

B 8693 no 3; witch 232; Barbelline femme Didier Antoine, d'Entre-deux-Eaux

7 July 1604; informations préparatoires

(1) Didier Charpentier, de Remeymont, 50

Had been commonly reputed witch when she lived at Remeymont 20 years earlier; his father Jean Charpentier had called her witch several times, saying 'qu'elle en estoit une ou il n'y en avoit point au monde', without her taking any action. Also said 'que pour lors ladite Barbeline faisoit plus de proufit en lait, bure et frommaige, d'une seule vache, que les autres cohabitans ne faisoient avec quatre, jacois qu'on les nourrisse autant ou mieux que celles de ladite Barbeline.'

(2) Jean Clement, de Remeymont, 50

Same story about cow being very productive - she boasted about this, and others thought 'qu'elle usoit de quelques moyens illicites pour ce faire'. Already reputed a witch; for his part he had lost many animals, but did not know who to suspect. Called witch by le viel Jean Parmentier without taking action.

(3) Colas Clement, de Remeymont, 60

Accusation by Jean Charpentier, and general suspicions.

(4) Colin Jean de Treux, de Remeymont, 45

He was her brother-in-law; she had often called him 'coquin' because he was lazy and not 'si bon mesnager' as his neighbours. Lost temper with her, after which he lost a bull, a foal, and several pigs, and thought if she was witch this had been her doing. Already suspected before she left village more than 20 years earlier.

(5) Demenge Fleurent le jeune, de Remeymont, 24

Had been very young when she left, but always heard she was suspected, and had been accused by several accomplices who were executed. Also knew story about boasting of productive cow.

(6) Jean Berthremin, de Remeymont, 30

Had no suspicion against her.

(7) Demenge le Rouyer, d'Entre-deux-Eaux, 40

Reputation 15 or 16 years, since she had come to village. Some 4 years earlier caught her and her daughter stealing nuts in his garden, and told them off, then lost some calves and a foal, which he imputed to her if she was witch as reputed. 12 years earlier, at midday, her husband's son Jean had run into street calling 'venez voir au logis, il y a ung rondeau de blanches gens qui dansent' - witness and others went to see, but there was nothing there.

(8) Hidoult Gregoire, 24

Cutting wheat at Mandray one day with the late Claude Anthoine, brother-in-law of accused, heard him say she was a witch and he would have her arrested, adding that his brother said 'que quand quelcun luy feroit mal que sa femme en tireroit bien la raison'. Had also heard Vincent Gerard and others blame her for losses of animals.

(9) Dieudonné Gerard, jeune fils, 21

4 years before was in service of Claude Gabourel, who sent him to mill at dusk; passed Barbelline's house on horse, and she said to him 'Si tu scavois ce que tu doibs rencontrer aux champs si haultz, tu t'en retournerois au logis.' Went on nevertheless, without meeting anything, but on way back two hours into night his horse was frightened by two women in black near the church - thought she was one of them, said something to him he did not catch, and was embracing her companion. Reputation as long as he could remember.

(10) Vincent Jean le Rouyer, 50

Reputation 15 or 16 years (residence). 3 or 4 years earlier she told them to stop letting their chickens into her garden, or send them to the devil, to which he replied that he did not know the way and she should lead them there herself. Soon afterwards his cock was found dead in her garden, with only bones and feet left. 6 or 7 years earlier his wife had lost speech for at least a week - thought if she was witch this was her doing. When his wife was in childbed she discouraged neighbours from going to help, and would not go herself, because he had said 'que sa femme se fioit a trop de gens'.

(11) Claudatte femme Colas Jean le Rouyer, 50

Had deposed against her on previous occasion 7 or 8 years earlier, and since then suspected her over several losses of animals. 2 weeks earlier credible people had told her that Barbelline said 'que jamais ne scauroit gré a ladite deposante de ce qu'elle avoit deposé contre elle, quelle beau semblant qu'elle luy face'. On one occasion accused had been making a cake, and witness's late father-in-law Jean le Rouyer asked for some - sent him a piece, but next evening he became so ill he thought he would die. Obtained something from her house to cure him, but did not know what.

(12) Toussains femme Demenge Collenot, 40

Had heard late Claude Anthoine of Mandray say she was a real witch, and he would have her burned; he died soon after. General reputation.

(13) Margueritte femme Nicolas Aubert, 50

8 years before her son Gregoire had quarrel with husband of accused when leading animals around his fields; he died a year or two later, and if she was witch as reputed was sure this was her doing.

