

B 8708 no 9; witch 270, Laurence femme Vincent Bandesapt, de Pajaille

2 November 1611; confrontation with Marguite femme Girardin Haxo, who had accused her. Said she had seen her twice at sabbat 8 years earlier. Indignant denials from Laurence, who said 'que toutte sa vie, elle a prins peine de bien faire, servir a Dieu, et faire des aulmosnes, et neantmoins elle veoit presentment elle est accusée pour sorciere, jacois qu'elle est femme de bien, que sy on informoit contre la vierge Marie on y trouveroit a redire.'

Record of earlier confrontation in 1599, with Didielle veuve Jean La Lance of Pajaille, who had also alleged that she had seen Laurence at the sabbat. On this occasion she said she had several children 'et qu'ilz sont tous enfans de bien et qu'elle leur donne des bonnes doctrines'.

2 November 1611; informations preparatoires

(1) Alizon veuve Claudon Durand de Pajaille, 60

Reputation more than 18 years; no personal suspicion.

(2) Benitte femme Demenge Comte de Pajaille, 33

Had heard late Didier Houchard say, 7 years earlier, that she had bewitched him and caused loss of his arm.

(3) Nicolas Arnoux de Pajaille, 50

Reputation as long as he could remember. Told of episode 5 or 6 years earlier when her husband had cut some wood without permission, and Monsieur d'Etival instructed him, as gruyer, to collect it. Was bringing it back on cart when he met husband, and dispute ensued, during which other said 'qu'il ne tenoit qu'a elle de faire renverser le cher, et les quatre chevaulx qui le menoient'; witness said 'qu'elle avoit donc bien de la puissance'. Soon after all 4 horses died - were worth at least 50 ecus each - and he had firm suspicion that she was cause. Also lost 4 calves within a week in a strange fashion.

(4) Catherine femme Jean Grand George de Pajaille, 32

Her late father Gerard de Ban had told her that about 20 years before Laurence's husband, who was close neighbour, had woken him at midnight and asked him to go to his house. Was in terrified state, saying there was an animal as large as a bull or a wolf in their kitchen, but when they reached house said it had gone. Her father had often said afterwards that she was a witch, and her master had been to fetch her. Less than 3 months ago accused had asked her about what her father had said, and she replied that she could not remember; Laurence replied that it was the wife of Colas Perrin who was a witch, and who had come to borrow her 'coustilon de drap tanné' to take it to the sabbat. Alizon fille Jean Serrier, now living at Visembach, had told her that accused had bewitched and killed her parents in order that her husband should be the only locksmith in the village.

(5) veuve Colas Jean Denise de Pajaille, 50

Reputation over 20 years; mother was also suspected.

(6) Georgeatte veuve Claudon Henry de Pajaille, 55

Reputation some 30 years; suspected her of causing loss of a calf 5 years earlier when discontented with witness.

(7) Mengeotte femme Vincent Yclon de Pajaille, 50

Reputation more than 20 years.

(8) Marguitte veuve Jean Colas de Bul de Pajaille, 25

Reputation 5 or 6 years of her own residence.

(9) Jacquot Charpentier de St Remy, 36

5 or 6 years earlier he too had been carting wood illegally cut by her husband, and was threatened by her in this case - suggested that she might get under wheels and upset cart. Frightened that she might cause him some harm, he told Monsieur d'Epinal about the threat; he replied 'qu'elle en pourroit bien tant faire qu'on la feroit prendre et brusler'. Did not know that she had done him any harm, but reputation more than 20 years.

(10) Claudon Hermemant alias Massenal mulnier au Vivier, 30

Some 4 months earlier had dispute with her, after selling half a bichet of wheat for 18 gros; these were to be paid in cash, but she still owed 4 to the present. A few days later his best horse sickened, and since he suspected she had bewitched it, he went to tell her he would have her taken unless she cured it. On the way he met Jean de Sombois, who persuaded him 'qu'il falloit bien endurer de telles gens', saying he believed she had killed one of his children. Horse died same day, after being ill for only 36 hours, and he blamed her; long reputation.

(11) Jean Demenge Hermemant de Pajaille, 35

Suspected her of causing loss of a mare 2 years earlier by witchcraft, because his children had fought with hers. Also suspected her of causing death of Claudatte femme Claudon Mongeay of le Vivier, because Mongeay had taken her husband to court for reparation for slander. Long reputation.

(12) Mengeon Jean Claudon paistre des rouges bestes de Pajaille et du Mesnil, 30

About 6 months before he had quarrelled with her and called her witch 20 times; within a few days lost a cow and a goat which became rabid. After marriage feast that summer (marriage between her son and his relative - document damaged) she took him aside and said she knew he suspected her over these deaths, but they were doing of Mengeotte femme Vincent Yclon, who was likely to be arrested for witchcraft, and against whom she would depose. Some 6 years earlier had been driving herd of village pigs when one got into her garden, and she drove it out angrily; it died next day, and he thought this was her witchcraft. Long reputation.

