

Witch 199, Mengeotte Blaise 1

B 8687 no 1; witch 199, Mengeotte femme Jacot Blaise, du Viel Marché

21 May 1601; informations préparatoires

(1) Loudevic Thoussainct, de la Rochatte, 34

3 and a half years earlier he and wife went to montagne St Martin to gain living by bringing down loads of wood; accused saw them and said 'que l'on ne voioit aultre chose que ledit deposant a ladite montagne, et que le diable luy puisse rompre le col'. Immediately after this his bundle somehow fell forward, so that he was injured and unable to work for 6 weeks. Told those who visited that she had caused this by witchcraft, and finally she told his wife he would soon be healed. Suddenly able to eat and drink, and went back to woods next day. General reputation.

(2) Annon femme Pierrat Tripper, 35

A year earlier had hired accused to hoe her field, but after doing some work she wanted to be paid more. Found others who would do it for less money, so she stopped employing her, at which she was angry. When she complained witness told her she had sought the best deal she could, at which she asked what animals she had. After this suddenly felt pain in throat, and had great difficulty drinking; next day had animal in stomach which cried like toad and gave her great pain, while she spat up stuff which was black as ink. Started to tell neighbours that she suspected her witchcraft, and one day reproached her directly, saying she knew the animals would kill her. Accused replied that she 'n'avoit encor guiere endurée et n'estoit encor preste de mourir', since when she had got no better, and wished God would end her days to spare her further torments. Was sure she had caused illness; long reputation.

(3) Pierrat Trippier, 36

Story of wife's illness, as already told. Added that he had done all he could in way of medicines and pilgrimages, and that she had to eat several times at night as well as by day to keep animals from tormenting her even more.

(4) Martin Villemin, 35

Long reputation; no personal suspicion.

(5) Magdellaine femme Ferry le Charpentier, 45

Reputation several years, but no quarrels or personal suspicion.

(6) Marguitte femme Jacot Hidoult George, 22

2 years earlier she had been in habit of taking her sheets to wash in house of her late father Nicolas Goeury, hosteller, where her sister Catherine kept house. Latter was annoyed about this, and one day took them out, so that Mengeotte had to take them home again, and was very angry. Soon latter fell ill, and languished until Christmas when she died, maintaining until death that accused had bewitched her. Long reputation.

(7) Catherine femme Fleurent Bazelaire, 40

3 years earlier she frequented house of witness and was always asking for things, so that she had difficulty satisfying her. Then her son aged 3 became ill, and after 2 weeks was so bad that all the neighbours thought he would die. Lay for half an hour without movement, so witness went to fetch a shirt in which to bury him, but Mengeotte came in and said he would not die; soon recovered and became quite healthy. Had always suspected that this had been her witchcraft. 2 years earlier had lost 2 cows soon after they strayed into her garden, and suspected her over this too - long reputation.

(8) Nicolas Maitrey le jeune, 41

9 or 10 years before was often in his house, and child developed strange swelling, then had neck so twisted that he was looking behind himself. Could find no remedy, and finally asked her if she could do anything; she manipulated his neck, and he made instant recovery. In view of long reputation suspected she might have caused illness then cured it.

(9) Claudatte veuve Jean Mourel, 30

Reputation 8 or 9 years (residence); no personal suspicion.

(10) Jean le Rouyer, 40

Reputation 7 years (residence).

(11) Mengeon Peltier, 46

Previous year had been collector for levy of 2 gros on each conduit for repairs in town, and had dispute with her because she wanted to give him worthless blanc and have rebate of one denier. This was followed by a serious illness which lasted 3 months, and he suspected this had been her witchcraft - long reputation.

(12) Jean Humbert alias Grand Jean, 46

Previous year he and her husband had been levying money in Vieu Marché, and had dispute about the account. Soon developed bad leg, so that he had to use crutches and was in great pain, unable to find remedy. Asked her if she could help, and she rubbed leg gently, then said he should have pilgrimage made to St Lienard and St Curien. After having this done he recovered completely; suspected if she was witch as long reputed she had caused illness.

29 May 1601; interrogation

Said she was about 50, daughter of Mengey Aulbry of Vichibure. Had not heard any suggestion she was witch until previous year, when Pierrat Trippier's wife suspected her over her strange illness, and a few days before Mengeotte veuve Colas Lienard had accused her.

Denied all charges, asking why she should have given Annon femme Pierrat Trippier her illness when she had done her no harm. At first denied touching child

of Nicolas Maitrey, then admitted she had done so, but did not know about cure. In general agreed to circumstantial evidence, but completely denied harming anyone or having quarrels with them.

1 June 1601; confrontations

No reproaches, simply continued denials of causing any harm.

1 June 1601; procureur for canons asks for torture

2 June 1601; Change de Nancy approves

7 June 1601; interrogation under torture

As soon as she was racked began to confess. Seduced by Persin 12 years earlier, when because of poverty she went to côte St Martin every day to fetch wood and sell it to buy bread. Promised her bread and enough money that she should never want; gave her money (horse dung) and black powder. Tried latter out on a pig and a dog she met, both of which died.

Had been angry with Catherine fille Colas Goeury over sheets, and killed her with powder on some bread. Wife of Colas Maitrey was always taunting her, saying 'qu'il la falloit estre la sage femme', so she made child ill, then healed it.

10 years earlier Blaise Bergier, hospitallier of Vieu Marché, had been one of the chief witches, and poor witches like her had to obey him as she did Persin. Ordered her to use powder to kill the old prévôt Anthoine Grand Dormange, who had he claimed made him pay too much tax. Refused, but was so beaten by Blaise and Persin that she was all bruised, and had to obey. Blaise made her take some money he owed to him, and she threw powder in his face so that he later died. Greatly regretted this because he had been a good man who did much for the poor.

7 years before had been working for Jean Ferry, hostellain, and he was not satisfied with her work; was angry and made him ill with powder in soup, later felt sorry for him and cured him with different kind of powder. While working there was angry with cows of the maire Claudon Meschot, which kept disturbing their fumier; threw powder on his when he was not wearing coat, and he became ill. Did not know if he was now cured, and regretted what she had done because he was such a good man and had done her no harm.

Said she had confessed these things about which none had deposed because she wanted to clear her conscience; would die rejoicing as much as anyone ever did when going to a feast. Asked to be executed soon, and not to be left alone, in fear that Persin would come and beat her.

Had been angry against wife of tabellion taking evidence, because she would not buy firewood, and threw powder on small child in arms of servant, which died 4 days later. As for illness of Annon Trippier, Persin gave her two small toads, which she put in a pot of water so that she would drink them. Greatly regretted this, but had no power to cure her.

Told she must have committed more maléfices, now agreed that she had caused accident to Loudevic Thoussainct. Had made Fleurent Bazelaire's child ill, then cured him, and also killed 2 of his cows. Had made Jean Grand Jean ill, then cured him.

Asked whom she had seen at sabbats, named her accuser Mengeatte Lienard, Marguitte femme Loudevic Thoussainct, and Claudatte femme Claudon Bandeca. Danced and feasted, made hail; went and returned on foot.

Witch 199, Mengeotte Blaise 4

8 June 1601; interrogation

Repeated earlier confessions and accusations.

12 June 1601; further repetition.

14 June 1601; death sentence from Change de Nancy