

B 8684 no 10. Witch 197; Claudatte veuve Mengeon Henry and Dieudonnée femme Mengeon Henry le Jeune, de La Croix

2 October 1600; informations préparatoires

(1) Benignot Gillot cordonnier, 40

Some 8 years before had bought his present house, then wife became ill, although only after 3 years did she have to take to bed. Finally died, saying house was cause of her death, that Dieudonnée had given her illness and she must die. (Missing section here). As for Claudatte, had always heard her reputed a witch.

(2) Marguitte femme David Pierre Guillemin, 36

Rumour they were witches.

(3) Jehennon veuve Oswald Treschey le jeune, 35

No personal dispute with Dieudonnée, but as neighbour had heard wife of Leonard Walther call her witch during a quarrel. Some 5 years before Claudatte asked her for some salt, but refused because she needed it herself. Went off murmuring between her teeth, and next day an ox fell ill, dying two days later. In view of reputation and quarrel believed she was responsible.

(4) Claudotte femme Laurent Bormes, 30

Dieudonnée reputed witch as long as she could remember. Her husband's sister, wife of Hannezo le Maire, had called her witch during a quarrel. Didielle femme Jean Mathis told witness that after she threatened them she had lost her husband. Long reputation of Claudatte.

(5) Jehennon femme Mengeon Didier Girard dit Choste, 40

2 weeks earlier had asked Dieudonnée why she allowed herself to be called witch, saying that although she was poor she would not endure such treatment, but seek reparation. As for Claudatte, she was feared, and when she was not given what she asked people thought they lost animals or suffered illnesses, so wished she was far away from them.

(6) Laurent Bormes, 38

Told of several people who had called Dieudonnée witch, including Didielle femme Jean Mathis, who said she had killed her first husband Jacob Willemin. Witness had heard him tell her husband 'foutteur de genaxe, je tay vendue une maison et tu ne la veulx pas prendre, mais tu la prendras et tiendras ton marché, l'on m'a rapporté que ta femme avoit dit que cy tost que tu serois dedans je ne demeureray guerre a la mienne, nous verrons ce qui en sera'. Husband forced to complete purchase, and Jacob died 9 months later.

As for Claudatte, told of occasion 20 years earlier when he thought he saw her fall from sky, with clothes above her head, and heard her say 'je suis bien malheureuse en ce monde'. (Document damaged here). Some 5 years earlier had a great pain in his leg for 3 days, and could only move on his knees. The late Nicolas

la Gaixe, cleric juré, came to see him as friend, and suggested he should send for her, since such people might have caused the sickness. Nicolas went to her house with an axe, and threatened to kill her, saying she had given Laurent the sickness and must now cure him. She came and looked at his leg, saying it was illness like that of Claude Saldey (who had died). He gave her plate of beans, and she told him to find 'mouxons de mouxatte', to which she added something and boiled them to make 'estuve' for leg (missing section here).

(7) Nicolas Willaume Thirion

Dieudonnée always reputed witch. Year earlier had been haymaking with her and her husband when her son, who was guarding horse, came along crying to say that Blaise Fresse had fined it. She replied 'qu'il se taise, et qu'elle en auroit bien sa raison sans beaucoup courir'. Later heard that Blaise had lost animals, but did not know if she was cause.

Claudatte always reputed witch, and had heard her called so, but lived some way off, and did not think she had caused him any harm.

(8) Nicolas Lyenard Gauthier

Dieudonnée always reputed witch, as was Claudatte. Had heard story about latter always making 3 turns round tree on way to church.

(9) Pieron Mengeon Henry, 50

Cousin germain to Mengeon Henry le viel, husband of Claudatte. Told how latter had been upset to find he had married a woman reputed a witch, and had talked to her of taking her to St Dié to be tried; she replied 'Mon bel Mongeon, je n'en scaurois que faire, sy tu m'y mene j'ay y mener jusques a cinq ou six' - had named these to husband, but witness did not know names. Had always told witness that he knew his wife was a witch. Dieudonnée always reputed a witch.

