700&_Seria_data_do=1800 (accessed 18.09.24). Almost all documents are in French and can be accessed on-line free of charge. All Lascaris' letters quoted in this article are accessible via this link and located according to date.

⁴ The four other relevant sources mentioned are those in Footnotes 11, 18, 19 and 20.

death in 1737 of Queen Clementina's father, Prince James Sobieski, both the Stuarts and the Radziwiłłs were deeply involved in the potentially lucrative Sobieski inheritance. Moreover, the Radziwiłłs had great potential in helping the Stuart Cause as one of Europe's richest families, connected to Louis XV and his Polish wife Marie Leszczyńska. They also commanded a large private militia and, from 1744, one half of the Polish armed forces.



FIGURE 1 – Europe circa 1750. Map edited by the author.

This article enlarges upon points made, and reinforces conclusions drawn, in the first two publications in *The Jacobite*. It focuses in more detail on members of the circle of people surrounding the Stuarts in Rome and the Radziwiłłs in Poland. It reveals the extent of the group's inter-connections, and the degree to which all members, the Stuarts and Radziwiłłs included, provided each other with mutual help. Finally, it explains that this

group functioned on an axis between Rome and Poland (Figure 1) which existed from 1719 until the early 19th century.

LASCARIS AND HIS LETTERS:

The vast majority of Lascaris' letters are in French, with a few in Polish or Latin. French was not Lascaris' first language – that was Italian. Nor was it the Radziwiłłs' – that was Polish. But it was their common one, being that of international diplomacy. The few in Polish relate to estate or church matters, though occasionally Lascaris wrote in Polish when he did not want an official who might open his correspondence to understand its content. For example, he did so when writing from Padua, criticizing the local authorities. Latin was seldom used and only for legal documents.

The letters span the years 1736-1790. The earliest is dated 24 July 1736 and was written in Warsaw to Prince Michael Radziwiłł (1702-1762). The last is dated 8 May 1790 and was sent from Rome to Prince Michael's son, Prince Charles (1734-1790), shortly before the latter's death, which marked the end of the line of the richest and most senior branch of the Radziwiłł family.

Lascaris' letters prove that he was in Poland for longer and more often than described in this author's first article. In 1735, with Archbishop James Augustynowicz, Lascaris taught at the Theatine College in Lwów.⁵ In 1738 he was in Rome when appointed Prefect of that College and when King James made him plenipotentiary for the Sobieski inheritance. His letters indicate that he was in Warsaw in July 1736 (where there was another Theatine College) and

⁵ The Theatines were a religious order of the Roman Catholic Church, founded in 1524 and noted for being aristocratic, exclusive and austere.

returned again in June and September 1737. He was also in Lwów in June 1738, in Warsaw in November 1739, and back in Lwów in March 1740. Those records show that he must have returned to Rome for his appointments as Theatine Prefect and Stuart Plenipotentiary either between September 1737 and June 1738, or between June 1738 and November 1739.



FIGURE 2 – Bishop Giorgio Lascaris.
Document property of the author.

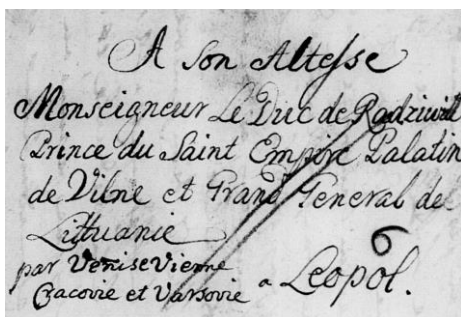


FIGURE 3 – Lascaris' letter to Prince Michael Radziwiłł dated 9 December 1752. Sygn. 1354058211-6 14, courtesy of the Archive for Ancient Acts, Warsaw.
(*Varsovie* is French for Warsaw, whilst *Leopold* refers to Lwów).

Throughout his time in Poland, Lascaris was keenly interested in the Theatine College in Warsaw, where his two nephews were studying. But he was particularly focused on the one in Lwów of which he was Prefect. There, his task was to cement the unions between the Vatican and the Greek-Catholic as well as Armenian-Catholic churches. When not in Lwów or Warsaw, Lascaris stayed at various Radziwiłł castles and palaces: Biała, Biały Kamień, Dubno, Nieśwież, Ołyka and Żółkiew. All straddle the confluence of borders between today's eastern Poland, the western part of the Ukraine, and south-west Belarus.

Lascaris also visited Radziwiłł manors near the city of Lwów, such as Witków, Żółtańce and Kulików. These were either ones of which the Lwów Theatine College held a lease, or were benefices of the abbey at Żółkiew or collegiate church at Ołyka. To both of the latter, Lascaris had been appointed by the Radziwiłłs. He also stayed in the cities of Warsaw, Kraków and Grodno and was a guest of great aristocratic families, such as the Zamoyskis in the city of Zamość or at their nearby palace in Klemensów. Similarly, he stayed with the princes Wiśniowiecki at their stately home in Wiśniowiec (in today's western Ukraine), and with the princes Sanguszko in Lubartów (near Lublin in today's eastern Poland). The latter two families were closely related to the Radziwiłłs.

Lascaris left Poland after eleven years and stayed briefly in Vienna in October 1749 on his way to Rome. There he remained until he returned to Lwów in March 1751 to stay for one year. By April 1752 he was in Wrocław, then back in Rome. Eight years later he again returned to Poland and was in Kraków in June 1760, Ołyka in August, Warsaw in October, Lwów in January 1761 and Zamość in March. He then left the country, reaching Venice in May 1761, and Rome soon after, where he remained until his death on 11

December 1795. Until the very end of his life he maintained a fervent interest in all matters Polish, and in the family of his nephew who remained in Poland, married a Polish noblewoman, and started a family there.

From 1735 to 1761, from the age of twenty-nine to fifty-five, Lascaris spent a total of fifteen years in Poland on four separate occasions. His letters show that he possessed an exceptionally deep knowledge of the country, spoke the language fluently and knew its most prominent aristocratic families.⁶ Above all, his closest relationship was with the Radziwiłłs, together with their trusted advisers: the Nikorowicz family (their Lwów-based bankers who imported luxury goods for them from Turkey and Persia), the latter's cousins Augustynowicz (for matters theological) and Bernatowicz (for administration), the Fergusson-Teppers (their Warsaw-based bankers), Pierre RiauCour (their Warsaw-based investment adviser and partner) and Francesco Giuliani (who imported goods for them from Turkey).⁷

Lascaris' correspondence covers international, Polish and Vatican politics, foreign military campaigns, social issues, non-Stuart connected Radziwiłł matters and family news. They mention his own finances and those of his ecclesiastical benefices, as well

⁶ In his correspondence, Lascaris demonstrates his excellent knowledge of Polish culture by referring to every noble holding senatorial positions (such as palatine or county governor, castellan) or senior county titles (such as chamberlain, *starosta* or high sheriff, judge, steward, cup-bearer, sword-bearer, etc), not by their surname, but by way of their office or rank and the region or town to which it related.

