

Witch 329, Jeanne Petiotte 1

B 8986 no 1; witch 329, Jeanne Petiotte veuve Pierre Maulgrais de St Nicolas

21 May 1613; statement that accused had previously been charged, tortured, and renvoyée. New suspicions said to justify further inquiry.

3 June 1613; information preparatoires

(1) Margueritte femme Didier Ottenat couroyeur de St Nicolas, 52

Had testified against her previously. About a year before late wife of Pierre Courier had fallen ill of unknown illness, and witness was informed by wife of Louis Thiery that on the day of Courier's marriage feast the accused had asked a beggar woman if she had received any alms. She said no, and accused said she had not either; wife fell ill some 3 days later, and often heard of suspicions. Had several times heard accused say that Barbe Courier mother of the defunct had been the cause of her being 'desrompue a la question', through deposition she had made against her.

(2) Jacquotte veuve Claude Profette drappier de St Nicolas, 36

Her husband had reproached her for cursing his nephew Vaultrin Queriot, as several neighbours had told them, and she cursed him too. 6 months later died of unknown illness, she suspected Jeanne and had told her so several times, to which she only replied that she had done him no harm.

(3) Barbe Chouquant veuve Nicolas Rieuval, de St Nicolas, 45

Thought she had wished her ill since she deposed against her, saying that her deposition had caused her many torments. Then told story of marriage feast of her daughter-in-law Claude Rieuval, her subsequent illness, and report of her dissatisfaction over alms. Also suspected her over death of her own late husband, and had heard from Jeanne's niece Jeanne Queriot that she had absented herself in fear of being arrested, that she had distributed some of her goods, and that she thought she was a witch.

(4) Jeanne Queriot femme Nicolas Demenge Henry manouvrier de St Nicolas, 55

About a month before Madame going on pilgrimage had seen wife of Simon Duxit whose limbs were paralyzed, and had ordered investigation on suspicion that Jeanne had bewitched her. Witness warned her, and she said 'que le diable ayt a emporter son corps sy elle n'estoit femme de bien, et qu'elle avoit tant prié dieu et les bons saints, neanmoings qu'ilz la delaissoit'; same day she absented herself saying she was going on pilgrimage to Ste Barbe, after distributing her goods. Also testified that Duxit's wife had asked for bread and salt from her house, to which she replied she was not allowed to; sufferer said she suspected her of causing illness, because she had refused her an 'offrande.'

(5) Nicole femme Louys Thiery manouvrier de la petite Rousier, 50

Had heard her grumbling after the Couriers' wedding feast, and then heard of wife's illness.

(10 June 1613)

(6) Jean Humbert laboureur de St Nicolas, 50

Resident 6 years, had always heard her reputed as witch. Suspected her over loss of several horses. Around last Christmas his daughter had accidentally thrown water over her as she passed, and she had uttered curses and threats against them; about a month later another daughter found her in their stables. Suspected her of further designs on horses, but threatened her that if any occurred she would be back where she had been before, and none followed.

(7) Honnete homme Paul Villaume, lieutenant du prévôt d'Amance, 45

Accused was his aunt; had never seen any wrong in her.

(8) Nicolas Mallenotte bouchier d'Amance

She was relative of his wife; had never seen any indice against her.

(9) Anthoinette femme Girard Marchal laboureur du Bourget d'Amance, 50

Accused was her aunt; had seen no indices, but had not seen her for 4 years.

(10) Nicolas Clement jeune fils de feu Bastien Clement manouvrier de St Nicolas, 17

On day of her arrest his master Vaultrin Queriot, her nephew, had seen substitut on way to his house, where she was lodging, and told witness to go and tell her to flee. She ran out into gardens behind house, where she was caught.

(11) Barbe fille Jean Humbert, 13

Told of finding her in stable, although doors were closed; said she was doing nothing, but asked witness not to tell anyone.

(12) Simon Duxel le jeune boulangier de St Nicolas, 26

Long reputation. His mother Bietrix had several times claimed she had made her ill after she had failed to give her a cake she had promised at last Rois; unknown illness left her paralysed until she died. Added that 'un certain particulier de Chateau Brehain qui fut appellé pour visiter ladite deffunte et donner advis de sa maladie leur affirma icelle maladie provenoit de sortilege'; he himself had accused her of causing death and called her witch 'en plaine rue' without any reaction.