(10) Lyenard Jean Mareschal, of La Croix but living at Chippal, 40

Dieudonnée always reputed a witch. Had often bought bread from her, and during argument over payment 4 years earlier called her witch, without her seeking reparation. Since then had shown him 'mauvaise visage', and a year before they quarrelled again. Called her witch, saying if she were a good woman she would not have left her husband as she had done. 2 days later a fine cow sickened, dying after languishing for weeks. When he called her witch again she said 'Je t'ay desia cousté je te cousteray encor', which confirmed his suspicions over this loss. Claudatte always reputed and feared as witch.

(11) Demenge Pauline de la Bolle

Long reputation of Dieudonnée. Her father-in-law had told him that when quarrelling with his son she told him that if she was pregnant the child was not his, but the devil's.

Claudatte always reputed a witch.

(12) Nicolas Colin Urbain, cousturier, 30

Dieudonnée always reputed a witch. Had lived in her house against his will, and after 6 months lost a cow which was found dead in the morning, strangled in a strange fashion, and had to be cut up to be removed. After this left house in fear of greater losses. A year before had heard wife of Jean Jacques Claude quarrel with her, saying 'Genaxe tu as esté jeune putain tu seras vielle genaxe', without any reparation being sought.

Claudotte also had long reputation. Some 6 years earlier, when still living with his father, they had a fine pig which she took and killed on pretence it was her own. He quarrelled with her about this, and 3 of his brother and sisters were taken with strange illness affecting legs and feet - were still on crutches, and they and his father had always said they would not have suffered this if he had not quarrelled with her.

(13) Claudotte femme Hannezo Gadel dit le Maire, 35

Sister of Dieudonnée's husband. Said she had called her 'ribaulde et sorciere' in public without any reparation being sought. Her father had married Claudatte, and some 11 years earlier witness became very ill, bedridden for 6 weeks. Her father suspected Claudatte, and told her to go and see if she could cure her; one Saturday morning found her in her bed, and said angrily 'Genaxe tu as mangé mon coeur et m'as donné ce mal, tu me l'osteras'. (Damage here) - seems to have given her apples and soup, after which she recovered.

(14) Jehennon veuve Gregoire Demenge Henry, 50

Dieudonnée always reputed witch. 4 or 5 years earlier she had overcharged witness for bread, and she called her witch without any reparation being sought.

As for Claudatte, witness had been caring for her stepdaughter (previous witness) during illness. Said that Claudatte had come and knelt, with hands joined, begging her pardon if she had done her any harm.

(15) Jehennon veuve Pieron Belmont, 40

Dieudonnée always reputed witch, and had heard her say 'qu'il falloit qu'elle face quelquefois un mauvais coup parce que l'on l'appelloit sorciere'.

Claudatte - also long reputation. 3 years before witness had been chambermaid to Suzanne first wife of Dieudonné Claude Henry, who had become ill after quarrel with her, and died after 5 weeks. Always claimed that Claudatte was cause, and on day before she died came with a 'bocquet dambre', which she tried to get her to eat. Had been forced to come because of suspicions, and witness thought she might have hastened death. Another incident with a servant in household who refused her some lard - damage here.

(16) Rozon femme Colin Urbain

Dieudonnée reputation only. Told story of pig which had been lost 5 or 6 years earlier, and found dead near her house - had been forced to pay 2 francs compensation, and was said to have made threats. Soon after 2 sons who were miners returned home, and they, with another brother and sister, became strangely ill, so that they had to go on crutches and have a leg cut off. When she came to pay money her daughter Babillon heard her say 'Voila l'argent aultant vault que je le jecté a la riviere'. If she was witch thought she had caused sickness.

(17)

Dieudonnée called witch without seeking reparation, and witness had heard Didielle claim she had killed her first husband. Long reputation, as had Claudatte, and said of latter 'que quant elle va vers sa maison elle la repousse comme aussy fait son marit'.

