

Witch 051, Jeannon Marchal 1

B 3358 no 2; witch 051, Jeannon, femme Gerardin Marchal, d'Autrepierre

20 May 1621; procureur fiscal asks for evidence to be taken

26 May 1621; informations preparatoires

(1) Claude Bastien, 48

General reputation only.

(2) Claude Pacquet, 30

General reputation only.

(3) Chrestienne femme du precedent, 22

General reputation. Her husband, with 2 or 3 others, had beaten husband of witness, while she encouraged them rather than restraining them - he had to spend 2 or 3 days in bed.

(4) Barbeline veuve Demenge Henriatte, 55

General reputation only.

(5) Claude Dieudenon, 28

General reputation. Thought she might have killed a horse 5 years earlier, when angry because they used another blacksmith at Amenoncourt.

(6) Catherine femme du precedent, 25

Similar suspicion.

(7) Jeannon veuve Jean Batho, 50

General reputation. Believed she had killed her husband, after quarrel on way to market at Blamont before previous Christmas. A week later was found lying in snow on way home, and was lucky to be rescued. Seemed to have recovered, but became mortally ill 2 weeks later; during illness always claimed she was responsible, and said he often saw her by his bed. Often advised her and their daughter to make sign of cross, because of his fear of her.

(8) Sibille veuve Germain Tabourin, 50

General reputation, and suspicions of Jean Batho.

(9) Demenge Aulbry, 34

General reputation. 2 years earlier had killed one of her geese with a stone, and she said he would pay more dearly than at the market, after which his best horse died suddenly.

(10) Marguerite femme Demenge Bagrat, 35

General reputation. 5 years earlier had threatened her husband, claiming he had charged her too much tax, and within a week their best horse died of an unknown malady.

(11) Catherine femme Bastien Charpentier, 45

General reputation. Some 2 years earlier had been in fields with her daughter Alizon, wife of Demenge Marchal, when a whirlwind came up. Daughter, who was 5 months pregnant, complained of pains in back, and that night had a miscarriage - was so ill she received sacraments herself. Accused visited her 3 days later, and asked why she was up so soon, after which she suddenly felt ill again. Jennon then visited her on successive days, giving her 3 apples, then 3 pears. After eating latter began to feel better, and Jennon continued to visit her; asked anxiously where husband was, she thought because she feared he had gone to consult a devineresse at Cueting. Before last Christmas had told Alizon she would give something to her god-daughter (one of her daughters) so that she should never have any more children.

(12) Bastien Charpentier, 50

General reputation. 3 years earlier had told him he would repent for calling her a witch, but he said he would call her so again in public - said this loudly so that curé (whose fence he was mending) could hear. She said she was 'une ribaulde' but not a witch, so he said she had been a young whore and would be an old witch. Curé then made him retire, saying he should leave her and she was well known.

(27 May 1621)

(13) Marguerite femme Demenge Colin, 33

General reputation. Story of her husband (presumably Demenge Aulbry) killing goose, followed by threat and death of horse.

(14) Alizon femme Demenge Marchal, 22

Same story as mother about whirlwind; shortly before she had passed Jennon washing and did not offer to help her. Also gave elaborate account about apples and pears, and her final recovery. Then said that Jennon had told her she would not have any more children, and suspected she had taken away her ability to do so.

(15) Catherine femme Toussaint Bastien, de Gondrexon, 60

4 years earlier had been to their house in their absence, and given piece of tart to their niece, who then sickened and died within 10 days. On day of burial came to house again bringing 2 pears which she said were for the niece; was furious and told her to leave, saying she knew well the niece was dead, at which she threw the pears down and left. Knew some from Gondrexon had told her of death, and suspected her of causing this.

(16) le maire Toussaint Bastien, de Gondrexon, 60

Same story as wife; added that shortly before she had been angry with him, accusing him of causing her husband to spend money on drink and go dancing at fête.

(28 May 1621)

(17) Demenge Bagrat, 40

When collecting tax 6 years earlier she told him and Louys Vincent she wished they might have as many devils as they asked for gros, with other threats. He told her he did not want to be threatened by one like her, and would blame her for any misfortune. Within a week a fine horse sickened and died with unknown illness.

(18) Dieudenon Maçon, 60

Had arrested Jehenne femme Demenge Mercier 8 years earlier, and she told them that Claude Bastien suspected her of causing his illness, but it was Jennon who had done it. Told her husband about this, but he did not seem to take much notice - she was already reputed a witch.

