

Witch 141, Mathieu Blaise 1

B 8667 No 3 Witch 141, Mathieu Blaise

? 4 August 1592; informations préparatoires contre Mathieu Blaise de Saint Margarée.

Begins with confrontation between accused and Laurence, wife of George Tolbay; she maintains her accusations, despite his denials.

(1) Nicolas Petit Didier de ?

Had known accused for 20 years; 16 years before he had been sergent (?) of ban d'Avould and the witness his echevin; they had been out day and night collecting taxes for the duke, and he had never seen any harm in him; the officers of that time at St. Dié 'faisoient cas' of Mathieu.

(2) Demenge Prevost de Sainte Margarée, c. 52

Over 40 year period he could remember, knew nothing to Mathieu's discredit. Had heard rumour he was a witch some 6 or 7 years before, but didn't know where it originated.

(3) Colas Hanry de Sainte Margarée, c. 40

As a fisherman he had been around night and day, on Mathieu's property as well as that of others - had never known any harm of him, and always heard him reputed 'homme de bien'.

(4) Jean Prevost de Sainte Margarée, c. 45

Again knew nothing against Mathieu. Some 8 or 9 years before, when Jean Colin Blaise of their village had been arrested on suspicion of witchcraft ('ce qui ne se trouva'), had heard a rumour that Mathieu was also a witch.

(5) Claude Demenge Mengin de ?, c. 50

Knew no ill of Mathieu, whom he considered 'homme de bien'.

(6) Jean Charramont de Vanifosse, c. 35

Had served Mathieu for two years, and had never heard or seen any suggestion that he was a witch. On contrary, in his service he had been 'bien payé et content'.

(7) Barbelline veuve de Jean Vannier, de Sainte Margarée, ?

Eleven years before had served as 'chambriere' in Mathieu's house for three years; during this time she had seen nothing in him but 'toutes choses bonnes'. Never heard anyone reproach him with witchcraft.

(8) (Name missing - widow of St. Margarée, c. 45)

Had been resident for 25 years, and had asked Mathieu several times for help in settling affairs of late husband and children with whom she was left; he had always advised her well and consoled her, and she thought him 'homme de bien'.

(6 August 1592)

(9) Demenge Simonnel de Sainte Margarée, c. 40

Resident since marriage 20 years before. Had been maire with Mathieu for five or six years. Knew him to be of 'telle bonne volonté' that if any 'homme de bien' had business with him he would help him from his own goods.

(10) Claude le Villy de Sainte Margarée, ?

In business deals and in general reputation knew Mathieu to be quite honest and generally esteemed. Had always been a great defender of rights of village, although he lived in a house which made him a subject of the duke, not of the chapter - was still procureur for village.

(11) Jean le Clerc (maire pour le chapitre de St. Dié) de Sainte Margarée,

Told how 7 years before he had twice heard that Mathieu was a witch. 6 years before, in the house of the then maire Honguey, had quarrelled with him, and among other insults had said to him that he was a witch, and long reputed so; Mathieu had hit him on the head with a 'pot d'etain', drawing blood. Had taken one another to law, then settled matter through mediators. His procureur had been Jean Clemens d'Anould, Mathieu's the maire Nicolas Honguey. Couldn't remember if he had made reparation to Mathieu for calling him a witch, nor give any precise source for rumours.

(12) Magdelaine servante au Curé de Sainte Margarée, c. 40

Resident 14 years. Knew Mathieu to be held in high esteem by 'gens de bien'. Thought accusations did him great wrong, and that 's'il estoit tel ne se fauldroit asseurer à personne.'

(13) Demenge Valentin de Sainte Margarée, c. 36

Was neighbour of Mathieu. Spoke of willingness to help others with own goods, and fact that he didn't quarrel with neighbours, but lived peacefully with them.

(14) Jean Doyen de Combrimont, lieutenant du doyen de Visembach at Sainte Margarée, c. 36

Around 10 years before, when Jean Colin Blaise of Sainte Margarée had been imprisoned, he had been talking with others on a Sunday morning outside church at Combrimont when someone whose name he didn't remember came up and started to say 'Que l'on parloit bien des sorciers et sorcieres et que sy on brusloit Mathieu Blaise Il y auroit bien de la gresse, Ce qu'ouy par luy deposant, luy dict que sy ledit Mathieu estoit present et qu'il l'eust ouy, qu'il eust bien reparti a sa reverence, lequel devint tout rouge et s'en alla incontinent'. Had never heard anyone else speak ill of

Witch 141, Mathieu Blaise 3

Mathieu, and himself would be 'bien esmerveillé' to find him charged with such a crime.

(15) George Demenge Mengin de Ravier, c. 40

No suspicion of accused; had good reputation.

(16) Jennon femme de Colas Bemuyne de la Texerandie, c. 38

Again reported hearing nothing but good of Mathieu over 8 or 9 years she had known him.

