

B 8721 no 6. Witch 298, Catherine femme Jean le Maire, of Le Paire (Saulcy-sur-Meurthe).

22 September 1618; informations preparatoires

(1) Jean du Sellier, 35

3 years earlier she had warned his wife about a cow which had done damage in her garden, and following winter it died suddenly; in view of reputation believed she had done this.

(2) Jean Pieron, 50

Reputation 10 years. Some 8 days before had a quarrel with her about a post she had taken from his field - told her she could take it and burn it when she offered to return it, saying he did not want to quarrel with her. Added that if he had any misfortune 'il la retrouveroit bien'. Went off without reply, and although he had lost various animals did not think her responsible.

(3) Urbain le Souche, ?

18 months earlier, during lifetime of his first wife, she had various minor disputes with accused, who said to her threateningly 'qu'elle estoit bien haulte, mais qu'elle rabasseroit'. Three days later a fine cow fell ill and died as if rabid, generally thought to be bewitched. Had also lost another cow and two bulls, which he blamed on her witchcraft - her sister already executed in ban d'Etival. Also blamed her for wife's death, and during illness she had said how much she feared her. Some 2 years earlier he himself had a strange illness which lasted 10 weeks, 'estant sans cognoissance', then slowly recovered. This followed occasion when he was angry over quarrel with his wife, and took an axe intending to attack her, but was dissuaded by his wife - thought she might have heard of this and made him ill. Had heard that she had absented herself since previous Wednesday.

(4) Bablon femme Jean Mathieu de Moyenmoustier, 60

During widowhood before current marriage, had resided with previous witness, who was her son, and repeated essential of his testimony about losses. Said she was more feared in ban d'Etival than her sister who had been executed, and reputed witch for more than 20 years. Confirmed fears of daughter-in-law, who said someone had given her the illness without naming them. Chretien Jean Barbe of Saulsure had said she had been in his house since previous Wednesday.

(5) Colas Epvron, 35

Reputation 12 years, execution of sister.

(6) Richard Jean Collate, 30

Previous year she and her husband were living in his house, and one evening husband, who had been drinking, drove her out. Next morning found her back in bed, although doors had been locked and no-one had let her in, so suspected some

diabolical device. Several times heard her husband call her witch and say she ought to be burned.

(7) Jean Voirin, 45

Some 12 years earlier her son Nicolas was herdsman, and witness told him off for not taking animals out early enough; 2 or 3 days later two fine cows sickened and died in the day, for which he blamed her witchcraft. Reputation more than 18 years. When he declared his suspicions openly, he was threatened and had to make 'une declaration amiable'.

(8) Catherine femme Jean du Hellier, 30

Same story as husband (witness 1). Had been alone in house at night when stable door flew open on its own, and heard noise of cats on roof. Did not dare to go in until next morning, when she found the cow dead. In view of general reputation believed her responsible, more so since she had asked her one day which cow she had lost, then said nothing more.

(9) Colas Collin, 26

When he had not wanted to receive her in his house said 'qu'il en avoit encore des bien jeunes, et que d'icy a cinquante ans il ne scavoit ce qu'ilz deviendroient'. Despite reputation did not think he had received any harm. Had not returned since she had been to St Dié with husband and son Nicolas, and had heard husband say he thought she might have gone with her son-in-law Denis who was a vagabond.

(10) Le maire Nicolas Mongeon, 56

A year before his daughter Fleuratte, wife to 'nous mayeur' (was he taking depositions?) had died after a strange illness which lasted a month. During life always heard her say 'qu'elle craindoit fort ladite prevenue, et qu'elle tascheroit de la contanter de ce que parfois elle luy demandoit de la maison'. Suspected that if she was witch as she was reputed she might have caused her death, either because she had been refused something or because she heard of suspicions. Execution of sister, rumour that she had fled.

(11) Jean le Maire le viel, 70

His son was her husband; he knew nothing against her, and had only heard of reputation recently. Had come to him last week lamenting that she had heard she was to be arrested, and said that she was going to St Dié to sign act transferring property to husband. Witness reproached her, saying that if she were a good woman she should have no fear.

(12) Demenge Jacquat, 55

Reputation more than 7 years; sister Jennon, femme Claudon de la Ruelle, already executed. About 6 years before had bought some land from tutor of dead sister's children, and she had been angry about this. Her daughter told him he would have done better not to buy them, at which he told her that if he had any

misfortune he would have her burned. 2 or 3 years later, every time he harnessed his horses he and his men were troubled by crows which flew down in front of them, so that they had great difficulty getting them out to work, and lost much time. Believed this had been her witchcraft.

(13) Demenge Malfort, 70

General repute only.

(14) Mongeon Jean, 36

3 years earlier she had told off his 5-year-old daughter Epnate for something she said, saying she would repent. A few days later she fell ill, and was in a pitiful state for 3 or 4 weeks before recovering gradually. Believed that if she was a witch as reputed she had caused this illness.

(15) Jennon femme Idoul Jean Collate, 35

Reputation 16 years (residence). Various disputes and misfortunes, but she had no suspicion; if she was a witch she was 'une faulce et rusée' one.