⁷ P. Piniński (2002), *The Stuarts Last Secret*, Tuckwell Press. See index of names for further detail concerning all those mentioned.

as petitions to promote his two nephews. His letters reveal his deep fondness for Poland. He also encouraged those close to him to pursue a career there and helped Poles to go and study in Italy as well as those visiting Rome. In particular his letters show how highly Lascaris was valued as their trusted confidant by both the Stuarts and the Radziwiłłs. For decades the two families sent each other large numbers of letters via him. His correspondence also reveals that he kept each family informed of the other's news.

Prior to considering the Stuart-Radziwiłł circle, a few facts are worth recalling. On 27 November 1746 Prince Charles Edward wrote to his father King James suggesting that a bride be found for his younger brother Henry from amongst Prince Michael Radziwiłł's daughters.⁸ In May 1752, having failed to convince Louis XV to launch another attempt to invade Britain and been expelled from France, Charles Edward was staying with Radziwiłł in Poland on one of his estates.⁹ It was logical for him to seek the help of his cousin at that time because shortly before, in 1751, Charles Edward had been in Berlin trying to gain the support of Frederick the Great. Yet in next-door Poland, Radziwiłł and his younger brother Prince Jerome (1715-1760) could field a private militia of over 6,000 armed and trained soldiers. That was the quantity of troops which Lochiel said in 1743 was essential for an uprising in Scotland to succeed. Michael Radziwiłł also had enormous wealth, being Poland's richest person, and from 1744 he commanded the

⁸ P. Piniński (2002), *op.cit.*, p. 53

⁹ *Correspondence de Benoit XIV*, ed. Emile de Heeckeren (1912), Vol. 2. Tsarina Elizabeth informed King George II, and wrote furiously to King Augustus III of Poland, demanding that Prince Charles Edward immediately be thrown out of the country.

Lithuanian Army.¹⁰ Furthermore, the shipping routes from the great port of Gdańsk meant that Scotland was well within reach. The fact that little came from Charles Edward's attempt to gain help from his cousin was because Michael Radziwiłł was indolent, got on badly with his younger brother Jerome, and was so rich that he had no motive for further gain, yet plenty to lose.

MEMBERS OF THE STUART-RADZIWIŁŁ CIRCLE:

The Stuart-Radziwiłł circle came into existence when King James arrived in Rome and married Princess Clementina Sobieska in 1719. Attention is drawn to one of the first members of this circle by Professor Aleksandra Skrzypietz.¹¹ She describes the moment in late 1725 when Queen Clementina left King James for two years:

Clementina considered that mothers are treated better in Turkey than the way she was treated in the home of her own husband. She therefore turned to Cardinal Giulio Alberoni, knowing that her husband had greater confidence in him than in many others. She took the decision to leave and live in a convent, and that she would be represented in talks with her husband by Alberoni or by

¹⁰ Poland was a commonwealth formed of the Kingdom of Poland and Grand Duchy of Lithuania. Each had its own army and its own Grand Hetman, with Radziwiłł holding that rank of commanding officer with regard to Lithuania.

¹¹ A. Skrzypietz and S. Jujeczka (2022), 'Maria Klementyna Sobieska – królowa i słuźebnica Boża, Katowice', p. 384. This work is based on research in the Sobieski Archive in the National Historical Archive of Belarus in Minsk. It is currently being translated for an English publication.

the General of the Jesuits, Michelangelo Tamburini, whom he also trusted.

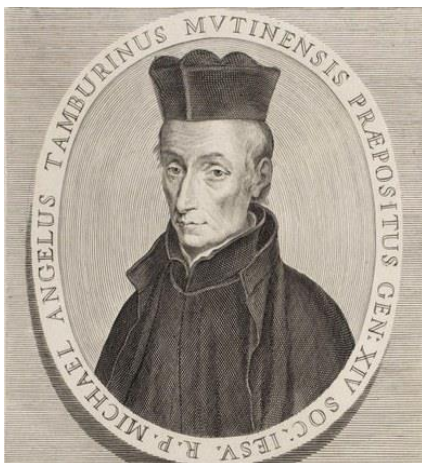


FIGURE 4. Michelangelo Tamburini, General of the Jesuits, confidant of King James III and Queen Clementina.
Document property of the author.

King James not only trusted Tamburini (1648-1730), but the two men had some history in common. For Tamburini had been the personal theologian of Rinaldo d'Este (1655-1737) who became Duke of Modena in 1694. Because Rinaldo was so much younger than his brother Alfonso IV (King James' grandfather), Rinaldo and James' mother were the same age. Then, in 1717, James fell in love with Rinaldo's daughter Benedetta Maria. He asked for her hand in marriage, but her father refused.

Tamburini had a nephew to whom he taught theology. He was Fortunato (1683-1761), the son of Simone Tamburini who was also connected to the Duke of Modena, as his councilor. Fortunato

Tamburini (Figure 5) became a cardinal in 1743 and in 1747 was appointed Prefect of the Sacred Congregation of Rites as well as of the Dicastery for the Eastern Churches and assigned to the congregation of *Propaganda Fide*. In 1752 he became a Protector of the Greek College in Rome. Giorgio Lascaris, on the other hand, had been appointed by the congregation of *Propaganda Fide* as Prefect of The Theatine College. His mission was to strengthen Rome's union with the Eastern Churches, whose Greek-Catholic and Armenian-Catholic cathedrals were in Lwów. In 1750, he persuaded Benedict XIV to issue the encyclical *Imposito Nibis*, allowing the Latin rite in Greek-Catholic churches without a consecrated altar. Put simply, Giorgio Lascaris and Fortunato Tamburini were close colleagues who worked together from 1750 until 1761.



FIGURE 5. Cardinal Fortunato Tamburini, Lascaris' colleague.
Document property of the author.