(17) Nicolas Honguey de St. Dié, previously maire of St. Margarée, c. 50

During imprisonment of Jean Colin Blaise had heard Mathieu and another villager (now dead), Jean de Ravier, suspected of witchcraft. He had himself called Mathieu a witch among other insults, but thought this had not been taken to courts because they were 'comperes'. In reply to questioning, confirmed story of blow to head of Jean Le Clerc. Both men had subsequently started suits, then after a few days come to an accord; he could not remember exact terms (at time priest was sent for to hear confession of Le Clerc).

(18) Jean Clement lieutenant de prevost à Anould, c. 60

Had known Mathieu for 40 years, and had high opinion of him, particularly for great honesty in handling money in the name of the Ban d'Avould. Also told of quarrel with Jean Le Clerc, and of settlement on basis of mutual pardon and recognition as 'homme de bien'.

8 August 1592; Change de Nancy declared that, on the sole accusation of Laurence wife of George Tolbay, 'disent que precipitamment il a esté apprehendé et mis en arrest à sa personne, et veu ce que fais à son information il y a matiere le renvoyer sans despens'.

3 September 1592; order from Nicolas Remy, as Procureur General de Lorraine, that in view of further denunciations fuller information should be sought.

17 September 1592; further depositions

(19) Colas Hanriat du Faing, c. 40

Had never heard any ill of him, except that 7 years before his father had told him he was under suspicion as a witch - but he didn't believe this to be true.

(20) Jehennon femme à Jean Didier l'hoste de Sainte Margerée, c. 50

Resident 20 years; had him in high esteem; knew of rumours 7 years before but dismissed them.

(21) Mengeon Didier Hanriot du Faing, c. 26

Witch 141, Mathieu Blaise 4

No quarrels with Mathieu; had heard rumour 7 years before, but didn't know source.

(22) Noel Cayel du Faing, c. 30

As servant with Nicolas Honguey 6 years earlier had heard about quarrel, but for his part thought Mathieu 'ung bonhomme'.

(23) Vincent Hanriot du Faing, c. 46.

Knew no evil of Mathieu, but had heard rumours. Also told of a servant of Mathieu's who had informed him that his master sometimes went out in the evening with 'ung fosseux sur son col', saying he was going out to find water on the meadows, and not returning until midnight - but had said nothing about witchcraft.

(24) Colin Guidat du Faing, c. 23

During four years since residence had heard nothing but good of Mathieu, until three or four days before arrest, when he heard that the imprisoned witches had accused him.

(25) Colas Jobert du Faing, c. 32

During 16 years of residence at Sainte Margaree had seen nothing but good in Mathieu; had heard rumours of witchcraft, but didn't believe them.

(26) Jean Ferry de Sainte Margaree, c. 26

9 or 10 years before had served Mathieu for a year, and had seen nothing but good in him; had heard rumours, but would be 'esmerveillé' if they were true.

(27) Colas Dion du Faing, c. 40

Saw no harm; had heard rumours.

(28) Colas Jean Alix maire de Neufviller, c. 36

Good reputation – 'l'at hanté plusieurs fois comme homme de bien'.

(29) Demenge d'Avould de Sainte Margaree, demurant à Grand Rux, c. 85

Had been to law with Mathieu, but thought him 'homme de bien' and had no suspicion of witchcraft. Had heard that at time of arrest of Jean Colin Blaise Mathieu 'luy dict qu'il advisast de tenir sa langue et que s'il parloit ce seroit fin de luy.'

(30) Colas Cayel du Faing, c. 60

Saw no harm; had heard rumours.

(31) Simon Honguey, de ? , 28

Witch 141, Mathieu Blaise 5

No suspicion; had heard that he had been accused by imprisoned witches.

(32) Humbert Colin Guidat de Vannemont, demeurant au Faing, c. 60

Saw no harm; had heard rumours during 4 years of residence.

(33) Bertremin Michel Flandrey du Faing, c. 30

Knew no evil; had heard rumours.

(34) Colas Andreu de Sainte Margarée, c. 36

Close neighbour for 12 years; had always found him 'bon voisin'. Had heard rumours recently, but didn't know from whom.

(35) Colas Demenge Hanry de Sainte Margarée, c. 80

Resident in village all his life, knew no harm of Mathieu; had only recently heard rumours.

(36) Demenge d'Avould Ie jeune, de Sainte Margarée, c. 24

Held him 'homme de bien', and of goodwill, who was always willing to help others.

(37) Claudel Flandrey du Faing, c. 40

High reputation as long as he could remember.

20 September 1592; Nicolas Remy declares that there are no further grounds for holding Mathieu, and that he should be renvoyé jusqu'à rappel.

23 September 1592; statement that he has been released.

Included at end are three accusations - by Laurence femme George Tolbay (10 August), Catherine veuve Claude Maremeix (14 August), and by same on 25 August - all denied by Mathieu, who was confronted with his accuser each time.