

Witch 246; B 8702 no 7, Claudatte femme Jean Claudel le Maimbourg 1

B 8702 no 7; Witch 246, Claudatte femme Jean Claudel le Maimbourg, de Ravas

Had been confronted with Jean Gregoire Mathis of Bertrimoutier, who claimed to have seen her making hail and cooking 'oisillons' in daytime.

15 October 1609; informations preparatoires

(1) Jacot Girard Pechey, 58

General reputation. Some 8 years before had row when his pigs damaged her grain in field; he apologized, but she said 'que mal proffict en puisse il faire'. Later the two pigs both died, and he suspected this was her witchcraft - had also been suspicious remark by her husband, but text damaged here.

(2) Didier Hault Marchant, jeune fils, 21

General reputation. Told of incident when he was guarding father's oxen as child - they damaged her field, and she told him off, saying they would not do this again as a pair. One of them then sickened and died 3 or 4 days later; he told father of incident, and he suspected her. When animal was cut up by hangman of St Dié he found small marks like barleycorns inside it, and said it was bewitched.

(3) Toussaint Hault Marchand, 50

Repeated son's story - hangman had said ox was bewitched 'de la plus parfaicte sorcelerie que se puisse trouver'. Also thought that after dispute over animals her husband was guarding as herdsman, which damaged his crops some 18 months earlier, she had caused two miscarriages by his cows, and lameness of another (if she was witch as reputed).

(4) , 34

General repute, and during quarrel he had called her witch without any redress being sought.

(16 October 1609)

(5) Margueritte femme Jean Renolbard, 25

Resident 2 years, had always heard her reputed witch. Told of seeing her come out of house with a bucket, followed by an unusually large grey cat. Seemed to be talking to cat, gestured to it, and it behaved in similar fashion, not like a cat, so that witness was very frightened. Had heard others tell of hearing her talking as if she was arguing with someone. When she was being taken for confrontation heard her offer a piece of silver to be allowed to stay at home; witness said to her sister-in-law, wife of Nicolas Cointzelin, that she would not do this if she was a good woman. Claudatte had heard of this, and seemed to bear her ill-will, not speaking to her as she had formerly done.

(6) Claude Danouzel, 40

Strong local suspicions. 3 years earlier he had dispute with her husband, because witness refused to pay him some money he owed, and was told he would regret it. Later suffered some losses among his animals, and suspected her if she was a witch, although he could not affirm this.

(7) Demenge Michiel le jeune, 30

General reputation. Incident that year when his father had found pigs doing damage in wood he rented; she had been angry, saying 'qu'elle en auroit sa raison', and if she could not obtain it from his father, then she would have it from his grandson in his cradle. Thanks to God no harm had come to child, but had lost several animals, and suspected her if she was witch as reputed. A earlier quarrel over straying animals, previous summer, was followed by illness of calf, which finally had to be killed - similar suspicions.

(8) Collatte veuve Demenge Louys, 50

6 years earlier had been living in same house as witness and her late husband. Claudatte and her own husband were quarrelling, and when he went to strike her she cried out loudly 'diable viens moy querir'. Witness and her husband told her off, threatening to beat them with a stick, at which they both left house. Were glad when they later moved away.

(9) Colas Mandray, 50

Long reputation. Some 10 years earlier he and her husband had taken a joint lease on a house, but she and husband were always quarrelling, and he finally renewed lease in his own name alone. Lost some animals after this, which he suspected had been her witchcraft. Mengel Louys had told him of incident reported by previous witness.

(10) Claude Jean Petit Colin de Layegotte, 36

5 years earlier, when she and her husband were guarding lesser animals at Layegotte, he had rented them part of a house. Heard quarrel during which she told husband 'Va t'en au diable, j'ay un autre maitre que toy', and he said it was not worth beating her.