It emerges from Lascaris' letters that he took two nephews with him to Poland: Teodoro (1736-1785) and Giorgio (born c.1738).¹² He cannot have taken them with him in 1738, as stated in this author's first article, because the older was only two at that time, and the younger a newly born baby. His letters reveal that they studied at the Theatine College in Warsaw, so he must have brought them with him in 1751, when they were fifteen and thirteen respectively. It was then, in mid-September 1752, that Lascaris began to petition Prince Michael Radziwiłł to help him and his nephews gain the Polish *indygenat*.¹³

¹² It is not clear when the younger nephew Giorgio died. Lascaris refers to his '*nephews*' on 3 December 1763. But on 12 April 1774 he writes of Teodoro as his '*unique nephew*', after which there is no further mention of Giorgio. Therefore, Giorgio must have died between 1763 and 1774.

¹³ Obtaining the *indygenat* was a very important privilege. It was an act of parliament whereby a foreign noble was acknowledged as a member of the Polish nobility. That brought with it the right to own land, hold county offices, vote and have the greatest opportunity to develop a career in politics or the army. It is clear that Lascaris and his family were not wealthy, otherwise there would have been no point for him to bring his nephews to Poland and then do his utmost to promote Teodoro's career as an officer under the protection of Prince Michael Radziwiłł and his son Prince Charles. Bishop Giorgio presumably gained the *indygenat* on or before 28 August 1756, as that is when he begins to sign himself '*Lascaris Godziemba*'. The latter appellation is the name of one of Poland's heraldic clans. The *indygenat* was often granted on the basis that members of one of the heraldic clans would adopt the petitioner into his clan, entitling him to bear their coat of arms. Polish arms were not individual, but common to all members of their heraldic clan who, from the mid-fifteenth century on, also had individual fixed surnames, usually taken from the name of their principal estate. The *indygenat* for Teodoro was granted in 1764.

Lascaris' letter to Radziwiłł from Rome dated 22 August 1750 tells us how together they provided support to Poles:

*Ciedzielewski has greatly profited, and all that is required is for him to spend two or three months under the famous Tartini in Padua, when he will stay with my friends and relations in Lombardy.*¹⁴

Thus, we see that Lascaris and Tamburini were from noble but not wealthy families, who became close colleagues, and both were members of the Stuart-Radziwiłł circle. We see that Lascaris encouraged fellow Italians to pursue a career in Poland and helped Poles to come and study in Italy. It therefore comes as no surprise to find in Lwów a Brygitta Tamburini, who died there on 11 November 1767 aged three.¹⁵ Nor is it surprising that, in the same city, a Gregory Augustynowicz was baptised on 22 March 1777, whose mother was Margaret, whose godfather was not only Margaret's father but also Radziwiłł's banker Gregory Nikorowicz (1713-1789), and whose godmother was Jadwiga Tamburini.¹⁶ Brygitta's parents are not recorded. Neither is Jadwiga's husband, although she was probably Brygitta's mother, for no other Tamburinis appear in earlier records.

¹⁴ Giuseppe Tartini (1692-1770) was a baroque composer, violinist, teacher and theoretician of music

¹⁵ Archiwum Główne Akt Dawnych in Warsaw: Lwów, 1767, PL 1 301 758 007, 12

¹⁶ Ibid., Akty Chrztu, Parafia Lwów, 22.03.1777. Jadwiga is such a typically Polish name that one may assume this was a mixed Italian and Polish marriage. Whether Jadwiga married her Tamburini husband in Poland or Italy is unclear, there being no record in the archive.

It is also significant that the priest who conducted this 1777 baptism was Abbé Mark Nikorowicz (1749-1820). He was Gregory's son and Margaret's brother, and he had only just returned from studying in Rome where he became a Doctor of Theology on 28 July 1775.¹⁷

The present author's article, published in *The Jacobite*, Winter edition 2023-24, presumed that Mark's stay in Rome was arranged by Prince Charles Radziwiłł and Lascaris. This was based on letters from Gregory Nikorowicz to Radziwiłł. For example, he wrote from Lwów on 30 October 1781 of *'half a century of my life during which I have had the honour of being graced by your Serene Highness'*. His son Mark had written previously to Radziwiłł from Rome on 26 April 1775, describing:

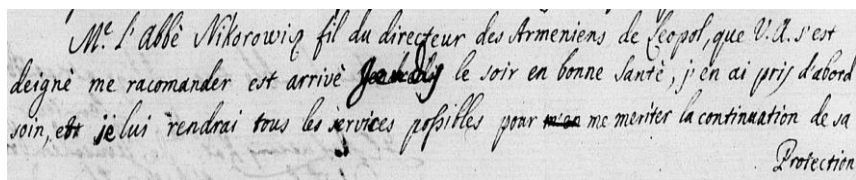
*[...] the grace and protection Your Highness has always extended to my whole family [...] only I know how much I have benefitted thanks to you, and how many times I have had the honour of treating with you.*¹⁸

The Radziwiłł letters written by Lascaris prove this earlier presumption was correct. For in Lascaris' letter from Rome to

¹⁷ The original diploma of Mark's Doctorate of Theology is in the Ossolineum, Wrocław, Poland, Dept. of Manuscripts: Nikorowicz, ksiądz Marek 1775

¹⁸ Archiwum Główne Akt Dawnych in Warsaw, Archiwum Radziwiłł (Nikorowicz), both letters are in the 70 Nikorowicz letters to the Radziwiłłs, catalogued by sender's name and date.
https://www.szukajwarchiwach.gov.pl/seria?p_p_id=Seria&p_p_lifecycle=0&Seria_id_serii=736717&Seria_nameofjsp=jednostki&Seria_sygnatura=1%2F354%2F0%2F5&Seria_tytul=nikorowicz&Seria_data_od=1700&Seria_data_do=1800 (accessed 18.09.24)

Radziwiłł dated 23 April 1774, he writes: *'The Abbé [Mark] Nikorowicz, son of [Gregory] the director of the Armenians of Lwów, whom Your Highness deigned to recommend to me, arrived here on Thursday evening in good health; I took care of everything at once, and will render him all possible services so as to continue to merit your ducal protection.'* (Figure 6)



*'M^e l'abbé Nikorowicz fil du directeur des Arméniens de Lwopol, que V^{re} A^{te} s'est
deigné me racomander est arrivé ~~jeudi~~ le soir en bonne santé, j'en ai pris d'abord
soin, et je lui rendrai tous les services possibles pour ~~me~~ me mériter la continuation de sa
Protection*

FIGURE 6. Lascaris' letter to Radziwiłł referring to Abbé Mark Nikorowicz's arrival in Rome. Sygn.1354058211-8 116, courtesy of the Archive for Ancient Acts, Warsaw.

