

B 8669 no 3; Witch 150, Barbeline femme Claude Wanesson, de St Dié

Accused by Mengeatte femme Jean Thierry dit l'Allemand (l'hospitaliere).

12 August 1593; informations preparatoires

(1) Nicolas Parmentier, bourgeois, 46

Long reputation only.

(2) Joseph Bouray, mre masson, bourgeois, 40

Around last St Martin her husband had carted some stones for him. Had paid him, but then she came and demanded payment again. Quarrel followed, during which he called her witch and she threatened him. Became ill until Whitsun, eating normally but losing use of limbs and becoming 'quasy asmaticqz'; was advised to obtain bread, salt and ashes from her house, after eating which he made full recovery. Believed she had made him ill after their quarrel - long reputation.

(3) Nicolas Paticier, bourgeois, 50

Reputation 12 years; his wife could tell them more.

(4) Jean le Rouyer, bourgeois, 30

Year before had exchanged a horse with her husband, and went to ask for a stick to beat it with, at which she said 'que maudictz soient les yvrognes'. Did give him stick, but when he tried to hit horse struck his own foot instead; was then in tremendous pain, and so ill he was expected to die. His mother-in-law remembered his suspicions, and made soup with items obtained from her house. As soon as he drank this he began to recover - 'ses espritz commencerent à s'esveiller, et revint a soy'. In view of threats had 'fantaisie et opinion' that she had caused illness and cure - while 'on la publie par toutte la ville' as a witch.

(5) René le Parmentier, bourgeois, 40

Reputation 4 years; had heard her called witch without taking action.

(6) Jehennon veuve Colas Henriot, 50

Long reputation; had called her witch herself, 10 years earlier, without any reparation being sought.

(7) Plaisance femme Toussaint Charpentier, 36

Long reputation; had several times called her witch without reparation being sought, even though she was often told she should not allow this 'sans s'en faire purger'. Daughter of witness kept driving away sow belonging to her from outside their house, and said she was a witch, after which she threatened to make her shut up. Some weeks later, when danger had been forgotten, daughter started to bleed from nose and mouth for two weeks, then vomited up strange stone - pebble at one

end, salt at the other. Believed this had been her witchcraft. Also confirmed Rouyer's story - had helped to get substances from servant of Jean Hardancourt.

(8) Jean Wagnaire, bourgeois, 50

Reputation 12 years, had heard her called witch.

(9) Jacotte femme Nicolas Paticier, 50

Previous year she and small daughter had been hurrying back from fields because a big storm was coming up, when they saw accused going other way, with hands joined and appearing to be talking. Long reputation; had heard her called witch several times.

(10) Collatte fille Colas Chaisne de Ste Margarée, 20

Previous year had been in service with grand doyen Fournier, and went to borrow broom from accused to sweep chimney. She remarked that they had killed an animal but given her nothing, then forbade witness to say anything to other servant. She broke the broom, and shortly afterwards went up to hayloft to feed animals, became frightened, and fell out, hurting herself badly. Unable to find healing until she obtained bread, salt, and ashes from house of accused, after which she was able to walk again - could not do so before although there was nothing visibly wrong with her. Accused was close neighbour to barn, and in view of reputation and way she found healing believed she had been cause of her fall. Also suspected her of death of pig - she had been in stable the previous night, and they suspected she was angry because she had not been asked to help with harvesting.

(11) Hidoult Cognolle, bourgeois, 35

3 years before had been invited into house in customary way when they were washing, as neighbour, but a shirt she brought was lost. Soon after child aged 4 lost voice for 10 weeks, then recovered; believed she had caused this illness and cure, through something she gave child to eat. Also suspected her over loss of milk by his wife; lasted 2 weeks, then returned after accused made her a soup. Suspicions in light of general reputation.

(12) Claudatte veuve Georgeon Rasaille, 50

2 years earlier, when she refused to sell accused a pig at the price she offered, was told she would not have much profit from it. She and her son then became very ill; could not bear sight of pork, and made no profit from pigs; suspected her in view of threats and general reputation.

(13) Claudatte femme Lyenard Taincturier, bourgeois, 40

Having urged husband not to give up lease of a cow which accused wanted to take over, became seriously ill. Suspected her because during Lent witness sold her some dried pears, and she suggested she could have given them to her. As she was recovering met her in church at Easter; she asked if she had given birth yet, and a week later she did so.

(14) Bastien Marande, fournier au four banal du chapitre, 60

She normally used oven, and they had quarrelled because she said he had not called her in time with her bread - went off down street cursing and threatening. Had lost 2 pigs and an ass since, and in view of her great reputation believed this was her doing.

(15) Colas le Viel de Sainte Helaine, jeune fils mulnier à St Dié, 20

Previous Christmas, when she came to mill, knowing her reputation he put a broom head up behind door. She spent an hour gathering things up, although flour was already in sacks, and only left when 'contenté d'avoir expérimenté ceste chose', he removed the broom..