(13) Loys Chapon de Pajaille, 45

6 or 7 years before Didier Bandecay, locksmith at Raon, and brother-in-law of accused, told him that after quarrelling with her he became dangerously ill, and was sure she had bewitched him. Long reputation.

(14) Jennon femme a Jean de Sambois de l'hermitage des Dames, 25

Around last St George she took her son aged 5 to house of Jean Grand George to be looked after until her return from la Neufville; Laurence was angry because previously she had done this, and next day he fell ill, dying in a week. Believed this had been her witchcraft. Said that when Colas Pairson had been led under the hall to have his trial read, accused had told her that he would accuse Marie Perrin, and that if Marie was a witch she thought she had been to her house to take her clothes and wear them to the sabbat without her knowing. Long reputation.

(15) Jennon femme Jean Claude Estienne du Mesnil, 60

Some 2 years before Laurence's daughter had asked her daughter to meal at their house, and before leaving she became ill; was in danger of death for 3 weeks. Witness had not spoken to anyone about suspicions, yet accused came and asked her why she suspected her. Told her that she had said nothing to anyone, and if she said otherwise she lied like an evil woman. This made her believe she had bewitched her daughter; long reputation.

(16) Jean Grandmont du Mesnil, 34

Some 4 years before her husband was doing some work for him, and asked him as part payment to collect a load of straw with his cart. She said he should go on the morrow to avoid its being spoiled by the rain, but since day looked completely fine he set off, with approval of her husband. Tremendous thunderstorm came up while he was carting straw, so that half the load was lost. She complained that it was completely soaked and ruined, and asked why he had gone when she had warned him it would rain. He was astonished by this, and confirmed in his belief that she was a witch; long reputation.

(17) Nicolas Charpentier du Mesnil, ?

5 or 6 years earlier she had asked him to fetch a load of charcoal from the woods, but he said he was too busy, and she was angry. Soon after a fine ox fell ill and died after 3 weeks, which he blamed on her witchcraft; long reputation.

(18) Dieudonnee veuve Colas Pairson du Vivier, 26

Her late stepfather Claude Serrurier had told her that he believed Laurence had killed his parents Jean and Alison Serrurier, and that he wanted to have her taken as a witch, but he himself then died immediately after his parents, and she imputed this to her witchcraft. Long reputation, and she herself had several times called her witch in public without reparation being sought.

(19) Jean Hermemant alias Holbin du Vivier, 26

Around last Assumption his brother Colas had quarrel with her at the mill, then lost a fine horse, which he thought was her witchcraft.

(20) Claudon Ferry du Mesnil, ?

Repeated story of pig which had strayed into her garden some 6 years earlier, and died the next day. Long reputation.

(21) Jean de Sombois de l'hermitage des Dames, 28

Repeated wife's story about death of 5-year-old son; said she had visited him and said 'qu'elle voudroit estre aussy proche de sa fin comme estoit ledit enfant' on day he died. Long reputation.

(9 November 1611)

(22) Didier Bandesapt de Raon, 40

Some 8 years earlier he had quarrel with Laurence, who was his sister-in-law, in his brother's house; called her witch and beat her, at which she threatened him, saying she would remember it well, and he would repent in time. On the day that the widow Piernat was executed under the hall his brother asked him to visit their house, but as soon as he entered he became ill, and had great difficulty getting back to Raon, where he was in bed for 15 weeks. Asked her to visit him, with intention of shooting her with a pistol, but she did not come. Believed her responsible for illness, and for death of his parents; she was reputed witch as long as he could remember.

(23) Catherine femme Jean des Mailles de Raon, 45

Some 25 years before her mother, as neighbour, had refused to lend her a cauldron; she was angry, mother became ill same day and died in 2 weeks. Her father also became ill, and died in a week; both said until death that she had bewitched them. Laurence's sister-in-law told her of their suspicions and asked her to visit them, to which she replied 'qu'elle les yroit veoir le grand diable qui les emporteroit'. Long reputation.

9 November 1611; interrogation

Said she was Laurence, wife of Vincent Bandesapt of Pajaille, and was about 44. She was native of Prouvencheres, daughter of Aubert Baret and Jehennon Tixerand, and had been married about 28 years. Claimed she had not had many quarrels with her neighbours, although she had been in dispute with her niece Catherine Bandeca, who had found her son taking apples and removed his clothes. Asked if she had caused her any harm by witchcraft, said she had not, 'jacois qu'elle voudroit de bonne volonté luy en avoir fait.'

Knew she was accused of witchcraft, and agreed that she had been accused some 9 years earlier by Didielle La Lance; this had made her so miserable that she had several times thought of drowning herself in a lake. Had also been accused by one Poirson, executed some 5 months earlier, and very recently by Marguette Haxo.

