

B 8941 no 2. Witch 318; Jaulne veuve Nicolas Vincent, de St Nicolas

30 July 1577; informations préparatoires

(1) Jacques Bastien cuysenier, 50

Some 2 years earlier had been in house of his neighbour Thienon Chaussetier, with his wife and others, to see his sick child, which was swollen and twisted 'par mal donné'. Chaussetier accused Jaulne of causing the illness, to which she said 'que ce n'avoit elle faict synon dieu'. She left when he threatened to beat her, still saying she was innocent, and child died in 2 days; since then she had avoided the witness when she saw him. Previous Whitsun had spoken with wife of Hanno Germant, who was ill and only skin and bones; told him she suspected Jaulne, to whom she had refused some flax for spinning. She died soon after.

(2) Thienon Chaussetier, 33

Told of illness of child; this followed incident when Jaulne came to house begging and wife refused because she came every day; she complained that she gave to others. Shortly afterwards gave birth to child which sickened after 3 or 4 days, and suspecting her they called her to house. Said she could do nothing, but suggested making a mixture of 'boulye' with milk from black cow, honey, and bread, then encasing baby in this - she in fact carried this out. Child became worse, so sent for her again same evening; she said they should wait until next day. When she came again he accused her of causing sickness, and said 'qu'elle se content de cela, Que si par apres il avenoit quelque inconvenient a luy sa femme ou a aulcuns de ses parentz qu'il prendroit peine de la faire brusler comme sorciere et genoche telle qu'elle estoit, et dont ladite Jaulne luy crie mercy, luy disant que jamais elle ne leur faisoit plus rien, ny a aultres ses parentz'. General reputation.

(3) Chrestienne femme du précédent, 28

Told of refusing alms, and later telling husband 'j'ay refuse la bourguignotte d'aulmosne si elle me faisoit quelque mal'. After giving birth was strange noise in room as if there was a cat there, but she and husband could find nothing. Rest of story as told by husband.

(4) Jaulne veuve Mengin le Sonrier, 56

Told how a year or more before she had quarrelled with her about a room, and called her witch. Soon afterwards she found her throat and neck all swollen, and they remained so until the New Year, when she asked accused for some remedy. She replied that she only treated 'mal de la mere', but finally on eve of Twelfth Night she took accused a scarf and a sol, and received some wood and some salt. After this recovered for some 5 weeks, but then developed new swellings on stomach and shoulder. Believed Jaulne was an evil woman and a witch, and that she had caused this.

(5) Perin le Charpentier, 36

More than 3 years earlier had seen her close to his children on jour des rois; called out 'que faict ceste vielle genoche vers mes enfans retire toy.' Same evening

after they had feasted and gone to bed a cat came down the chimney; it went towards children but did them no harm. Next day she came into house and said they were lucky to have such a bed to sleep in, but he thought she had done no harm; general reputation, and called witch by neighbours.

(6) Nicole femme Nicolas Cordier l'huillier, 25

Told how Jaulne had come to house asking for three towels and a tablecloth which she alleged her husband's first wife had in her keeping. Told she would look for them after coming out of childbed, went off talking to herself. Witness promptly lost her milk and became very ill; believed this was her doing.

(7) Catherine femme Jacques Bastien cuysenier, 44

Told of seeing sick child and saying that illness was 'mal donné par quelque genoche ou maulvaise gens'. Asked Jaulne if she could do anything, knowing that she had treated various people; she said no, and immediately Thienon's sister-in-law accused her of being witch herself and cause of illness, saying that if it were her child she would make a fire and throw her in it. Jaulne said nothing to this, at which witness returned to her house. Had heard from several, including Jehenne wife of Hanno Germant, that she was a witch.

Jaulne agreed to this account, but repeated that she was not a witch and had done child no harm.

(8) Symonette femme Nicolas Jeannel l'huillier, 25

Some 3 years before had been selling oil from house, and had agreed to give Jaulne some on credit, buut refused when she came back for more. Was told she would repent, and promptly became ill, unable to walk or eat properly. After a fortnight sent for Jaulne, saying she knew she healed various illnesses; replied that she would have healed her at the start if called, and gave her ointment and drink, after which she recovered. Common repute as witch.

(9) Nicolas Jeannel l'huillier, 45

During wife's illness had asked her if she had quarrelled with anyone who could have given her sickness, and she immediately told of dispute with Jaulne. Knowing she healed various sicknesses, asked her to come, promising to pay her well; made some difficulty, saying it was too late, but eventually came and wife recovered. During this time he had called Jaulne witch, and developed 'quelque mal au dos de la grosseur d'une noix'. A friend (could not remember whom) suggested that he must take 5 nails from the street and drive them into a piece of brass with five blows each, like 5 wounds of Our Lord, then the person who had caused illness would appear. Did this and Jaulne arrived next day offering to treat him with herbal 'estuves'. After some discussion he refused to take any drink from her, but next day had recovered, and believed that it had been her witchcraft.

