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Witch 278: B8715 no 1, Georgeatte femme de Didier Malley de la Neufville-les-Raon

24 April 1515; informations preparatoires contre Georgeatte femme de Didier Malley de la Neufville-les-Raon.

(1) Nicolas Charier de la Neufville, c. 50

Reputation more than 10 years. Some 4 years before Georgeatte's son Demenge had got into fight with Jean Gelliat, with whom witness was working. When he tried to separate them he had to defend himself against Demenge; next day she came up to him in street and 'se print a luy furieusement', saying he had struck her son 'et qu'elle l'auroit, ou le diable l'auroit'. 3 or 4 days later was suddenly taken ill, losing use of arms and legs, and this lasted a month, so that some expected him to die. During illness his brother Claudon told her they suspected her of causing it, and that if she did not take it off 'ils mecteroient leurs biens pour en voire une fin'. He then began to recover, and as she was passing his house she asked him how he was, and said that he would get better if he had patience.

(2) Le maire Bastien Fournier de la Neufville, c. 60

Reputation more than 7 years. No personal harm.

(3) Didier Daulphin de la Neufville, c. 65

Had had various disputes with her husband over years (both were manouvriers). Some 18 months before, outside church, she had struck him on the shoulder without any explanation; next day had found the shoulder and all the left side of his body virtually paralysed. Since then had been unable to work and had been reduced to great poverty, living from alms. Believed that if she were the witch she was reputed she had caused the illness.

(4) Le maire Demenge Guenare de la Neufville, c. 38

Reputation 12 years. Around that time she and her husband had been regularly in house of his father-in-law, maire Thoussaint, and he had heard that she had said 'que s'ils ne faisoient tant d'estat de leurs enfans a les cherir qu'ilz timeroyent'; soon after son Adam aged 2 fell ill, dying a week later. Suspected her of causing this in hatred over some offence given her. Some 5 years before had been member of justice when she had been accused as a witch by Georgeatte wife of Demenge Chopat, who had maintained that she saw her at the sabat; after this she had shown hatred towards him, and spoken in such a fashion that he had threatened to take action against her. Previous year, as his servants were taking horses past her house, she had called out maledictions, including 'que le grand diable puisse emporter le mre., les serviteurs et chevaulx' - a few days later two of them, one being worth 30 ecus, died in strange fashion. Had accused her of bewitching them, in presence of her husband and children, but no action followed.

(5) Colas Tiriat de la Neufville, c. 30

Some 4 years before, when the late Clemence, wife of the maire Bastien, had been very ill, her children had asked him to consult the devin of Tanviller, who told

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him 'que seroit bien d'aventure avant qu'il soit retourne en sa maison s'il ne rencontroit celle que luy avoit donne le mal'. Met Georgeatte on bridge on way back, which in accord with her reputation made him suspect her.

(6) Chrestien Brandec de la Neufville, c. 45

Reputation 8 years; as doyen had heard accusation by wife of Demenge Chopat before her execution 5 years earlier.

(7) Claudon Charier de la Neufville, c. 46

Reputation five years, since accusation by Demenge Chopat's wife; had several times heard Demenge Colin call her witch, but she had not sought to avenge herself.

(8) Didier Rondel de la Neufville, c. 36

Reputation 12 years.

(9) ? de la Neufville, c. 60

Reputation at least 20 years.

(10) Estienne Pescheur de la Neufville, c. 36

Reputation more than 7 years; had heard her called witch by her youngest son, and by Lucas Brandec, from whom she had sought no redress, but had no suspicion himself.

(11) Nicolle femme a Jean des Boeufs, c. 58

Told how 5 years earlier her daughter Odille had been in service with maire Bastien; one day at mill they had dispute about who should go first, after which Odille was afflicted by illness which lasted 15 months, losing use of limbs. During this time her children were in Georgeatte's house, and she gave them some milk from which witness made some soup for Odille, which she drank in expectation of either death or recovery; became worse, but then slowly recovered, and was now married in Allemagne. Both she and her mother believed that Gergeatte had given her the illness. Some 6 years earlier witness had been at mill with Georgeatte and talked of Jean Pieron and his wife, then convicted of witchcraft; Georgeatte told her that Pieron had said there was another such household in la Neufville, and witness had suspected it was hers, since both she and her husband were reckoned such.