Mark Nikorowicz's younger brother was Paul (1751-1810). It was he who in 1803 married Charlotte Stuart's eldest daughter Marie Victoire. He was her first husband. However, he being much older, she was his fourth and last wife. A letter of his father Gregory reveals that Paul Nikorowicz followed him into finance and at the time of his first marriage had been living abroad.¹⁹ That letter was addressed to Emperor Joseph II, therefore *'abroad'* meant outside Poland and the realm of the Habsburg monarchy.

Paul had evidently, and not unnaturally, joined his elder brother Mark in Italy, because his first wife, and the mother of his first

¹⁹ Landesarchiv, Vienna, Ritterstand, Nikorowicz Grzegorz, 11.08.1781, seiten 23-24; 36. The Nikorowicz title of Ritter was the equivalent of a baronetcy.

three children, was none other than Caterina Tamburini.²⁰ In other words, she was from the same family as the Stuarts' trusted Jesuit Michelangelo and Lascaris' colleague Cardinal Francesco (see Figure 7). Therefore, and this is a fundamental point, when Paul Nikorowicz married Charlotte Stuart's daughter Marie Victoire in 1803, he had already been linked to the Stuarts for decades, through his first wife's family of Tamburini, Lascaris and the Radziwiłłs.

Gregory Nikorowicz's letter describes his two other sons. The eldest was John (1746-1830). He became the owner of two Radziwiłł estates, Grzybowice and Zboiska, mentioned in Lascaris' letter of 7 June 1741. He was also the husband of Sophie Augustynowicz, a close relation of the coadjutor Archbishop of Lwów James Augustynowicz (1701-1783), described to Prince

²⁰ Biblioteka Jagiellońska in Kraków, sw.351312, Potwierdzenie szlachectwa Augusta Józefa Marii Romaszkan, 1882, manuscript/rkp. dyp. 614 . This reference is for Baron August Romaszkan's 1882 confirmation of nobility. He was the great-grandson of Paul ritter von Nikorowicz and Caterina née Tamburini. His sixteen armorial quarterings include the coat of arms of Caterina's parents, Giuseppe Tamburini and Maria Legnani. The Legnanis were from Piumazzo, to the south-east of Modena, whereas the Tamburinis were from the mountains of Modena. The *Libro d'Oro* records only one noble family named Tamburini: <https://www.collegio-araldico.it/wpcontent/uploads/2020/03/LIBRODORONOBILTAITALIANA.pdf>, p.313, accessed 6.10.2024. At different periods their arms varied slightly, which was often the case, but its principal heraldic charge was always a drum, as on the engraving of Cardinal Tamburini and Giuseppe's quartering. Caterina Nikorowicz née Tamburini died as a consequence of childbirth in 1783/84.

Michael Radziwiłł by Lascaris on 6 May 1743 as '*such a good friend of Your Highness*' (Figure 8).



FIGURE 7. Four of the sixteen heraldic quarterings on the 1882 proof of nobility for Baron August Romaszkan, showing his great-grandparents Paul Nikorowicz and Caterina Tamburini, as well as their parents. Courtesy of the Jagiellonian Library in Kraków.

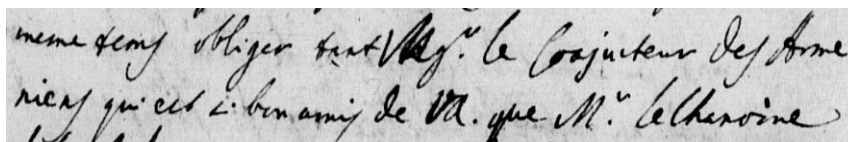


FIGURE 8. Lascaris' letter mentioning Archbishop James Augustynowicz as '*such a good friend*' of Radziwiłł. Sygn. 1354058211-2 123, courtesy of the Archive for Ancient Acts, Warsaw.

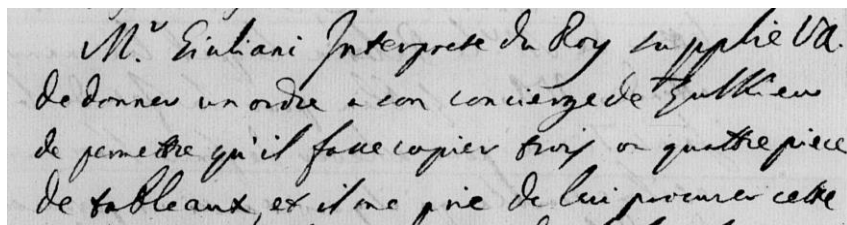


FIGURE 9. Lascaris' letter of 27 May 1741 to Radziwiłł describing Francesco Giuliani as 'Interpreter to the King'. Sygn. 1354058211-193, courtesy of the Archive for Ancient Acts, Warsaw.

John Nikorowicz was attached to the Polish Embassy in Constantinople from 1763-1772 where he was one of the first four pupils at the Polish Oriental School. Two of his fellow students were the sons of Francesco Giuliani, Pietro and Enrico. Giuliani was a Neapolitan polyglot merchant who became the official translator to the Polish Embassy in Constantinople in 1736. He was subsequently ennobled by Augustus III in 1758 for services to the Polish Crown.²¹ Giuliani also belonged to the Stuart-Radziwiłł circle and is mentioned frequently in Lascaris' letters (Figure 9). And this Giuliani connection lasted right up to 1835 when Charlotte Stuart's son Charles, namely Paul Nikorowicz's brother-in-law, received money from the sale of a '*grand and magnificent palace*' in Vienna belonging to Theresa Giuliani.²²

Gregory Nikorowicz's youngest son was Joseph (1757-1833). He became an 'Excellency' as an Austrian imperial privy councilor, as well as President of the Court of Appeal and of the Senate of the

²¹ P. Piniński (2002), *op.cit.*, p. 224

²² *Ibid.*, pp. 223-224

Republic of Kraków. At the time when Prince Michael Radziwiłł's two sons Prince Charles (1734-1790) and Prince Jerome jnr (1759-1786) were still alive, Joseph acted for them in Vienna just as Lascaris had done for them in Rome. Lascaris' letters reveal that not only he, but also King James and Cardinal Henry, did all that they could to facilitate Charles Radziwiłł's divorce in 1756-60. So too did Joseph with regard to Jerome Radziwiłł's divorce in 1786.²³

It should also be noted, that Gregory Nikorowicz's mother was from Lwów's oldest Polish-Armenian family, called Bernatowicz (Figure 10), and his cousin James was another member of the Stuart-Radziwiłł circle.