Said she had heard story about husband calling neighbour in some 20 years before to see animal in their house, but denied that it was true. Also denied recent

remarks about wife of Colas Perrin being a witch and taking her clothes, then admitted she might have said something of the kind.

Asked if her late mother had been suspected of witchcraft, said she had, 'et que comme elle a entendu dire que ceulx qui sont sorciers et sorcieres, et meurent sans en avoir faict confession à la justice, et en enduré la peine du feu, sy tant estoit que sa feuere mere soit esté sorciere, elle est contante d'estre bruslée au nom d'icelle, pour sauver son ame.'

Agreed that Mengeon Jean Claudon had called her witch, and that she had told him that some other witch was responsible for losses of animals. Also agreed that she had said that since she had been accused so often, some other witch must have taken her clothes and worn them to the sabbat. Had several times put blessed bread in the chest where she kept her clothes so that witches should have no power there. Also agreed that her brother-in-law had called her witch and beaten her, but he had done her great wrong; if she were cause of his illness let her never have remission for her sins.

10 November 1611; confrontations

She started by saying 'qu'elle nous prie par l'honneur de Dieu d'envoyer appeller son marit pour luy encore parler une fois pour la derniere, et que par apres elle nous dira tout ce qu'elle se sentira coupable, et dela qu'on la mene tout droit au supplice.' Judges insisted that she confess first, and she said she could not confess to being a witch without damning herself.

Confronted with Nicolas Arnoux, said that if he had been threatened as he said, it was by some other person who had taken her form to get her accused. Agreed she had quarrelled with Mengeon Jean Claudon to point where they were ready to kill one another. In reply to testimony of Jean Grandmont, said that if evidence were taken against the Virgin Mary 'on s'y trouveroit assez a redire, veu qu'on treuve a redire contre elle prevenue qui est sy femme de bien'. No reproaches to any witnesses.

10 November 1611; procureur d'office asks for question ordinaire et extraordinaire

12 November 1611; Change de Nancy agrees.

16 November 1611; interrogation under torture

As soon as she was given thumbscrews, said she had been seduced 20 years earlier by Persin, when feeling miserable because both her mother and she were suspected of witchcraft. He offered to ensure that no-one would speak of this any more, and she yielded - normal seduction scene. Gave her powder, black to kill, yellow to make languish and cure, and a coin, which she put with husband's secret stock. Tried powder on a hen, then used it to kill maire of Pajaille, Colas Jean, by sprinkling it on him - was angry because he did not want her to keep going to his house to spin. Killed small daughter of Toussaint Gregoire because he said his children were worth more than hers, and Colas Jean Aulbry because he called her witch. Denied killing horses belonging to Monsieur d'Etival, then when pressed admitted it - was angry because of confiscation of wood. Had also killed Jean Serrier and his wife, because latter refused to lend her cauldron. Denied some accusations of killing animals, and of killing Claudatte femme Claudon Mengeay, who had been killed by Claudon Mareschal of le Vivier, who was 'ung parfait sorcier'. Mengeon Jean Claudon's animals had been killed by Vincent Yclon's wife, also a witch.

Denied killing child of Jean de Sambois, or daughter of Jean Claude Estienne. Had killed ox of Claudon Charpentier when he refused to do carting for her. Denied making her brother-in-law ill.

Had been to sabbat more often than she could remember, usually on côte de Repy, but 'ce n'estoit qu'ung abbus, et toute pauvreté'. Had seen Dieudonnée veuve Richard Pelletier of Deyfosse, Marguitte veuve Jean Colas Arnoulx du Mesnil (now living at Deyfosse), Jean Gerardin of la Fosse, Marguitte femme Girardin Haxo, Claudon Mareschal du Vivier, Marie Perrin de Pajaille (deceased), Mengeotte femme Vincent Yclon de Pajaille, Floratte femme Jean Chappouxat, Jean gendre à Nicolas Perrin de Pajaille (living at St Dié), and Epnatte femme Jean Tixerand de St Remy. Finally added name of Curienne veuve Claudon Pairson du Mesnil.

Brief description of sabbat, where they ate 'oysillons' and made hail in usual fashion. More important witches, who wore masks, sat next to Persin.

16 November 1611; interrogation

Confirmed earlier confessions. Said that she had no powder left, and that Persin had usually given it to her for specific purposes. Had incited her to commit many more maléfices than she had actually done; she had bitterly regretted her temptation, and but for fear of losing her soul completely would long since have drowned herself in the river or a lake.

Now revised list of accomplices, saying she had accused some of them out of hatred. Maintained charges against Dieudonnée veuve Richard Pelletier, Jean gendre Nicolas Perrin, and Epnatte femme Jean Tixerand.

18 November 1611; procureur d'office asks for execution

21 November 1611; Change de Nancy approves

29 November 1611; sentence carried out at St Dié