(16) Honn. Nicolas Andreu mayeur, 28

Some 5 years before he had told her and her children off for taking wood from his field, and she had been angry. Since then had lost 4 or 5 cattle, which had been 'fort enflé et plain de poison', generally reckoned to be bewitched. Then told of death of his wife Fleuratte, who had been afraid that she had been bewitched by accused. He believed these losses and death of wife had been caused either by her 'ou bien Marion femme a Jean Voirin qui est aussy soubconnée pour le mesme crime en hayne de quelques disputes, et les impute aux sortilleges de l'une ou de l'autre'.

(17) Beniste femme Andreu Pieron, 60

Reputation 12 years; no personal suspicion, but had heard Demenge du Maillé blame her for death of a pig.

(18) Jehenne femme Jean Pieron, 56

Had heard her disputing with daughter-in-law Claudette, who called her witch; did not believe she had taken any action.

(19) Vincent Harmant de Moyenmoustier, 66

A fortnight earlier had been drinking with her husband and talking of rumours about her arrest; latter said 'qu'il scavoit mieulx ce que s'estoit d'elle, qu'autres personnes qui en parloient, et qu'il voudroit qu'elle fust desja bien loing.' Previous day had told him he had sent her to work in woods with some 'bocquillons', and if she were taken she would not allow herself to be tortured. Reputation several years.

(20) Beniste femme Colas Jean Mongeay de Moyenmoustier, 56

About 20 years before her husband had lost a sack, which had been taken by son of accused; quarrel ensued, after which they lost animals and had other misfortunes. Had always believed that if she was a witch she had caused these.

26 September 1618; procureur d'office notes that he has received evidence taken at his request and that of Jean Jacquat 'partie produisante'. Also states that she had been named as accomplice by Jehennon femme Claudon Veltin of La Chapelle, already executed. Orders arrest, or banishment if she does not answer summons on three separate days.

6 October 1618; Change de Nancy approves

11 October 1618; interrogation

Said she was about 44, native of Le Paire; husband Jean le Maire was manoeuvrier. First husband had been Claudon Barlier. Agreed that her father had been imprisoned on suspicion of witchcraft, 'mais que ce fust en homme de bien'. Asked about absence, said she had gone to work; judges objected that this was implausible, and quite against her normal practice. She had gone right out of seigneurie to comté de Salm in bishopric of Metz, where she had been arrested. Admitted that she had been frightened of justice, and had heard that Jean Jacot had become 'partie formelle' against her. Asked if she had been accused of witchcraft by Mongeatte femme Jean Johel, executed previous year, said she had only heard about this after execution - was not confronted, and she was 'une meschante femme'. Agreed that her sister had been executed.

Denied all the specific charges, which were recited to her in some detail. Asked about visit to St Dié with husband and son, 'Elle a commencé a souspirer et estre affrontée sans dire mot, enfin elle a dit que c'estoit pour achepter des souliers.' Did agree that Colas Andreu had told her and children off for taking wood, and that she had been angry, but denied causing him any harm.

12 October 1618; confrontations

Said that Jean du Cellier was 'larron de fruit', while Urbain Le Souche was 'larron' and 'faulcaire'. Said that Nicolas Mongeay had refused justice to her father-in-law Jean le Maire le viel while he was in office, but he denied this strongly. No other specific reproaches, but accused them all of lying, and ended up saying 'qu'ilz sont tous dampnés a tous les diables ceulx qui ont déposé.' Added that she wished they had killed her already.

13 October 1618; procureur asks for question ordinaire

16 October 1618; Change de Nancy agrees.

19 October 1618; interrogation under torture

Repeated that she was 'femme de bien', God was her only master, and she 'voudroit estre tuée'. Withstood thumbscrews but when she was racked asked to be released. Had been seduced by Persin 7 years earlier, when very angry after husband had beaten her. Appeared to her first time and then vanished; 3 days later came again, said she was a poor woman and he would make her rich. Money was oak leaves. Had intercourse with her twice - as cold as ice. Asked about powder,

said she was given this some days later - black to kill and yellow to cure. Tried powder out on hen. After quarrel with wife of Urbain le Souche, who accused her over a lost girdle, she used powder on her. Master asked her to use powder on Colas Andreu's wife, because she feared her - refused, but finally allowed him to act for her, and he told her he had given the illness from which she died. During this she was full of regret, but was unable to cure her. Had also allowed him to make Mongeon Jean's daughter ill, for words she had spoken, then used yellow powder in a pear to cure her. Angry with Jean Jacquat because he had charged her, had agreed that her master should kill one of his horses.

Said she had committed no other maléfices, and had often been beaten by her master because she refused to agree to do harm. Had been carried to sabbat on côte de Repy on her master's shoulders, going like a wind. Found 2 or 3 others there; danced back to back to sound of flute, ate unseasoned meat like that of chickens. Talked of killing people and doing harm. At other sabbats at Haulte Pierre were many witches; had recognized Babillon femme Mongeon Voirin dit Masteste, and Jennon femme François Vanier of Moyennoustier, but no others because they wore masks. Had refused to make hail etc because she was poor and feared dearth. Had only been about 3 times a year, most commonly in summer, otherwise in autumn - annual offering of a chicken at St Jean to be excused attendance.

20 October 1618; interrogation

Repeated confessions, adding that she had consented to her master killing ox of Colas Andreu after his pig damaged her garden.

Repeated confession in afternoon, asking to be put to death as soon as possible.

23 October 1618; procureur asks for death sentence

25 October 1618; Change de Nancy agrees