

Witch 012; Jacotte Colin 1

B 2512; witch 012, Jacotte femme Demenge Romary Petit Colin, de Seuche

13 January 1594; Nicolas Pironel, prévôt d'Arches, having been informed that Jannon, femme d'Arnould Jacquel de Moulin, was sick and maintained that her illness had been given her by Jacotte femme de Demengeon Romary Petit Colin de Seuch, went to take Jannon's testimony.

She said that on December 22 she had been returning from 'la grange de St. Jean Chouart', where she had been sent to visit some sick people and see if it was 'de contagion'. At Seuch met Jacotte, who asked her about illness, and she replied that it was not plague. As soon as she got home witness became ill and had since been unable to stir outside house; believed Jacotte, who had a bad reputation, had given her the illness. 'Que toutesfois ce qu'elle en a dict presentement n'est pour s'en plaindre, ains en donner advertissement seulement; et que sy ladite Jacotte la vouloit guerir, elle luy pardonneroit, et n'en parleroit jamais.'

14 January; husband of accused, known as Demengeon Alix, came before Prévôt to demand reparation for charge against his wife, or that Jannon be forced to prove that she had given the sickness.

28 January 1594; Procureur General des Vosges orders Prévôt to investigate 'vie, fame et deportements' of Jacotte.

14 February 1594; informations preparatoires

(1) Jean Collusse demeurant a Ranfaing, c. 50

Had lived 14 years at Seuch, and it was for more than 20 years that he had heard Jacotte reputed a witch; her mother had already had this reputation, although she had not been executed. Had heard her called witch by her husband's brother George Gilles Geoffroy. Her stepchildren had told him that when their father had been fishing on river their stepmother had driven them away from house as they returned from veillées by night, and they were then chased by a great black beast like a bear. They were now in Allemaigne. Some 10 or 12 years earlier witness had bought an ox from her husband, against her will, and it had died soon after. 7 years before 4 cows had become so thin he had to have them killed - this followed quarrel over passage by a meix belonging to her husband. At same time his son-in-law Nicolas Raon had been tormented by an illness, but had been cured when Jacotte visited him and made him some soup. His wife had believed her to have caused death of one of their children, and he now thought she had killed his wife.

(2) Jan Graniere demeurant a Seuch, c. 60

Said that he had known Jacotte's parents, and that her mother had been suspected as a witch; she herself was reputed to be one, and witness though her so, though he had always been wary of her and had suffered no harm. Had heard that she had been accused by Colette femme Jean Paret, executed at Arches, then discharged.

(3) Pierot Blaise Andre demeurant a Seuch, c. 35

Believed her to be a witch, as she had common repute. 3 years before he had quarrelled with her, and had then lost a cow, which was one of three Jacotte had walked around as they passed her house. 4 years before in autumn he had shared produce of a pear tree with Jacotte's husband; when she brought half of pears he would not eat them, but fed them to pigs. Oldest pig promptly went lame, and subsequently became thin and 'comme enragé', so that it had to be killed and buried. Also thought she had been cause of death of a horse previous year, following a quarrel; all neighbours feared her and often had losses after quarrels.

(4) Claudon Gerard, 28

Had always heard Jacotte reputed a witch and daughter of a witch. Jean Raon de Xennenay had told him that she had given 'le mal de mort' to Claudon, son of Jacot Estiennon Petit Demenge, who had asked his father for an arquebus to shoot her with while he was ill, and claimed she had bewitched him at mill of Nicolas Margo. Had heard Nicolas Romary say in his house 'Je void bien que quant j'auray tant fait de a mes bons amys, il t'en faudra aller au diable.'

(5) Marion veuve de Jacot Estiennon Petit Demenge de Seuch, c. 50

Told of death of her son Claudon 6 years before, after 10 or 12 day illness. This followed incident at mill when Jacotte touched him on shoulders and said to him 'Ne te veux tu pas marier affin que je mange de tes nopces'. Her other son Jacot had guarded cows belonging to husband of accused for 6 months without being paid; when he wanted his pay to buy a hat, she told him he would not be paid in money, but otherwise. A few days later a cow belonging to witness broke its leg. 10 or 12 days earlier the witness had been asked by Jacotte to 'aller petrir sa paste'; had done so, and after baking Jacotte had given Jacot a tart. He became ill after eating it, but when she heard of this she sent him pears and nuts, and he recovered in 2 or 3 days. General reputation, and stories of mother.