(10) Marye femme Didier de la Santz, sellier, 40

Rather rambling story of how 3 weeks earlier she had found 2 calves in stable entangled with fine cords, which would have strangled them if she had not set them free. Suggested that Jaulne was responsible, partly because neighbours suspected

her over death of Hanno German's wife, also because she had tried to take some hay from son of witness and he had called her witch. Suspicions went back all 28 years she had lived at St Nicolas.

(11) Nicolas fils de la precedente, 15

Told of quarrel over hay, which had been day before incident with calves. Also repeated detail already given by mother, how that night something fell down their chimney and there was a noise like thunder, although the sky was clear.

(12) Catherine femme Thouvenin Vehey bouchier, 40

General reputation. Told of occasion when she was talking about a horse which was ill, and Jaulne said that when she was in house of Jehan de Xanrey at la Magdelaine they had cured sick horses. Invited her to look at theirs, and she suggested using some herbs, but horse died next day before these could be used. No suspicion over this, but common repute as witch.

No reproaches made to any of the witnesses. (10 August)

16 July 1577; interrogation

Said she was about 80, widow of Nicolas Vincent of Mont St Marie. Seems to have agreed to scene in house of Chaussetier, and to having healed wife of Nicolas Jeannel l'huillier.

19 July 1577; interrogation

Accusation against the other prisoner Mengeotte la Gaigeade, whom she said had made her lame after dispute over alms.

24 July 1577; interrogation

Repeated earlier admissions about two cases of healing; then asked about sabbat, said she had been 5 times only. Said this had been 3 years earlier, when she was suspected of making child ill. Had been taken by the late wife of Laurens, who gave her a broom which she mounted in the middle of the street, and was immediately carried high into the air. Her companion told her she had a good master; name was Persil, but she had not identified him at sabbat. They made noise and did other things to spoil grain. More than 50 people of both sexes, 'l'un boussu l'autre contrefaicts et de plusieurs sortes'. Had not recognized anyone; had begun around 8 in evening and lasted 3 or 4 hours. On second occasion they had conspired to destroy vines of Rozieres by frost, and trees and grain by other means. On another occasion approached by three men dressed like gentlemen, asking her which she would take for her master; when she said she already had God for master they disappeared and she fell to ground, only getting home following morning. Judges pressed her, saying it was implausible that she had not taken home powder to harm her enemies, as witches were well known to do. She still denied doing any harm to individuals, despite being threatened with torture.

19 August 1577; interrogation

Continued to deny any harm done to others; placed on rack at end, but not actually tortured.

20 August 1577; interrogation

Said that she had gone to sabbat after a widow named Lucye, who lived at the hospital in St Nicolas, had called her witch and accused her of causing death of child. Wife of Demenge Launery, drappier, had said to her that she was angry, then 'Vien t'en avec moy au sabbat, et tu aura ce que tu voulera pour t'en venger ou ladite Jaulne prevenue si accorda a intention de recouvrer de la pouldre du diable pour faire mourir ladite Lucye qui l'avoit ainsy injuriee touttefois n'en retrouva point comme elle dict et a dict encor presentement que si elle avoit puissance de luy faire desplaisir qu'elle luy en feroit encor . . .'

24 August 1577; interrogation

Agreed it had been against God's commandment to go to sabbat, but insisted that she had gone with intention of finding means to avenge herself on Lucye, and had no desire to do any other harm. Agreed that she had continued to go to church and take sacraments during period when she went to sabbat.

19 September 1577; Change de Nancy recommends that she be tortured.

25 September 1577; interrogation under torture

When racked she promised to tell the truth, and admitted killing child of Thierion Chaussettier with powder given her by her master, because his wife had refused her alms. Also agreed that she had made Jaulne wife of Mengin Sonrier ill; they had quarrelled over some goods which accused felt she had been promised, and victim had called her witch. Had caused Nicole wife of Nicolas Cordier to lose her milk because of dispute over napkins etc. Used powder her master gave her to put on clothes of victim. Had made wife of Nicolas Jannel ill because she refused her second loan of oil, but never intended to kill her. Had tied up calves belonging to Marye wife of Didier de la Santz because son had called her witch.

Next day she confirmed her confessions freely.

30 September 1577; Change de Nancy approves death sentence

2 October 1577; formal sentence that she be strangled and her body burned.