

B 8691 no 11; witch 222, Jennon veuve Nicolas Bresson dit Neuxat, de St Blaise

16 January 1603; informations preparatoires

(1) Hanry Jean Hanry, 50

Reputation more than 20 years. 14 years earlier on night of his wedding the accused (perhaps angry at not being invited to feast) went in to bedchamber and moved beds and straw from one side to another. He was very angry, but dared do nothing because of reputation. Did not know what kind of 'sort ou mallefice' she might have put in bed, but immediately after consummation of marriage he and his wife entered into state of divorce and remained so for several years, hating one another strangely. Sometimes found his wife as if in trance or ecstasy in bed, and they both suspected her of having bewitched the bed. Also thought she might have caused illness he had 6 years earlier; it lasted 12 weeks, and began a week after she had been very angry when he fined her for damage done by animals.

(2) Jean Magdelaine, 40

Reputation several years.

(3) Anthoinette femme du precedent, 35

Reputation 14 years (residence).

(4) Idoult Jané, 27

Long reputation. 13 or 14 years his mother lost fine cow after quarrel with her, and was sure it was bewitched.

(5) Valentin Jané, 46

Similar story of loss of horse and suspicions by his late wife.

(6) Mengeon le Clerc, 40

Reputation 30 years, no personal suspicion.

(7) Claudatte femme Colas le Clerc, 31

Reputation 11 years (residence). Claudatte Neuxatte (then living in village) had told her on way to church that husband had been bewitched to death by accused.

(8) Colas le Clerc, 40

Reputation 14 years.

(9) Marguitte femme Humbert Drappier, 30

7 or 8 years before her first husband Jean Chasseur had dispute with accused, after which he immediately fell ill and claimed she had given him sickness. Claimed

that late Thoussaincte (wife of Idoult Jané, then of Valentin Jané) had maintained that she had caused death of first husband by witchcraft. Long reputation.

(10) Mongeon Bresson, 46

3 years earlier, after dispute with her, became so ill he was bedridden for 6 weeks, and thought to be at point of death. At last she came to visit him, and he said 'meschante femme que fait vous icy allé vous en au diable en prison a Moyenmoustier avec les autres qui y sont', to which she replied 'que jamais ne puis il aller en paradis jusques a ce qu'il auroit dit la verité' and left angrily. Then met his daughter at spring and said 'ton pere est bien fasché contre moy, qu'il puisse enrager tout a fait'; in fact began to recover from moment of her visit, and suspected her.

(11) Jennon veuve Colas Lallemand, 50

Reputation 12 years.

(12) Catherine, femme Mongeon de la Voevre, 36

Some 11 years before Jennon had been very angry when pig of witness got into garden, and uttered curses against her 'et toute sa race', immediately after which an ox died suddenly - suspected this had been her witchcraft.

18 January 1603; interrogation

First confronted with Jean Marion, who maintained his accusations, and also reminded of similar charges by Babellon femme Henry Jean Henry. Then said she was about 50, native of la Vacherie, daughter of Colas and Mongeatte Gerardin. Had lived at St Blaise since marriage 30 years earlier, widow for 12 years; knew she had been suspected as witch for several years. Asked about events after wedding of Hanry Jean Hanry, denied at first, then started to hesitate and say she might have been there, but it had not been for any harm. Asked if she had put anything in bed, said if she had 'ce fut tout bien'. Did not remember quarrel over fine, but illness had come from God.

Aroused suspicion by statement that angel had visited her in prison - was unable to say how angel was clothed or what had been said. Denied any memory of disputes with Jean Chapelle, except that son had quarrelled with him. Agreed she had dispute with Mongeon Bresson over field she had leased him when her children did not want to honour contract; agreed with his account of exchange when she visited him, and remarks to his daughter. Also agreed to curses when Mongeon de la Voevre's pig strayed.

Reproached that she had also been accused by Claudatte veuve Chrespaille le Maire, executed 6 years earlier, although no extract available because papers had been sent to Chambre des Comptes.

18 January 1603; confrontations

This time she refused to take the oath, despite much pressure. Agreed that she had spent much time around bed of newly-weds, although saying she did no harm. In reply to Catherine femme Mongeon de la Voevre said that if she were a witch she would doubtless have killed the pig - had certainly not killed the ox. No reproaches.

19 January 1603; procureur for Mgr de Verdun in seigneurie of Moyenmoûtier asks for torture

20 January 1603; Change de Nancy approves

22 January 1603; interrogation under torture

Agreed to confess as soon as she felt thumbscrews. 12 years earlier 'compagnies des gens de guerre' had been in country, and St Blaise was much molested. Soldiers had beaten her, ransomed her, and made free with her house; was seduced by Persin while lamenting her losses. Promised he had enough credit to protect her in future, and would give her enough money so that she would never want. Gave her money (leaves) and 2 kinds of powder - black/kill and yellow/heal.

Tried powder out on own hen and calf, which died. Had then killed a man of village after disputes (name missing). Also confessed killing ox of Mongeaon de la Voeuivre, and cow of Thoussaince. 3 years earlier was very angry with Jean Chapelle after disputes, and went to house 'faisant semblant d'aller querir quelque chose qu'elle avoit necessité, in order to use powder to kill him. Had made Henry Jean Henry ill 6 years earlier in revenge for fine, but finally took pity on him and healed him with powder in soup. Had killed Chrespaille le Maire, who refused to pay money due to her, but denied causing illness of Mongeon Bresson.

Had been to sabat twice a year, carried through air on master's shoulders; usual dancing and feasting. Had seen Jean Marion, Babellon femme Henry Jean Henry (executed previous day), Anthoinette femme Mongeon Bresson alias Neuxat, and François Marion serrurier, of Grand Faulbourg de Raon.

23 January 1603; interrogation

Confirmed previous confessions. Added name of Jaulne, femme Claudon Curien, to list of accomplices; later same day discharged both her and Anthoinette femme Mengeon Bresson, saying she had done them wrong.

24 January 1603; procureur asks for death sentence

25 January 1603; Change de Nancy approves