(13) Barbon femme du precedent, 30

Repeated husband's story; said that mother had died that same day. Jeanne had been called 2 or 3 times to visit her, and said they should make a pilgrimage to St Goeury (?) and bring back oil to rub her with, which must only be done 'en montant et non en descendant'. This was done, but brought no relief.

(14) Jeanon femme Simon Bon mercier de St Nicolas, 47

Had long heard her suspected as witch, notably in connexion with illness of Bietrix who had died that day; had heard latter talk of 'la meschante femme' without naming anyone.

(15) Jeanon veuve Claude Mercier, regent des grandes ecoles de St Nicolas, 60

Similar story about suspicions over Bietrix.

(16) Francois Richard drappier de St Nicolas, 24

Had heard of gifts of beds and other things to relatives, and that she had absented herself in belief she was to be arrested.

(17) Mengeotte Belliey femme Chrestofle Page cordonnier de St Nicolas, 40

Told of incident around last grape harvest when she and Jeanne Humbert were in street where accused lived before dawn, and were attacked by a cat which they could not shake off.

(18) Jeanon fille Jean Humbert, 22

Told of incident when she accidentally threw water over accused, followed by threats, then story of being attacked by black cat, which she believed had been caused by accused.

15 June 1613; PG de Lorraine (C.M. Rémy) orders interrogation and confrontations

21 June 1613; interrogation

Said she was Jehanne Petiatte, native of St Nicolas, widow of Pierre Malgras cuisinier, aged about 80. Had had 7 children, but they were all dead. Had been imprisoned about three and a half years before on accusations of killing children. Said she had been warned by her niece, wife of Nicolas Demenge Henry, that they wanted to arrest her after report to Madame that she had made Bietrix ill. Had gone towards Mononcourt and then to St Cesar, where she had promised a pilgrimage for one of her children; took 8 days over this. Asked why she had been so long over what was normally a day's journey, said weather was bad and she had difficulty in walking. Her niece had told her that she would be burned the next day, and that Madame had ordered she be brought to justice; was so frightened that if she had

found a river she would have thrown herself in. Denied distributing goods; had left them in her room, and did not have much to give.

Reproached that she had tried to conceal where she was going by telling people her destination was Sainte Barbe, said she intended to go there next if weather had been fine. Agreed that her nephew Vaultrin Gueriat had kept back some money of hers, and she told him 'que mal proffict il en puisse faire, et en mal sante il le puisse despendre'; had been told off over this by Claude Profette, but had done him no harm. Agreed that Bietrix had failed to give her promised cake; she had offered her some white flour instead, but she had not needed this. Said of her that she 'scait bien maintenant sy elle a bien faict en tel soupcon', but she had wished her no ill. Agreed to incident when water was thrown over her; she had been soaked, and had said to girl 'que malle santé luy puisse arriver', but had not done her or father any harm.

Denied having suggested any remedies for Bietrix, although her relatives had several times asked her to do so when she went to buy bread.

28 June 1613; confrontations

Agreed she had complained that Barbe had caused her great torments by her deposition. Admitted after initial denial that Jacquatte veuve Claude Profette had accused her over husband's death. Barbe veuve Nicolas Rieuval accused her of saying that her daughter-in-law would be found in cemetery at Varangeville because she had refused her alms, but she denied this. Agreed that she had told relatives that if she did not return they should share out belongings in her room.

3 July 1613; substitute for procureur general asks for question ordinaire et extraordinaire

5 July 1613; Change de Nancy approves question ordinaire only, with moderation suitable to her age.

10 July 1613; interrogation under torture

In preliminary interrogation said that Claude Profette's widow had told her his illness was result of his forcing himself to work. Said she had told Bietrix that she had been on pilgrimage to Raville, to St Jean de Baptelmont, and to Sercueil for an illness herself, and had recovered after rubbing herself with oil obtained there. Had been a swelling, and oil came from lamps before sanctuaries.

Given thumbscrews on hands and feet, then racked, but would confess nothing.

13 July 1613; substitute for procureur general asks for banishment

15 July 1613; Change de Nancy rules that she be renvoyée, and instructed to behave well in future on pain of banishment

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29 July 1613; court at St Nicolas orders banishment, stressing fear she arouses among inhabitants, and fact that she had not seemed to feel much pain during torture; sense of some embarrassment at disregarding views of Nancy court.