(18) Charles Claude Pierre, 35

Long reputation of Dieudonnée. As for Claudotte, 20 years earlier he had been in service of her first husband Jacob le Fromy, but only stayed there 6 weeks, because there were such frightening noises at night. Told her of this and said there were witches; she said it was cats, that he should take a stick to them, and that there were holes they must block up. Had been to see him recently and asked if there was talk of arresting her; when he said yes, replied that if she were certain she would leave.

(19) Honn. Homme

Long reputation of Dieudonnée. 3 weeks before her son and the daughter of the late Jacquot Villermin had rushed into his house crying, saying there was a voice in their house, and all the shutters had been opened - this happened often, and mother and father were out.

Claudatte always reputed a witch. His father had a maid who refused her some lard, at which she said she would repent, and girl then ill for a week, always claiming she had given sickness. His first wife had dispute with her about a hedge, and she said there had been others in the house before her who had been better neighbours. Immediately after this wife became ill, and remained so for 6 months, always saying she had made her ill. Finally asked her to come and see her, promising to pay her well, but wife died within 12 hours, and he believed this was her doing.

(20) Jean Lienard serviteur du precedent, 24

Told story of arrival of children 3 weeks earlier, saying noise was a beast which came often.

(21) Claudatte soeur au precedent, servant of Dieudonné Claude Henry, 23

Around last Twelfth Night her husband had beaten Dieudonnée because she tried to stop him going to confrérie organised by brother-in-law; she came to veillée in their house (were neighbours) and told everyone about this. Went home about 10 or 11, then witness heard great noise, saw her husband outside house with sword, then two 'statues en forme d'hommes' which left house, making noise like horses.

(22) Didielle femme Jean Mathis, 36

Dieudonnée's reputation 12 years, since she came to La Croix. Told of disputes with husband over purchase of house; after one of these he nearly cut his foot off with axe in woods. Then sudden illness and death, saying that if she was witch he thought she had caused this. Sent daughter to ask her for some beans, but

she refused, telling girl her father had no more need of them, and would not eat them. Called witch by sister-in-law and Jehennon femme Bernard Walther, but took no action; witness had often blamed her for death of husband, sometimes she made off, sometimes rebuked her.

(23) Colin Colas Michiel alias Urban, cousturier, 40

Had heard that Dieudonnée had actually been named Lienarde when she was baptized at St Lienard - 'ne trouve pas bon' that she now used different name. Always suspected as witch, and came 'd'ung lignage semblable' - a sister and an uncle had been burned. Suggestion that Claudatte had also had relative accused at Laveline (damage here).

(24) Catherine femme Jean Bon Temps, 50

Dieudonnée - long reputation, failure to seek reparation. Had been present at several of visits which Claudatte made to wife of her brother Dieudonné Claude Henry, who suspected her of bewitching her, and finally died. One day she came to house to join in haymaking, and brother said to her 'qu'il n'avoit affaire d'elle sy elle ne vouloit donner la santé a sa femme qu'estoit malade, et qu'elle allast hors de sa maison que c'estoit une sorciere'. She made no reply, but took a rake and went out with the others. About a year earlier had come to house of witness begging; refused soup for which she asked, and ungrateful for bread she was given, went out 'mal contanté' after sitting by fire. 2 days later witness developed pain in stomach, hardly able to eat; after 3 weeks summoned Claudatte to house and said to her 'qu'elle advisast de luy donner sa santé, et qu'elle avoit ja faict des choses en la maison dudit Dieudonné, que le tout viendroit ensemble, le menassant de la battre si elle ne la guarissoit, dit s'excusant qu'on luy faisoit tort, que Dieu estoit maitre et jugeroit ung chacun.' After she had left witness started to recover appetite and health. Next Holy Week Claudatte came to see her, asking pardon and that when she came seeking alms she should not refuse, and she would never do her harm.

(25) Nicolas Noel

Both had long reputations.

(26) Claudatte femme Demenge Saffroy, 60

Dieudonnée always reputed witch. Some 5 years earlier witness's son Lucas had sold her husband a horse, which later died because he did not tend it properly. She quarrelled with Lucas, using various curses 'comme elle en est bien coustumiere'. Soon after she had lost 4 or 5 horses, 2 cows, and some pigs - deaths were very sudden. In view of threats and evil reputation could only assume that she was cause.