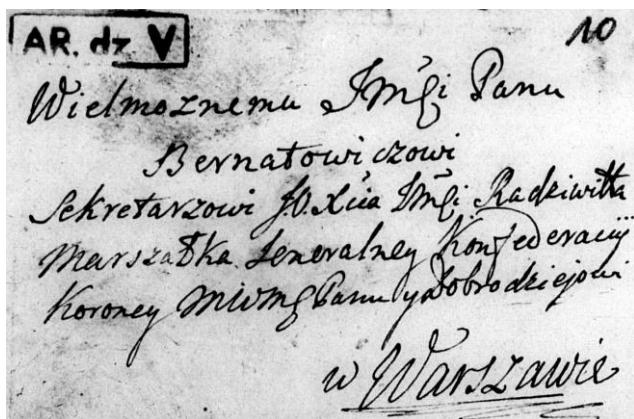


FIGURE 10. Teodoro Lascaris' letter of 4 March 1764 to Bernatowicz, addressing him as 'Secretary of Prince [Charles] Radziwiłł'. Sygn. 1354058210-12 40, courtesy of the Archive for Ancient Acts, Warsaw.

²³ *Ibid.*, p. 180. Divorce in the context of the late 18th century meant annulment.

Frequently mentioned in Lascaris' letters is the name Riaucour (Figure 11). It refers to two brothers of French origin, Pierre (1694-1768) and Louis (1700-1777).

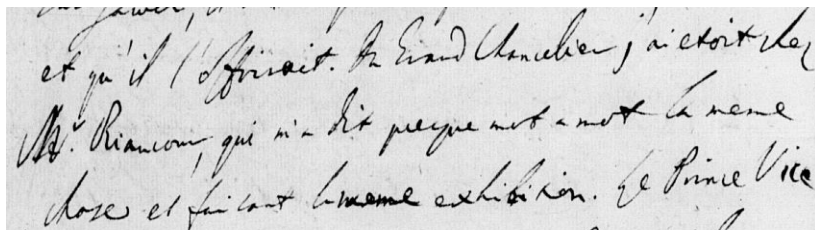


FIGURE 11. Lascaris' letter of 6 January 1744 to Prince Michael Radziwiłł saying that 'he was at the home of Monsieur [Pierre] Riaucour'. Sygn. 1354058211-3 22, courtesy of the Archive for Ancient Acts, Warsaw.

The first conducted business transactions for the Radziwiłłs on a Warsaw – Western Europe axis. The second was Bishop of Łuck who, at the Radziwiłłs' request, was appointed priest to their Biała estate where Lascaris was a frequent guest. Pierre Riaucour also owned the 'Under the Four Winds' Palace in Warsaw.²⁴ In 1765 he sold it to the Radziwiłłs' Warsaw-based bankers, Fergusson-Tepper (Figure 12).

This author's article published in *The Jacobite*, Summer edition 2024, quoted the letters of Gordon and Morvern which appeared in *The Oban Times* in 1939.²⁵ They stated that Charlotte Stuart's

²⁴ The palace *Pod Czterema Wiatrami* still stands on Warsaw's Długa Street

²⁵ P. Piniński (2024), 'The Roehenstart family and the death of the Victoire Adélaïde Roehenstart', *The Jacobite*, Summer edition 2024,

son and daughter ‘Marie’ were ‘*secretly adopted by a family in Warsaw named Fergusson-Tepper*’. Gordon and Morvern clearly had no idea of the Fergusson-Teppers’ importance within the Stuart-Radziwiłł circle. Their mention of such a significant name therefore stamps this with the hallmark of authenticity, indicating that their ancestors must have heard it from Charlotte Stuart’s son Charles before his death in Perthshire in 1854.

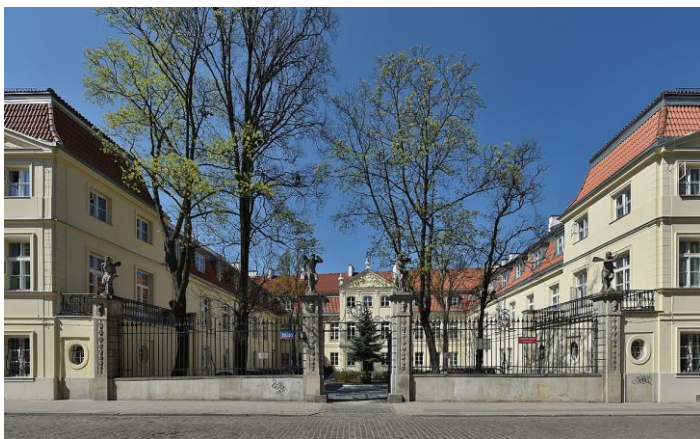


FIGURE 12 – The Fergusson-Tepper Palace on Długa Street in Warsaw, known as the ‘Under the Four Winds Palace’, which the family bought from Pierre Riaucour. Photograph property of the author.

Number 175, p. 33. For further reading on these letters see P. Piniński (2002), *op.cit.*, pp. 158-182; P. Piniński (2010), ‘*Bonnie Prince Charlie – A Life*’, Amberley, pp. 130-131, 134; P. Piniński (2022), ‘*Bonnie Prince Charlie – His Life, Family, Legend*’, NMS Publishing (National Museums Scotland), pp. 162-163, 215, 226. Note that the use of the name ‘Marie Victoire’ is this author’s choice for the sake of simplicity. This is because her baptismal entry shows that her name was ‘Marie’, and in later documents she was called either ‘Marie’ or ‘Victoire’; see P. Piniński (2022), *op.cit.*, illustrations pp. 155, 165, 174.

LASCARIS' LETTERS AND THE STUARTS:

Lascaris' letters reveal the mutual interest the Stuarts and Radziwiłłs, as cousins, had in each other. On 24 January 1746 Lascaris commented to Prince Michael Radziwiłł (Figure 13) that *'The affairs of the Prince of Wales are not going well'*.