13 August 1593; interrogation

Said she was about 45, daughter of Claude de la Lealbe of St Lyenard, wife of Claude Wanesson, chartier. Married about 15 years, during which she had always lived at St Dié. Said that the first person who had insulted her was responsible for present plight - this was widow of Colas Henriet, who had called her witch. Had no witnesses, so could not seek reparation. Did allege that she had obtained reparation from Joseph Bouray; judges suggested this was false, to which she replied that her husband had taken action, and she had not been present when he took the official to meet Joseph.

Claimed she was a good christian, and showed them a black cross on her forearm, saying it dated from her childhood, and was made with holy water, blessed candlewax, and 'charbon de la souche de Noel'. Asked about illness of Jean le Rouyer, said 'gentil fils dieu, Roy de tout le monde, qu'est ce qu'on peult dire, et qu'est ce qu'on luy peult imputer, que c'est ung terrible monde. S'escriant, ach Jean le Rouyer, pense à ta conscience, qu'elle ne veult pas dire ce qui n'est pas, et ce qu'elle ne fit oncques'.

Agreed she had quarrelled with Plaisance femme Toussainct le Charpentier, but had made it up and were now good friends.

Admitted going out to garden on day of storm, but when it was suggested she had been on way to sabbat denied this, saying there were several other people in the fields. Asked about loss of shirt, said it had belonged to one of her sisters; as for child which had lost voice, she had often done him good, and he was often very hungry.

Asked about loss of milk by wife of Hidoult Cognolle, said 'Ach Jesus bon dieu, ses bonnes voisines ont elles telle opinion contre elle, que par pitie de la famine, qu'elle ly veoit endurer, elle l'a secouru plusieurs fois de ses biens, et que c'est le remerciement qu'on luy faict.'

Gave text of short prayer for divine protection she said every morning, so that she knew that 'dieu luy est propice' for the day.

Was finally confronted with 'l'hospitaliere', who repeated her allegation that she had seen her and her late husband at the sabbat.

20 August 1593; Change de Nancy approves question ordinaire et extraordinaire.

? Confrontations

No reproaches, but denied all charges.

26 August 1593; interrogation under torture

Denied all charges again, making remark in connection with Joseph Bouray about 'l'appetit de l'argent qu'il luy devoit' having brought her to present state.

Cried out loudly when given thumbscrews; said of accusation by l'hospitaliere that it was made because her own husband had tried to obtain post of hospitalier. Was then racked and given tortillons, but maintained her denials throughout.

Brought back again later, started to waver - asked if judges would take sin on themselves if she said something she should not. Given thumbscrews, then placed on rack again, finally started to confess. Seduced by Mre Napuel 4 years earlier, on way to Fossarux; asked if she would believe in him, promising to make her happy. Gave her money to buy bread, but it turned out to be wood. Also gave her black powder to kill people and animals. Had been to sabbat at Fossarux, where there were many people - danced to sound of drum and musette, led by several devils in black. Confessed to killing a couple of their own animals - horse and cow - and to inflicting illnesses as described by witnesses. Had taken these off again with grey powder; had always refused to kill anyone. Said she had made la grosse Bietrix, femme Jean l'Hoste, ill after dispute over keeping of goats; asked if she could be cured, said they should take bread or salt, ashes, and 'joutte' from garden. Said she had killed horse of Grand Doyen, which seemed to be rabid, under compulsion from her master.

Asked about accomplices, named l'hospitaliere and the wife of Jean Diez of La Bolle, with another woman of La Bolle she did not know. Racked again, but insisted this was all she knew.

27 August 1593; interrogation

Repeated earlier confessions; was racked again to try and make her identify more accomplices, but she said they were masked and she could not identify them. Finally named Mengeatte from Viel Marché, a young daughter of Jean Parmentier, Dion wife of Colas Babon, and la femme Holbin des Trois Maisons - then discharged the last, saying she only knew of her by hearsay.

Confronted with wife of Jean Diez, who was brought from prison, repeated her charge despite denials. Then named le Grand Masson du Molinet and his wife, but no more.

31 August 1593; Change de Nancy asks that she be interrogated again in another place, without even presence of executioner, since there was a great presumption that she had been forced to confess more than she would otherwise have done, had torture not been repeated so often.

11 September 1593; interrogation

She now denied all previous admissions, saying they had been forced from her.

16 September 1593; Change de Nancy recommends that she be tortured again 'avec mediocrité'.

23 September 1593; interrogation under torture

Threat of further torture was enough to make her renew most of her earlier confessions. Said that there were about a dozen others at only sabbat she attended, but only recognized one called le peu Bourrat (this seems to have been wife of Colas Babon).

Confirmed confession next day.

1 October 1593; death sentence confirmed by Change de Nancy

10 October 1593; report that she has been found dead in prison. No sign of violence or suicide. Apothecary called in to check for poison, again saw no reason for suspicion; suggested she had died from cold and other privations caused by her long imprisonment.