(9 October 1600)

(27) Mengeon Didier Girard dit l'Hoste, 60

Around last Easter had dispute over her pigs which were doing damage in his garden - she said he should arrange matters so that they could not get in. Fell ill, and was only cured after he persuaded her (following initial refusal) to give him

some cake - slowly recovered after eating this. Heard her called witch by wife of Hannezo Gardel without seeking reparation.

(28) Annon femme Noel Collardat, 55

Was sister-in-law of Dieudonnée. During disputes 'coustumiere qu'elle est a disputer avec ung chacun', had called her witch without her seeking any reparation. As for Claudatte, some 7 years earlier, when witness was selling wine, refused her a glass for which she asked. Then became so ill she expected to die, but Claudatte came to see her and she recovered (damage here).

(29) Germaine femme Jacques Anthoine du Chippal, 35

For many years bought bread from Dieudonnée, then sought it more cheaply elsewhere. On a market-day she came up to witness and made great fuss about small debt she still owed - she was in habit of insulting anyone. On evening of same day a cow sickened and died, which she believed had been her doing.

(30) Pieron Jean Pieron, 50

Dieudonnée always reputed witch, and thought he had lost animals after disputes with her. Her father-in-law had said they should curse the hour when someone cut the rope with which she was hanging herself, and that he thought reputation was correct.

(31)

Blamed Dieudonnée for death of first wife, who had called her witch during a quarrel, then fallen suddenly ill and died in 6 days. Shortly before death accused came to ask how she was, and when he said she had had last sacraments told him he had been too hasty. 8 or 9 years earlier, when she had dispute over account with Jean de Saldey, said that if husband would not help her the devil could - opened window and shouted 'diable viens moy querre'.

(32) Lucas Saffroy bourgeois de St Dié, 27

Story of her dissatisfaction over horse he exchanged with her husband, and subsequent losses of animals.

19 October 1600; interrogation

(Claudatte)

Said she was over 70, daughter of Demenge Robin of Laveline. First husband was Nicolas Voiry of Velipaire, to whom she was married for 25 years, and second Mengeon Henry. Had 7 children in all, of whom 5 were dead. Widow for 5 years, during which time she had lived by begging. Claimed to know no reason for her arrest, saying she had harmed no-one. Asked about sister at Wissembach, said she had been burned as witch some 10 years earlier; brother Colas Robinet was still alive at Laveline.

Asked about practising healing, said 'que quelquefois elle a faict tout ce qu'elle a pheu pour guerir plusieurs bestialz et ne luy en a on sceu guiere du gré, disant que sy dieu luy fait la grace de sortir de prison, elle ne s'en meslera davantage, quant aux maladies des personnes elle ne s'en a jamais meslé.' Denied hearing herself called witch; begged to be released, saying she would go so far off they would never see her again, and offering to leave her goods for costs.

Denied range of charges. Said she had not made soup for Claudatte femme Hannezo Gadel, and that 'elle ne l'aymoit pas tant, parce qu'elle la diffamoit'.

(Dieudonnée)

Said she was 36, daughter of late Claude des Pasquis of St Lienard, married to Mengeon Henry for 18 years. 5 children, of whom 3 were dead. Had been in service for 10 years in val de Liepvre before marriage. Claimed she knew no reason for her arrest. Said she had not visited wife of Benignot Gillot, who had died of plague. Agreed that she had quarrel with wife of Hannezo le Maire over debt, and that she had called her witch; husband (who was brother) obliged her to make restitution. Asked about other accusations, said the only ones were from wife of Bernard Valter and Didielle femme Jean Mathis; husband had refused to take action, saying he would only do this for 'gens de bien' who accused her. If she had not been under control of husband she would have acted herself. Said she would put her knife into stomach of anyone who called her witch in future. Said that as a girl had been seduced by young man in Val de Liepvre and had child by him; might have married him if she had wished. One of her sisters had died in prison when accused of witchcraft. Denied that she had ever tried to hang herself.