(6) Cury Jacot Michel de Seuch, c. 45

6 years ago at last veille des Rois Jacotte had met his wife Marion at Remiremont and given her 5 apples. She ate one of them while preparing supper, and promptly became ill. During fatal illness she told him the apple was responsible, and also accused Jacotte before priest who gave her last rites and others who visited her. After death he himself accused Jacotte of being a witch and having killed her, but she took no action. Reputation 30 years, and mother also suspected.

(7) Nicolas Arnould Raon de Seuch, c. 26

5 or 6 years earlier a cart he was driving had knocked into wall of Jacotte's house, dislodging a few stones. She told him he would repent, and 2 or 3 months

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later had an illness which lasted 3 weeks. His mother asked Jacotte to come and see him; she made a soup with the yolk of an egg, and he recovered in two days.

(8) Vincent Delon demeurant a Seuch, c. 30

Had heard children of his father-in-law Jacot Margo claim that Jacotte had killed their father. No 'desplaisir' himself, but general repute.

(9) Margueritte femme de Vincent Delon, 20

Blamed her father's death on Jacotte; his honey bees had settled on a tree in Jacotte's garden, and when he went to fetch them Jacotte told him 'qu'il n'y hanteroit plus guere'. Died 4 or 5 months later.

(10) Mongeotte veuve de George Gillet Pierre Geoffroy de Seuch, 36

Had various quarrels with Jacotte during which she called her witch, without any reaction. On one occasion, however, quarrel was followed by loss of bullock and two cows within 8 days. Also claimed to have heard Jacotte's husband say that she was 'une malheureuse femme', and suggest that he would eventually leave her.

(11) Remy fils Jean Graniere, 30

No knowledge of her reputation even.

(12) Nicolas Jacot Michel de Seuch, 30

Knew she had always been reputed a witch, but although he had kept company with her husband he had never seen any harm in her.

(13) Thienel Marc Olry de Mechaichamp, 40

General repute, and accusation 5 or 6 years earlier by Collette, wife of Jean Jacot Michel, before her execution.

(14) Nicolas Graniere demeurant a la Breuche de Mehaichamp, c. 40

General repute; many feared her; had suffered no harm himself.

(17 February 1594)

(15) Arnould Jacquel demeurant a Moulin, c. 60

Knew Jacotte well, and had always heard her reputed a witch, but had no personal complaint until incident with his wife just before Christmas. She had been in danger of death, until Demengeon Romary visited her; he knelt by her bareheaded, and asked pardon in his wife's name. Jannon replied that she pardoned

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her if she cured her, to which he said 'que sy sadite femme y scavoit quelque chose qu'elle la gueriroit'; since then she had been well.

(16) Jannon femme d'Arnould Jacquel, c. 50

Repeated earlier deposition, and husband's story of visit by Demongeon.

(17) Francoise femme de Pierot Blaise Andre de Seuch, c. 35

Reported dispute previous autumn over a shared pear tree; had complained that Jacotte had taken pears without waiting for her, and taken too many; reply was that another time she would be at the picking and the witness would not. Witness said 'qu'il ne falloit personne menacer'. General reputation; also believed she might have killed one of their cows.

(18) Alix veuve de Claudon Simonin de Seuch, c. 40

Reputation 12 years. Just over a week before, thinking she had already deposed against her, Jacotte had said that she and the others would repent of it.

(19) Jean Estienne Raon de Xennenay, c. 35

8 years ago at Easter he had been at Seuch in mill of Nicolas Margo; he and Margo's nephew Claudon were mending wheels. Jacotte came to mill, although it was out of use, and struck witness on shoulder and Claudon on back, asking latter why he didn't marry. Witness said that if he fell ill, he would say she 'l'avoit engenauché', to which she replied 'tu n'ay garde de par le Diable'. The two young men then finished work and went to feste at Remiremont; on return witness became ill for 3 or 4 days. A week later Claudon fell ill, and died after 6 weeks, believing himself bewitched by her.

(20) Olry Marc Olry de Xennenay, maire de la chambre de Moulin, 50

Had been present when Demengeon Romary begged pardon of Jannon, wife of Arnould Jacquel; had begged that she withdraw charge against his wife.

