

Witch 129, Babon Laboureur 1

B 8275 no 2; witch 129, Babon femme Willaume Laboureur, de Preny

30 May 1597; interrogation

Said she was about 40, native of Vendieres, and had been in service in neighbouring villages until marriage 20 years earlier. Judges then gave long description of scene when Chrestaille, previously executed, had maintained her charges against 3 other women to point of death, despite exhortations to accuse no-one wrongly. Babon agreed this had taken place.

31 May 1597; interrogation

Made voluntary confession that she had been seduced 22 years earlier, when she was in great need and had no bread. Was approached by Mre Jolly in hayloft, who consoled her and gave her some grease. 18 or 20 years earlier had put this in milk to kill le Grand Gillot, who was debauching her husband. On second visit her master had intercourse with her, for only time; was not like a man, and 'ne faisoit que frotter trouiller ça, et la, froid comme marbre'.

10 or 12 years earlier Colas Harmant, 'frere non germain' to Chrestaille, had been in dispute with her over inheritance. She complained to Babon, whom he owed money for wine, so they conspired to put grease on the straw in his stable, and 2 horses died. Then put grease in his soup, after which he died.

Had been to sabat 3 times, and danced back to back. 2 years before had made hail, and rich wanted to direct this against best land in the ban, but the poor resisted from fear of dearth, and it mostly fell on the woods, with a little on the vines.

Asked if she had seen Jeannotte Pierron, said she had not for sure, but thought she might have been in a group, because she walked stiffly and had a limp.

4 June 1597; Rémy asks for witnesses to be heard, partly to confirm her confessions, in case she were trying to procure her own death, partly to see if she had committed other maléfices, since it was implausible that they should have been so few over so many years. Change de Nancy approved this.

12 June 1597; informations

(1) Mariotte femme Pierresson Vaixe

Had been wife of Nicolas Harmant. Some 12 years earlier he had made loan of seedcorn to Willaume le Laboureur, and had quarrel with Babon when he asked for payment next autumn. Went to strike her with pole from cart, but witness prevented him. Soon after lost 2 horse, and he himself died at Christmas. Babon never visited him during illness, although they were neighbours. Knew nothing of alleged debt for wine.

(2) Mariotte femme Jean Lambert

Had attended Harmant during illness; never heard him express any suspicion, but she did not visit him.

Was no-one to speak about death of Gillot, who had left no relatives.

Babon then repeated confessions, saying that she could not be sure she had seen Jeannotte at sabat.

Witch 129, Babon Laboureur 2

26 June 1597; substitut for PG asks for death sentence

27 June 1597; Change de Nancy approves

3 July 1597; definitive sentence from court at Preny