26 October 1600; confrontations

(Claudatte) No reproaches and no significant admissions.

(Dieudonnée) No reproaches, admitted some disputes and other details.

6 November 1600; substitute for procureur général suggests that evidence is so strong that they should be given question ordinaire and extraordinaire. Response of Change de Nancy largely missing, but suggests that Dieudonnée should be presented to the torture only, unless she appears on the point of confessing.

14 November 1600; interrogation under torture (Claudatte)

Executioner claimed to have mark on her shoulder, and had been able to push pin right in without her feeling any pain. Was given thumbscrews and rack; resisted latter for some time before offering to confess. Had been approached 12 years earlier by man in black with goat, while looking for lost animals, who offered to make her rich and tell her where animals were. When she said she believed in God and Virgin Mary he said she was 'trop devote' and he would not win her over. Came a second time and tried to make her burn her chapelet, which she refused, but on third visit she yielded. Usual seduction scene, said he had told her name but she was deaf and could not remember. Money was piece of glass, given something like ashes, but did not know what it was for. Would not renounce God on this occasion. Interrogation suspended as night was coming on.

15 November 1600; interrogation

Now said master's name was Joly, and seduction was 15 years ago. First time she tried powder by eating it herself, and became ill for several days - threw rest away. Then confessed series of maléfices very much as suggested by witnesses, using black and red powder given by her master. Had only been to sabbat 3 times, and those with her were all dead now.

16 November 1600; interrogation

Renewed earlier confessions.

25 November 1600; Rémy asks for death sentence

26 November 1600; Change de Nancy agrees

15 November 1600; interrogation under torture (Dieudonnée)

Asked about chappelet she had been using in prison, said she had been making 'neuvaine' and praying for 15 days; a woman in white had appeared to her and told her she would soon leave this place and see her children. Had also seen small angels flying round her. Asked if she had been visited by other spirits, said that 20 years ago when she was in service 'le sottrel' had visited her; was very heavy and lay on her so that she could hardly breathe. Had sometimes visited her when husband was away, and again when she was in prison. Asked if he had not had intercourse with her, since such spirits were well known to seek this, said no, but he had sometimes kissed her. Father had told her he already pursued her when she was in cradle.

Was then given thumbscrews and racked. Offered to confess, and said husband was cause of her being abused. 2 years before had been angry about bad bargains he made over horses, and a man in black on black horse appeared to her. Persuaded her to renounce God and have intercourse with him, although said there was nothing unusual about him. Money disappeared; name was maitre Hu. Was taken to sabbat, where she saw la comtesse de la Croix, very well dressed in black, wife of Colas Vomisson, Leonard le Marschal of Chippal, wife of Jacquot du Chippal, Didielle femme Jean Mathis, Catherine femme Colas le Criccq, and Nicolas de la Chievre (who played flute).

Confessed a few maléfices committed with diabolical powder - killed wife of Hantzo Gadel, and cow of Lienard le Marchal of Chippal. Also killed a poor beggar woman who was already ill. Interrogation than halted because it was late.

16 November 1600; interrogation

Renewed earlier confessions. Said that at sabbat they had wine and roast meat, with goblets and plates of pewter. She had never agreed to do any harm to crops because she feared dearth. Added hardly anything else to earlier statements.

22 November 1600; interrogation

Now withdrew all her confessions, except that about Sottrel, saying that she had only made them to avoid torture. Noted that she looked in good health and there were no marks on her body.



25 November 1600; Rémy asks that she be tortured again.

26 November 1600; Change de Nancy agrees

4 December 1600; interrogation under torture

When she was placed on rack immediately offered to confess, and repeated earlier confessions. Those she had seen at sabbat were la Comtesse, one named Jandrette, and wife of Hieric, all of La Croix, Lienard du Chippal, Germaine femme Jacquot Anthoine, and Blanche Fresse. Others wore masks.

10 December; Rémy asks for death sentence; Change de Nancy approves.

13 December 1600; final reiteration of her confessions.