(11) Jean l'Hoste de Ginfosse, 46

Reputation several years. 3 years earlier he had taken keeping of lesser animals at Raves for his children, but she refused to pay her share, alleging that she and her husband should have had this. Then held back piece of cloth which one of his stepsons was making for her, and husband came and disputed with him; witness advised him to make no threats, in view of his wife's reputation, saying he would take action if there were any consequences. Later she met stepson, who was already ill, and told him 'qu'il avoit de ceste maladie pour toutte sa vie'. He died 3 or 4 weeks later, and if she was witch as reputed thought she had been cause. She later told his wife that she should have mentioned suspicion to her alone, and not to everyone as she had done.

(12) , 40

Reputation 5 years. Some 2 years before had told him his horses had strayed into her field, and he said he knew nothing of it, but would try to prevent it in future. 2 weeks later a fine mare died suddenly, and had subsequently lost two more horses and other animals - suspected her if she was witch as reputed.

(13) Claude Jean Demenge Mengin, 40

2 years earlier found 3 of his horses in her field, and used some wood from her hedge to block gap. She was angry about this, and he then lost a foal, suspecting that she was the cause if she was a witch as reputed.

(14) Dieudonné Jean Nicole, hostellain, 40

Long reputation, and had called her witch himself without redress being sought. As lieutenant of maire had 2 or 3 times quarrelled with her when involved in collecting debts; she threatened him, and he saw 'qu'elle luy portoit de la malveillance'. Had lost animals, including 2 pigs, after this, and suspected that if she was witch she was cause.

23 October 1609; interrogation

Said she was about 44, native of Beaumont in prévôté of Bruyères. Daughter of Jean Badouin and his wife Lorence; father had been procureur for abbess of Remiremont. Had been married 16 years, just one child, who was still living.

Thought she had been arrested because Claudel le Maimbourg (brother-in-law) and Nicolas Cointzelin had called her witch. This was when she refused to let them take animals across her garden - brother-in-law threw her to the ground and called her witch. Had reparation from him, but not from Cointzelin, who was away for at least 6 weeks after this.

Claimed that there had been a dispute between her husband and Jean Gregoire Mathis over keeping animals, suggesting this lay behind his accusation. Agreed to various disputes over straying animals, but not to having done any harm.

Agreed that she had had a grey cat, which had been 'un fort bon chat et des meilleurs pour deschasser la vermine'. Had been sad to lose it - had become ill after eating a bad egg which she originally cooked with cream for her son, and died after 7 weeks. Cat had sometimes followed her, and rubbed against her while she stroked its back, as one normally did with cats.

In case of Jean l'Hoste, said she herself had told him to keep cloth until they could pay him. When son-in-law was very ill had found him coming back from baker with loaf which was 'fort rude et noir', and told him this would not be good for him, and he should feed himself properly. Said that Dieudonné Jean Nicole had been hostile to her for 3 years, although she had never given him cause; her husband had only one arm, and was very poor, so they had wanted to take some action against him (text damaged here).

28 October 1609; confrontations

No serious reproaches; denied all charges.

Subsequently a further witness was produced:

(15) Claude Peterman, jeune fils, 25

Some 2 years earlier his mother's cows had got into her field, and she warned them to prevent this in future. About a week later two fine cows fell ill, becoming little more than skin and bone; thought of her reputation and told her she was a witch and had caused this, adding that if she did not cure they he would have her arrested. She took no action over this, but next morning he found the calves had suddenly recovered, and they were still alive. Believed this had been her witchcraft, if she was a witch. Confronted with her, she agreed he had called her witch, but said there had been no witnesses.

Substitut for PG asked for question ordinaire et extraordinaire. Change de Nancy (6 November) approved only ordinaire.

12 November 1609; interrogation under torture

Given thumbscrews, then racked three times, but would confess nothing.

17 November 1609; substitut recommends that she be renvoyée

19 November 1609; Change de Nancy agrees

5 April 1610; note that she has been released - slightly damaged, so not quite clear - had she been in prison all this time?