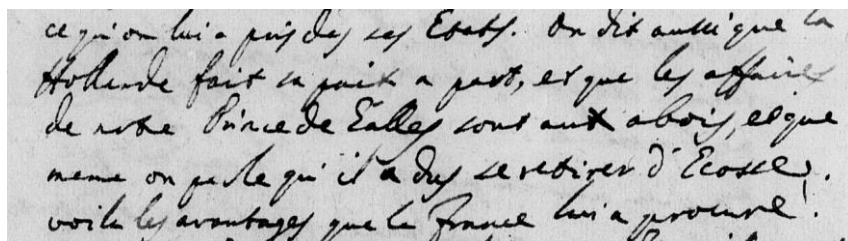


FIGURE 13. Lascaris' letter to Prince Michael Radziwiłł of 25 May 1746. Sygn.1354058211-4 42, courtesy of the Archive for Ancient Acts, Warsaw.

Then on 25 May he wrote:

The affairs of our Prince of Wales are desperate, and it is said that he is forced to retire from Scotland. Such are the advantages France has given him!

On 31 December 1749, Lascaris wrote:

His Majesty is well, and so is the Cardinal York. As for the Prince of Wales, one speaks nothing of him and it is forbidden to mention him to the King, nor do we know where he is, yet some claim he is in Scotland.

On 26 April 1750 he stated:

As regards the Prince of Wales there is nothing new, only a brief letter which arrived fifteen days ago, giving neither date nor place, just telling His Majesty that he is well.

On the 22 August he added:

The refuge of the Prince Edward²⁶ is constantly unknown to everyone, even the King his father and the Cardinal his brother, who from time to time receive undated letters which mention only that he is in good health. Both of them instruct me to assure Your Highness and all the ducal family of their Royal goodwill. (Figure 14)

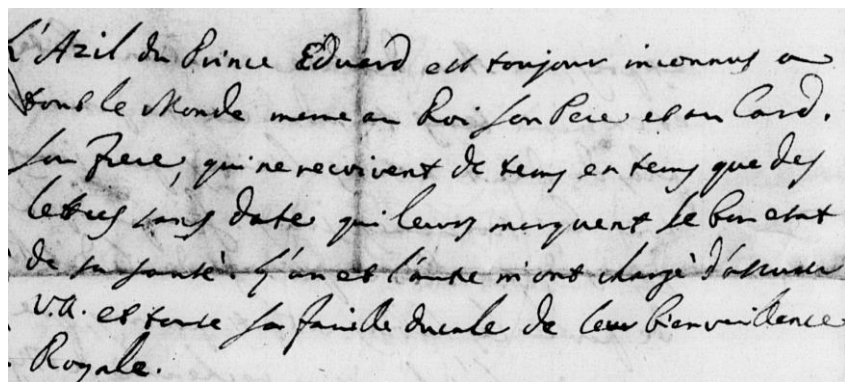


FIGURE 14. Lascaris' letter sent from Rome to Prince Michael Radziwiłł, dated 22 August 1750. Sygn. 1354058211-5 56, courtesy of the Archive for Ancient Acts, Warsaw.

²⁶ French speakers in the 18th century invariably referred to Prince Charles Edward as *le Prince Edouard*

By 27 October, Lascaris was complaining:

How can one succeed in this matter so long as the older Prince is so well hidden from sight and the place of his residence unknown to the King his father [...] it seems with evidence, that the signature of the Prince of Wales will presently be even more necessary, being that of the person principally interested in this matter.

Lascaris negotiated Cardinal Henry's return to Rome from Bologna after a bitter argument with King James on the topic of Henry's ambiguous relationship with young priest Giovanni Lercari. Such was Lascaris' tact that Henry placed complete trust in him.

On 8 July 1752 he wrote to Prince Michael Radziwiłł:

He [Henry] would like me to come and reside in the Royal Palace, dine at his table and drive with him in his carriage, but that would be too much too soon and give rise to jealousy.'

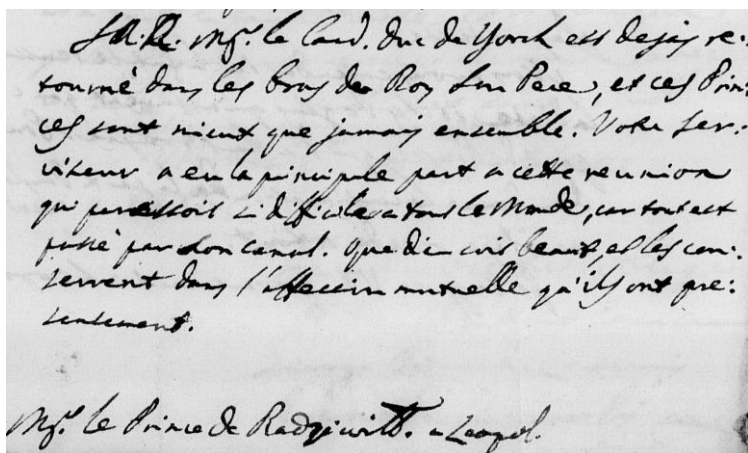
By 14 October he wrote:

'This Prince [King James] continues to be afflicted by the absence of his two sons, the first of whom continues to remain so hidden that there is no news of him, whilst the second is still in Bologna, although he is thinking of returning to Rome.

On 9 December 1752 Lascaris informed Radziwiłł (Figure 15):

His Royal Highness the Cardinal Duke of York has returned to the arms of the King his father, and these Princes now get on better than ever before. And it was your humble servant who

played the principal part in this reunion which seemed so difficult to everyone.



M. le. m. le. Com. Duc de York est déjà re-
 tourné dans les bras de Roy son Père, et ces Prin-
 ces sont réunis que jamais ensemble. Votre ser-
 viteur a eu la principale part à cette réunion
 qui paroitroit si difficile à tout le monde, car tout est
 joint par son canal. Que dieu unis bientôt, et les con-
 servent dans l'affection mutuelle qu'ils ont pré-
 sentement.

M. le Prince de Radziwiłł. - Leopol.

FIGURE 15. Lascaris' letter from Rome to Prince Michael Radziwiłł dated 9 December 1752. Sygn. 1354058211-6 11, courtesy of the Archive for Ancient Acts, Warsaw.

At the time of the Elibank Plot, one month after the execution of Dr Archie Cameron, Lascaris wrote to Radziwiłł the following words from Rome on 14 July 1753:

There is talk here that King George's death has occurred in England, and because his grandson is a minor, one may foresee dissention between the Parliament and Regency which may open a path for the supporters of King James to replace him on the Throne. If this accident is true, then it would appear that we do, after all, have news of the Prince of Wales, Edward.

On 8 September he added:

Of the Prince of Wales, one still knows nothing of his whereabouts, but it is nonetheless believed that the people recently arrested in Scotland were his emissaries [...] which proves that the Prince rests not, but is working towards finding a way to the throne of his father.