(12) Nicolle veuve de Nicolas Mathiatte de la Neuveville, c. 60

General reputation. Some 5 years earlier had heard Colas Charier's wife accuse her of causing his strange illness.

(13-) CI? femme de Noel Gerard de la Neufville, c. 40

Previous year accused had passed near their mare and foal, after which mare had lost its milk - suspected her of being cause.

(14) Claudatte femme a Rocq Gerardin de la Neufville, c. 25

4 years before, when she was in service with Demenge Colin, Georgeatte's son had been seeking her in marriage, but she had rejected him. After her marriage Georgeatte met her at fountain, and said that if she had married her son 'qu'elle n'eust heu tant de mal qu'elle avoit avec son dit marit, et qu'elle auroit encore jusques a Pasques'. Next day (Chandelleur) when at church was stricken with a great sickness which lasted 3 months or more, during which she sometimes lost speech and all feeling in body - could not even give suck to her baby. All remedies seemed useless, although she finally recovered - believed Georgeatte, who had been angry over marriage, had bewitched her.

(15) Dieudonne fils de Noel Gerard, c. 16

Had seen a woman with a scarf on her head in a field belonging to accused about 2 years before, jumping and throwing herself to the ground, while a large black man watched from other side of field. Thought it had been Georgeatte, particularly in view of her reputation as a witch.

(16) George Mongeat de la Neufville, c. 46

Accusation 5 years earlier; he himself had called her witch after a quarrel without any action being taken.

(17) Jean Daulphin de la Neufville, c. 32

Some 5 years earlier Georgeatte came repeatedly to their house asking to buy first milk and then butter; first two times was refused, didn't know if his wife had given her any on third occasion, but she had been angry. Two days later a fine calf became ill, dying next day as if rabid - believed this was witchcraft by accused, in view of reputation.

(18) Magdelaine femme a Mongin Forney de la Neufville, c. 40

Reputation 16 years (since her residence).

(19) Jean Mourenat de la Neufville, c. 34

Some 5 years before, when Georgeatte was neighbour, his late wife had suffered from a continual fever, which no remedies could help. Sickness had lasted 9 months, but had been cured when accused brought her a plate of 'milletz'. Suspected Georgeatte in view of reputation, and also because on day before illness she had quarrelled with his wife over who should go first at the mill.

(20) Marye femme a Claudon Cherier, c. 34

Told how after quarrel between husbands she had told Georgeatte that they had better suffer no misfortune, to which she replied that they should not fear this, and none would come. Had also heard Demenge Colin and his wife call her witch, and accuse her of causing loss of more than 100 ecus.

(21) Demenge Vatrin de la Neufville, c. 50

General reputation. Had dispute with her husband about tithes 3 years before, when he held ferme, and she threatened him, saying 'que peut estre Dieu ne luy feroit la grace de les lever une autre fois', but no misfortune followed.

(22) Colas Blaiset de la Neufville, c. 55

Blamed her for causing an illness to his son Colas four and a half years earlier, after incident when Colas and her husband had been overpaid for some work by mistake, and Colas had returned money rather than sharing it. Had told witness he was a thief, and threatened that she or the Devil would have him, after similar threats by her husband. Son had been ill for 7 weeks, with no mark on body, but as if in despair and troubled in his mind.

(23) Mongin Forney de la Neufville, c. 45

Some 5 years earlier had been maitre valet in 'marchandise des toiles' of George de la Roche; knew accused had been angry and envious because they were taking trade from her husband and son. One day as he was putting 'commieres' in water by bridge one of them struck him behind the leg, and he hurt himself falling; needed a month's expensive treatment by surgeon. Believed that if she were the witch she was reputed she had caused this misfortune.

(24) Jehenne femme a Didier Rondel, c. 40

Some 5 years earlier she was returning from market at Raon with an earthenware pot; as she passed Georgeatte's house latter said 'vous avez une diable de vache, sy elle vouloit remplir ladite cassatte'. Witness was affronted; a few days later the cow, which had been giving a lot of milk, gave less every day, and calves died - believed this had been witchcraft by accused.

(25) Thoussaince femme a Didier Daulphin, c. 40

Told of husband's illness, and of belief that Georgeatte had caused it.