2 March 1594; PG des Vosges asks for arrest and interrogation of Jacotte.

1 April 1594; interrogation and confrontations

Said she was Jacotte, daughter of the late Humbert Jannol of Seuch, aged about 40. Had been married about 18 years, and had a daughter and two sons, aged 12, 10, and 5. Her husband had been married twice before; two daughters by earlier marriage were living in Allemaigne, where one of them had married. Asked why they had gone there, said that when they were old enough to gain living, one of them had gone first to Ferderny in ban de Longchamps, then into Allemaigne, from where she had sent for her sister. Asked if she had previously been 'reprinse de justice', said she had not; then told she perjured herself, since some 8 years before

she had been to Arches on accusation of Collette. Agreed that she had been confronted, but Collette had then voluntarily withdrawn accusation. Agreed to conversation with Jannon about possible plague, but denied having touched her or caused her illness. Said that if Jean Collusse charged her with death of his wife 'il se damne perpetuellement et mect sadite femme en peine'. Said her husband would never say hostile things of her 'parce que c'est un tres bon homme pour elle.' Said that she could not even remember being at mill, let alone conversation with two young men. Agreed that some weeks earlier she had been ill, and had asked her neighbour Marion to make her dough, gave her 'un torteau' in recompense, with no evil intention. Pears and nuts had been sent by one of stepdaughters who had returned, since Marion was 'voisine et bonne amye'. Said that Cury Jacot Michel 'a menty cinquante pieds dans le ventre' in his accusation.

At confrontations, said that Marion (witness 5) 'a menty comme une meschante femme et faulse dixmeresse, qu'elle se damne perpetuellement et qu'elle n'en verra en sa vie la face de Dieu, Requerant qu'elle soit prinse et arrestée en ce lieu, jusqu'a ce qu'elle luy aura demande pardon du tort qu'elle luy fait'. Also claimed that she had been several times to beg in her house. When Cury Jacot Michel said he had called her witch before her husband, she retorted 'que c'est un meschant usurier, mangeur et rongeur de peuple et que les fiebvres quartaines luy puissent relievier le coeur en son ventre.' In reply to Nicolas Arnould Raon objected 'que quant on va voir un malade, on ne peult moins luy donner ou porter quelque chose'. Continued hostile attitude to witnesses to end, finishing by saying 'que le Diable les emporte tous; et en puisse avoir l'ame et la chair'.

6 April 1594; Procureur General asks for torture.

14 April 1594; Change de Nancy agrees.

23 April 1594; interrogation under torture

Racked; withstood at first, but after given water started to confess; said to Prévôt 'je parleray bien votre vin'. Then confessed to having been taken to sabbat 9 or 10 years earlier by Collatte wife of Jean Jacot Michel. Said she had been seduced by Mre Persin, who promised her 'qu'elle n'auroit jamais faulte de choses quelconques: qu'il ne falloit craindre personne: et qu'elle ne tumberoit jamais entre les mains de la justice.' Said she had killed Marion wife of Cury Jacot Michel 'parce qu'elle estoit rude aux pauvres gens, et aussy qu'elle maudisoit ses voisins, dautant que ledit Cury estant riche, ladite Marion qu'il estoit surchargé de rancon'.

Denied killing any other persons, but admitted killing some animals. Her master had beaten her because she would not have intercourse with him, and because she would not commit other malefices. Asked if her husband had known she was a witch, said he had not, and that she had always met her master by day, when he was fishing or at Remiremont. Said that animal seen by her stepdaughters had been her master in the form of a wolf. Had been numerous witches at sabbat, but faces had been covered, and she had known none of them; Collette had told her many came from Pont des Fayes, where she had never been. Asked about other accusations, said she had not committed other crimes attributed to her. Agreed that she had repented her abjuration of God, but she had been unable to withdraw; now

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thanked God for bringing her back to path of good, and prayed he would forgive her.

24 April; interrogation

Repeated admissions of previous day; now agreed to two more cases of killing animals. After she denied a couple of further questions, sent back to prison - no interest shown in accomplices.

28 April 1594; Procureur General des Vosges asks for death sentence

30 April 1594; Change de Nancy approves.

14 May 1594; sentence carried out.

Costs of trial only some 42 livres.