During the period 1757-1759 the French again wanted to use Prince Charles Edward Stuart, inviting him to lead their attack on Minorca and head a planned invasion of Ireland. On 8 May 1757 Lascaris wrote: [...] *It is said the Prince of Wales is presently in negotiations with the Marshal de Belle-Isle, to make a descent upon England or Scotland.*

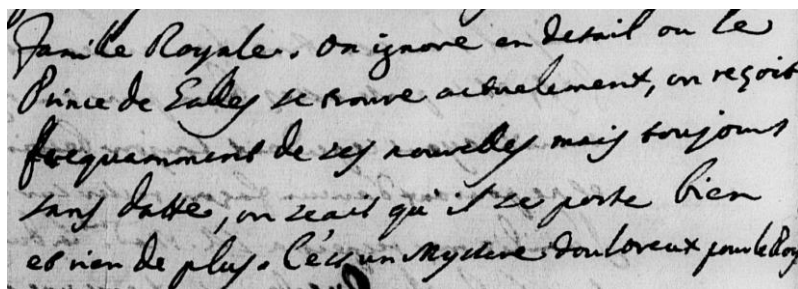
A photograph of a handwritten letter in French. The text is written in a cursive script on aged paper. The visible text reads: "Famille Royale. On ignore en detail ou le Prince de Galles se trouve actuellement, on reçoit frequemment de ses nouvelles mais toujours sans date, on sait qu'il se porte bien et rien de plus. C'est un mystere douloureux pour les".

FIGURE 16. Lascaris letter to Prince Michael Radziwiłł of 12 October 1757. Sygn. 1354058211-7 73, courtesy of the Archive for Ancient Acts, Warsaw.

But by 3 September he wrote to Radziwiłł in frustration (Figure 16):

I believe an internal revolution of those countries is the only way to replace His Majesty on the Throne, in the person of the

Prince of Wales, who, thank God, is well and sends news from time to time to the King his father, however without giving the place where he is staying.’ On 12 October he added: ‘One does not know in detail where the Prince of Wales is at present, receiving his news frequently, but always without a date, saying that he is in good health, but nothing more. It is a sad mystery for the King.

Then, in a letter of 16 June 1759 Lascaris wrote to Radziwiłł the following:

The King has not been too well for the past year, having fallen into a sort of languor, but His Royal Highness [Henry] is a marvel.

Yet on 20 May 1760:

The King of Great Britain is no longer in a state to undertake anything and seems almost dead, having already received all the Sacraments [...] and with Your Highness’ permission, in all confidence, the offices of the Cardinal Duke of York and Cardinal Paolucci are hardly adequate for this sort of a matter.
(Figure 17)

King James rallied but fell sick again in 1764. He passed away on the first day of 1766. Prince Charles Edward then returned to Rome and later, in 1771, his cousins Charles, 4th Duke of FitzJames and Louis XV, as well as the Duke d’Aiguillon, hatched the plan which led to the prince’s marriage of 1772 to Princess Louise zu Stolberg-Gedern. His still-estranged daughter Charlotte travelled from France to Rome to protest. It had the effect of infuriating her father

and irritating her uncle. But once again, Lascaris' diplomatic hand smoothed things over for the Stuarts.

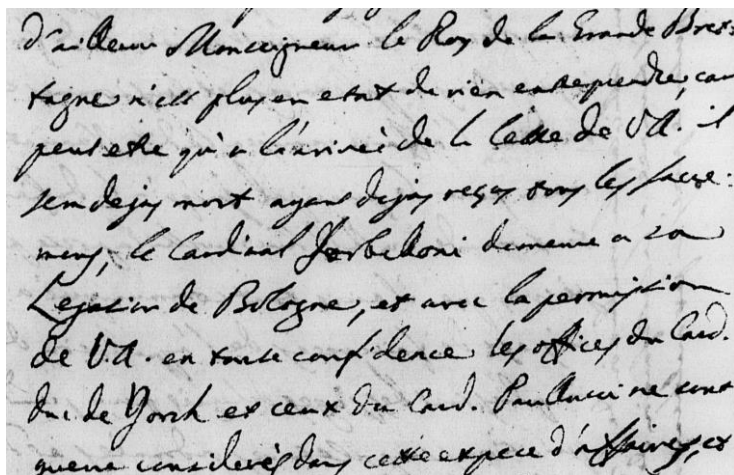


FIGURE 17. Lascaris' letter sent from Vienna to Prince Michael Radziwiłł, dated 20 May 1760. Sygn. 1354058211-7 170, courtesy of the Archive for Ancient Acts, Warsaw.

One of his last Stuart-related letters is from 15 January 1775 (Figure 18), during the conclave from October 1774 until February the next year.

As Henry was busy as vice-dean of the College of Cardinals, Lascaris urged Prince Charles Radziwiłł to delay coming to Rome, because:

[...] not having a Pope, and the Cardinals being locked in the Conclave, it would remain to me alone to show all the honours and pleasures due to Your Highness' rank, particularly given

the absence of the King and Queen of England who are in Florence and do not think of returning here.

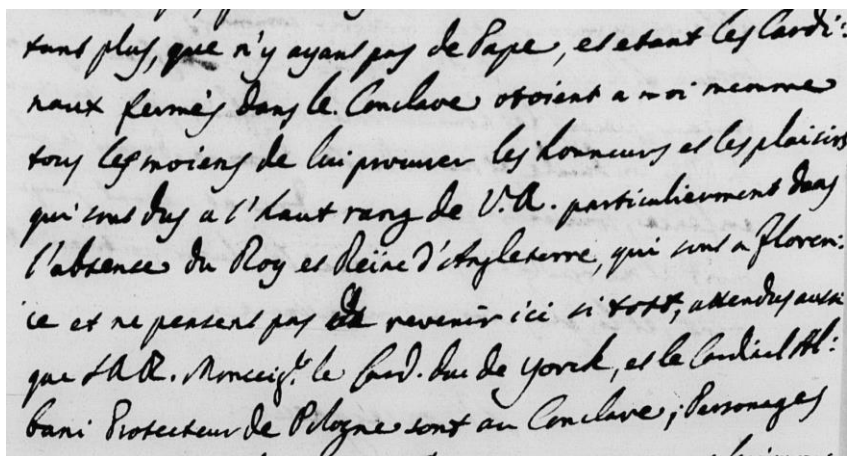


FIGURE 18. Lascaris' letter from Rome to Prince Charles Radziwiłł, dated 15 January 1775. Sygn. 1354058211-8 149, courtesy of the Archive for Ancient Acts, Warsaw.