(19) Nicolas Guerard, 34

6 years earlier he, his first wife, and his sister-in-law went to gather wild plums, but he was so frightened by 'ung grand criallement de pies' around him when he was up tree that they went home. Found a chest had been burgled, and suspected Jennon - she heard of this, although she gave no sign, and within days his wife fell ill, dying 10 weeks later. Suspected her - reputation 7 years.

(20) Louy Vincent, 30

Story about accusation by Jehenne Mercier, as told by witness 18. Also story of threats against Demenge Bagrat over tax collection, and death of horse.

(21) Chrestienne femme Jean Dieudenon, 32

4 years earlier had gone to house of accused to borrow a 'brye' for making tart, and she made a sign of the cross on her stomach with a knife she was holding. Suspected this was cause for an illness which began next day and lasted 10 weeks - long reputation.

(22) Marguerite femme Henry Zabey, 40

3 or 4 years earlier her husband, as bannard, had Jennon fined for taking wild pears. Later she and her husband saw the witness collecting wood, and said she should be fined like others; he added that he would have her or the devil would. Fell ill within 2 weeks, and was in bed for 6 weeks - thought this resulted from their threats, but particularly from Jennon because of reputation.

2 June 1621; interrogation

Said she was about 35, wife of Gerardin Marchal; believed she had been arrested on suspicion of witchcraft.

Agreed to threats against Demenge Colin after he killed her goose, but said his horse died because he made it pull a heavy load of wood. Agreed to quarrel with Demenge Bagrat over tax, but not to threats. Said she had visited Alison femme Demenge Marchal, and taken her some pears; had said to midwife 'que portant quelque chose aux malades, elle en recevoit des mauvais fames'.

Claimed that when she went to ask Bastien Charpentier if he had called her witch, he denied this in presence of curé. Admitted having been angry with Toussaint of Gondrexon because he caused her husband to spend money dancing, and that she had taken tarts to his house, but knew nothing about circumstances of niece's death. Admitted she had taken pears, but this was excuse to ask for some fresh meat, which she desired in first stages of pregnancy. Was not driven away, but offered a plate of cooked peas.

Denied all other charges. Asked why she had asked to see the greffier in prison, said she wanted him to write to the holy father who was at Nancy, so that he could come and say if she was a witch or not. To comment that she ought to know, replied that she had no doubt she was not a witch.

4 June 1621; confrontations

Said that Jennon veuve Jean Batho was 'une variable, mauvaise sottie, et mauvaise langue', while Sibile veuve Germain Tabourin was a woman 'qui va au devin pour les uns et les autres'. Latter replied that accused herself had sent her in case of her husband, and that she went for others to earn a little bread, in view of her poverty.

Catherine femme Toussaint Bastien denied having offered accused some peas, saying they had none at the time; she was not at beginning of pregnancy, but so big she could not see her feet, and this had saved her from a beating.

Colas Guerard added that he suspected her of causing death of his second wife, after she refused to nurse one of her children. Otherwise she denied all charges, but made no serious reproaches to witnesses.

6 June 1621; procureur fiscal asks for question ordinaire et extraordinaire

7 June 1621; Change de Nancy approves

8 June 1621; interrogation under torture

Started to confess when given thumbscrews. Had been seduced 10 years earlier by Jolybois, who was dressed in grey. Told her she was sad, made her renounce God, and had intercourse with her. Had been once to sabat, where she saw Jean Didier of Autrepierre, with his sisters Alison and Rose. Was given yellow powder, with which she killed niece of Toussaint Bastien; also used it to cure Demenge Marchal's wife of illness Jean Didier had given her.

Had killed horse of Demenge Colin, but not that of Demenge Bagrat. Also killed her nephew and niece, children of her sister Chretienne, because they were small orphans and she had trouble looking after them.

Now said she had been to sabat more than 7 times, and almost every week, without husband being aware of it. Said that at sabat they plotted to make hail or damage woods, danced together, then kissed master's arse before leaving - was sometimes in form of cat, other time dog or man, with twisted feet. Thought she had

seen Joseph de la Moictresse and his wife there, but could recognize no others, although there were up to 30 present.

Master had wanted her to kill her husband, but she refused on account of her children. Seduction had been when she was in despair over husband's gambling - he would play until 2 at night, but was otherwise a good man.

Was finally racked for short time - she was saying they should not press her further, or she might accuse worthy people - but made no further confessions.

9 June 1621; repeated confessions. Procureur fiscal asks for death sentence.

11 June 1621; death sentence approved by Change de Nancy.

12 June 1621; formal death sentence from court at Blamont. After this was read to her she discharged those she accused, saying she had done so falsely.