

Witch 312, Margueritte Jean Symon 1

B 8735 no 5; witch 312, Margueritte Jean Symon jeune fille de Raon

17 July 1624; informations preparatoires

(1) Dedie femme Lucas Champestre le jeune de Raon, 30

Had been reported to her that around last carnival time Margueritte had complained that she had not been invited to be godmother to child of witness, adding remark about how ill it now was. If she were a witch, as she was long reputed, believed she had caused sickness.

(2) Jeanne femme Jean Villemin bouchier de Raon, 35

Reputation 7 or 8 years; much feared in town.

(3) Gerard Codat drappier de Raon, 50

Reputation more than 12 years. Believed she had plotted with her sister-in-law, already executed, to cause illness from which his wife was expected to die. Had called her witch and reproached her with this, but she had not taken action.

(4) Catherine femme Nicolas Ferry de Raon, 27

Had heard her make complaint about not being godmother, and saying that if she had held child it would have been 'en chance'. Had heard child's mother say she blamed illness of her witchcraft; reputation 14 years.

(5) Meline femme Jean Trichart dit Henry de Raon, 50

Some 5 or 6 years before had sent her daughter to her to learn to sew, but after a year and more she became angry with her because she learned too well and was taking away her business. A whirlwind struck her when she was outside house of accused, and on return home complained of earache; face became all swollen and infected, and she was subsequently deaf. In view of common repute both witness and daughter believed this was her witchcraft.

(6) Nicolle fille Jean Trichart, 19

Repeated mother's testimony.

(7) Mengeotte femme Bastien Drouin de Raon, 35

Reputation 14 years. Witness had left small child in bedroom while she went to house of Gabriel Drouin, and there met accused, who said she should go back in case something happened to child. On return found front of clothing all burned, and child choking on smoke; died two weeks later, and believed that if she were witch as reputed she had caused this.

(8) Martin Sachot drappier de Raon, 48

Some six years before he had owed her 10 francs for pension of his niece Anne, whose tutor he was, and they had several disputes, so that he had to seek an accord through the then maire. Some two weeks later he became very ill, having to take to bed then go on crutches; illness lasted 10 weeks, and believed that if she were witch as she was reputed she had given it to him.

20 July 1624; Change de Nancy approves arrest and interrogation

6 August 1624; interrogation

Said she was Margueritte Symon, daughter of the late Jean Symon of Raon, aged about 50; knew she was accused of witchcraft. Then started to confess; 11 years before when Demenge Mathiatte's wife had been about to be executed as a witch she said 'en son prone qu'on ne la fait point mourir qu'elle estoit une bonne fille'. Was in despair thinking she would be accused, and crying bitterly behind house when she was approached by Maitre Parsin. Agreed to serve him and renounce God, but money was only leaves. Appeared to her again some 6 weeks later, gave her powder (black, yellow and white; kill, languish, cure) 'luy enseignant que quant elle auroit quelque dispute avec personne, qu'elle les facent mourrir'. Experimented with powder on her cat, but did not use it otherwise, and was reproached by master who gave her more.

About a month later used it to kill Catherine fille Jean Curiels (dit Jambe de bois), who often said she was a witch so that 'le bruict courroit parmy la ville'; died 'd'estrance facon'. Some 3 years earlier had great dispute with late cleric juré, when living in same house, and gave him fatal illness which lasted more than 6 months; he had to be taken to hospital. Denied causing illness of Lucas Champestre's child, or that of Gerard Chodat's wife, daughter of Jean Trichard, or child of Mengin Drouin, but admitted to causing illness of Martin Sachot.

Said she had been to sabbat, where they danced to sound of oboe, flute and tambourin, and ate tasteless meat in form of 'oysillons' without bread, wine, or salt; as 'une des moindres de la compagnie' she served as cook. Others were masked and no-one spoke, so could recognize none of them. After 4 visits arranged to give master a hen to be excused.

Admitted making Claudon Champestre ill, because he had said that if any witch did him harm he would beat her until she had enough. Had also killed daughter of Nicolas Brabant because his late wife would not sew for her.

6 August 1624; additional depositions

(9) Claudon Champestre tailleur d'habitz de Raon, 37

Had quarrel some 9 years earlier over oil on cloth he wanted to sew; then had great illness which lasted 6 years, from which he thought he would die, and which still affected him. Had not thought it was her witchcraft, but thought 'en soy mesme' that some witchcraft might be involved.

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(10) Nicolas Brabant marchand de Raon, 31

Said that 5 or 6 years earlier his small daughter Francoise had died after illness lasting 3 or 4 days, but had no suspicion of witchcraft.

6 August 1624; interrogation

Confirmed earlier confessions.

7 August 1624; another formal confirmation of admissions, on two separate visits.

9 August 1624; Change de Nancy approves death sentence

12 August 1624; formal sentence from court at Raon

Costs shared between duke and abbot of Meyenmoutier; share of first, including costs of execution, some 42 francs.