Eventually Charles Edward did return, at the end of 1785. He had separated from his wife Louise in 1780 and formalised their separation in 1784. He had also recognised his daughter Charlotte, made her his heir and created her Duchess of Albany in 1783. He then astonished her a year later by inviting her to come and live with him, which she did. But, between 1779 and 1784, then still with no hope of being recognised by her father, she had secretly given birth to her illegitimate children by Prince Ferdinand de Rohan, Archbishop of Cambrai.

Prince Charles Edward died in 1788, followed by Charlotte in 1789, and their Radziwiłł cousin Charles in 1790. In 1795 Ferdinand

de Rohan fled the terror of the French Revolution and arrived in Rome. Unknown to each other before then, Ferdinand's and Lascaris' paths finally crossed. They could not fail to meet, both having been so intimate with the Stuarts, and both being high-ranking prelates. By then, Charlotte Stuart's children Charles and Marie Victoire had found safety outside France, but Ferdinand was in a desperate financial position and needed help to secure their future. Ferdinand, therefore, had the strongest of motives to seek assistance for Charlotte Stuart's children, and Lascaris had the motive and means to help.

Poland was a haven for French refugees, including Louis XVIII and the exiled royal family. At that time, apart from the elderly Lascaris, the last surviving members of the Stuart-Radziwiłł circle were the Nikorowicz family in Lwów and the Fergusson-Teppers in Warsaw who were colleagues as co-bankers to the Radziwiłłs. In seeking help for Charlotte's children, Ferdinand could not admit he was their father, but six years after Charlotte's death he could reveal that she was their mother. None of the 1,482 Lascaris letters mention the name Rohan, yet they would have done had he known the family. So, what mattered here was the Stuart connection. For Lascaris had decades of loyalty to the Stuarts and the Radziwiłłs. So too, did the Nikorowicz and Fergusson-Tepper families. Such loyalty was a strong motive to help Charlotte Stuart's children in the late 1790s, and an introduction by Lascaris to the wealthy Nikorowicz and Fergusson-Tepper families was exactly what Ferdinand needed.

Thus, in 1803, Marie Victoire married Paul Nikorowicz, son of the Radziwiłłs' banker and widower of Caterina Tamburini from the family of the Stuarts' trusted Jesuit Michelangelo and Lascaris' colleague Francesco. Earlier, Ferdinand is recorded as having been

in Warsaw in 1799 ²⁷, where Marie Victoire and her brother Charles were said to have been '*secretly adopted by a family [...] named Fergusson-Tepper*'. And by 1807, Charlotte Stuart's son Charles had been given an unusually privileged position with the family of General Prince Alexander of Württemberg. His family had been clients of the Radziwiłłs' bankers Fergusson-Tepper, who had bought their Warsaw palace from the Radziwiłłs' business partner Pierre Riaucour (Figure 12).

CONCLUSION:

Bishop Giorgio Lascaris' letters prove the existence of an intimate and inter-connected circle of people surrounding the Stuarts in Rome and the Radziwiłłs in Poland. Lascaris knew every one of them. He was the go-between for this mutual self-help group as he travelled or corresponded between Rome and Poland. He advised the Stuarts and Radziwiłłs on their most private affairs and kept both families in touch with the other, relaying countless letters over decades between them. He helped the Stuarts with regard to the Radziwiłłs on the matter of the Sobieski inheritance and helped the Radziwiłłs when they needed Stuart support regarding the Pope, to confirm the charter for an abbey, or push through a divorce. He enabled Italians to travel to Poland, such as his nephews Teodoro and Giorgio, as well as the Stuarts' trusted Tamburinis. And he arranged for Poles to go to Italy, such as the musician Ciedzielewski, or the Abbé Nikorowicz whose brother married a Tamburini. And the evidence points to the fact that Lascaris put Ferdinand de Rohan in touch with the Radziwiłłs' co-

²⁷ H. Sage, '*Une République de Trois Mois: le Prince de Rohan-Guéméné*', Verviers 1909

bankers Nikorowicz and Fergusson-Tepper, thereby securing a future for two of Charlotte Stuart's children.

Benefits accruing to members of the Stuart-Radziwiłł circle lasted even as late as 1835, when Charlotte Stuart's son received money from the sale of a Giuliani property in Vienna.

Lascaris' letters also provide a remarkable and broad context to the history of the Stuarts' in exile. They provide firm dates for events such as the last years of illness prior to King James' death in 1766.²⁸ They give an insight into the atmosphere surrounding the Stuart family. And they do this from the perspective of a sympathetic loyal observer, rather than that of a Hanoverian spy whose information was often obtained from second-hand sources and tailored to its addressee.

Moreover, Lascaris' letters emphasise how potentially important to the Stuarts were their Polish cousins Radziwiłł. It is

²⁸ To emphasise just how close Lascaris was to the Stuarts, there is an interesting comment made by King James' last *majordomo* Sir John Constable, which he wrote on 15 September 1765 that he: '*used to meet Lascaris every evening in the king's antechamber*', with the implication that it occurred over a long period (*The Stuart Papers*, 429/112). Furthermore, Sir John died in 1775 and made the following bequest in his will: '*In reason of legacy, and as a memory of the good service shared with Monsignor the Illustrious and Reverend Patriarch Lascaris, to him a Ring with an ancient carnelian stone, so be it*' (*Archivio di Stato di Roma/30 notai capitolini/Ufficio 33 - Notaio Cicconi/vol 606/ff. 155-6 - Aperitio Testi b:m: Equitis Jōis Constable*). I am indebted to Prof. Edward Corp, Stefano Baccolo and Dr Calum Cunningham for this information.

revealing that Prince Charles Edward suggested to his father in 1746 that he might request the hand of one of Radziwiłł's daughters as a bride for his brother Henry. Even though the prince had not met his Polish cousins before he sailed for Scotland in 1745, he already understood their significance, wealth and influence when still young, in Rome, prior to 1744 (Figure 19).



FIGURE 19 – *Prince Charles Edward Stuart, June 1737, painted in Venice by Rosalba Carriera. Property of the author.*



Those on a magenta background were linked by their close relationship with Bishop Iascaris © Peter Pininski 2025

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Figure on rear page:
Engraving of Prince Michael Radziwiłł (1702-1762),
courtesy of the *Zakład Narodowy im. Ossolińskich*, Wrocław, Poland



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