(26) Jean Gerardin de la Neufville, c. 60

Had various quarrels with accused, who had threatened him, saying that if she were a witch she would kill him; he replied that if he suffered any misfortune 'il feroit parler d'elle'. Had lost animals since this, and if she confessed she ought to be asked about them.

30 April 1615; Change de Nancy orders arrest and imprisonment

4 May; interrogation

Said she was native of la Neuville, daughter of Demenge Tabourin and his wife Dedie. Aged about 50, had been married for 23 years to Didier Malley, manouvrier. Agreed she had been accused by Demenge Chopat's wife, but she was 'une meschante femme et qu'il y avoit longtemps qu'elle avoit dit qu'elle luy garderoit ung desplaisir.'

Agreed that Claudon Cherier had threatened her during brother's illness in terms stated, but claimed she was innocent. Also agreed that she might have wished Demenge Ganaire, his servants and his horses, to the devil; hated him because every time he passed house he talked of the need to burn the witches. Asked if she had killed his horses, replied 'qu'elle prie Dieu de le paier de dire telz propos et qu'il luy veuille donner patience et que c'est ung Judas et trahistre'.

Admitted to being called witch by several, but generally had no witnesses, while Ganaire was a drunkard, and she lacked the means to take him to court.

Told that she was perjuring herself and denying truth, replied 'que jamais elle ne puisse aller en Paradis sy elle ne confesse la verité, et qu'on la vouldroit faire dampner'.

Made no other admissions of importance, and was then confronted with witnesses on same day, with no real results.

6 May 1615; Change de Nancy orders question ordinaire et extraordinaire

11 May 1615; interrogation under torture

Given thumbscrews on hands and feet, then racked. Continued to deny at first, then said she would tell truth if released. When taken off rack reasserted that she was 'femme de bien', so was put back, and tordillons applied to one arm. Asked again to be released, saying 'qu'elle avoit aultant mieulx estre bruslée, que de recevoir ces tourmentz'.

Now said she had been seduced 15 years before, when husband had been angry with her about some money she had spent, and had beaten her. She had gone to woods in a rage, and had been met by Mre. Persin - but on this occasion she resisted, only to succumb three days later to his 'propos amieles'.

Gave list of malefices committed with powder given her. Had sprinkled it at edge of field where goats were always eating crop, and goat of Didier Ganar died. Killed horse of Demenge Ganar, which had done damage outside house, and cow of Paulans Parmentier, which had bumped into hers. Had been angry with Jean Mongeat's wife, whom she had allowed to go before her to mill, and who had lost her place so that she could not mill that day, despite having no bread.

Had resisted master's incitement to take vengeance, since she was neighbour and a friend, but finally consented, and master made her ill, until she repented and gave her healing powder in dish of millet.

After Colas Charier had beaten her son, her master said he should kill him; she resisted this, but agreed that he should make him ill, as he did for a time. Similar case of Odille daughter of Jean des Boeufs, who would not give place to her at mill - in both these cases master threatened to beat her until she gave in and allowed vengeance. Denied committing other malefices, despite being questioned specifically about accusations made by Didier Daulphin, Demenge Ganart, and Claudatte femme Roch Gerardin.

Agreed that she had been to sabbat two or three times a year, carried through the air by her master. 30 or 40 people there, who danced to music made by menestriers, such as a flute, then feasted. She had hung back from dances, and in general 'n'estoit des plus avant par ce que les pauvres estoient tousjours mis en bas, et les riches en hault, et lors qu'il failloit retourner il convenoit aller baiser une paix, que l'un desdits diables tenoit en signe de reverence.' Claimed she had always resisted invitations to harm crops, and had been beaten for this, although on one occasion some 5 years before had helped to make hailstorm to destroy millets.

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Said that she had seen Georgeatte wife of Demenge Chopat, and Sebille wife of Estienne Pescheur, already executed; also Fleuratte wife of Bastien des Boenfs, whom she had recognised by her clothing although she had been masked like the others.

12 May 1615; interrogation

Confirmed earlier confessions; said to judges 'qu'elle nous remercie de la peine que prenons a l'entour d'elle pour faire le salut de son ame'.

14 May 1615; formal death sentence from Change de Nancy

16 May 1615; execution carried out.

Costs of trial were 118 fr 2 gros, shared between Duke and abbot of Etival.