(14) Colin Colas Henry, 35

4 years earlier the son of his brother Claude Henry fought with her son, and was injured when thrown down. The mother of the witness and her children quarrelled with Didier Anthoine over this; next Sunday his mother said good-day to Barbelline at church, but received no reply. Became ill same day, and died 8 weeks later, always claiming that accused was responsible - would have sent for her if witness had not prevented this. She had said of his mother 'qu'elle ne mourroit jamais de cette maladie si on ne la tuoit.'

(15) Jean Gerard, 40

A year earlier had been rumour she would be arrested, following accusation by Nicolas Girard before his execution, and he had been ready to be witness. Since then had lost various animals, which he believed to be her doing.

(16) Jean Vincent, 60

Before accusation by Jean Blaise (already executed) she was suspected; he had always taken good care not to quarrel with her or her husband, and did not think he had suffered any harm.

(17) Claudatte femme du maire Jean Vincent, 60

One day in fields asked her how the wife of Vincent le Rouyer was doing, to which she replied 'que le Diable la puisse aller veoir quand elle seroit en gessine'. Turned out that she was already in labour, and in such a bad state that she had lost consciousness - had heard le Rouyer and others say that this was her doing, if she was a witch as reputed.

(18) Vincent Colas Henry, 40

Story of quarrel over boy who was injured in fight, followed by death of his mother, who believed she was bewitched, but brother intervened to prevent this going any further. This witness said illness lasted 8 days rather than 8 weeks. Was nearest neighbour, and had various quarrels, after which he lost animals - believed that if she was witch she was cause.

(19) Vincent Demenge Laurent, 40

Reputation more than 30 years; her husband had told him that he was suspicious, and thought she might have caused him great losses of animals.

(20) Claude Colas Henry, 50

Story of quarrel arising from fight in which his son Vincent was involved, and subsequent death of mother. Reputation as long as she had been resident, and brother-in-law told witness she was a witch.

(21) Jennon femme Jean Colin Dieudonné, 42

Returning from market at St Dié previous week heard from Jean Gossey of Coinche, native village of accused, that she was already suspect as a witch there, as she had been in both subsequent places of residence, so she was 'fort meure sorciere'.

(22) Jehenne femme Jean Gerard, 40

Neighbour with whom they had several times quarrelled - losses of animals followed, which they thought were her doing if she was a witch as reputed.

(23) Vincent Gerard, 35

5 or 6 years earlier she suspected witness of killing 2 of her geese, after which he had a bad arm for 6 weeks - suspected this was her witchcraft if she was as reputed. 2 years earlier quarrelled with her husband, 'et comme ilz se reprocheyent qu'en leur race il n'y avoit point de meschantes gens ledit deposant luy dict que sa race n'estoit peut estre bien nette, luy marit a elle prevenue, luy dict qu'il luy en pourroit bien couster de on bien'. After this lost some animals, over which he also suspected her.

(24) Claudatte femme Vincent Laurent, 27

A year earlier husband of accused wanted to hire a meadow from them, but her husband refused because he offered too little. Shortly afterwards a calf died, and they had to return money they had already received from a butcher at St Dié.

(25) Jean Dion de la Goutte, de Coinche, 56

26 years earlier she had been married at Coinche to her first husband Colin Jean Aubert - was generally thought that she bore him 'peu d'amitié', and later he was found dead in stream behind house with cord round neck. Much talk against her, but no evidence produced, since it was not seriously investigated. Already on bad terms with others because she boasted of her ability to get more from her cows than them, while her mother was suspected as a witch.

(26) Jean Jacquot Jeannel, de Coinche, 70

At time of marriage already reputed a witch, as were mother, father, and grandfather. Boasted about cows, and other women, who were jealous, called her 'la profiteresse'. First husband bitterly regretted marriage, found dead after 3 weeks with cord round neck and wrists tied together in 2 inches of water.

(27) Valentin Dion de la Goutte, de Coinche, 50

Same story about husband, but said it was 6 weeks after marriage.

(28) Jean Dieudonné Laurent, maire d'Entre-deux-Eaux, 40

6 or 7 years earlier had a great quarrel with her husband, and very soon his child aged 6 fell ill and died within a day - believed this was her witchcraft. After another quarrel 4 years earlier a daughter aged 3 was ill for a week, then slowly recovered, which he also blamed on her.

(29) Claudon Bertrand, de Mandray, 50

10 or 12 years earlier had quarrel with her and called her witch; no reparation sought, but immediately lost several animals, which he imputed to her in view of long reputation.

Note that previous accusations were appended, save those by Colas Girard de Benifosse and Catherine femme Didier Jean Parmentier, whose trials had been mislaid.

9 July 1604; interrogation

Said she was about 45, native of Coinches, daughter of Toussaint and Marguittre Nicolas (who were long dead). First marriage had been 26 years earlier, and only lasted 2 weeks before death of husband. He had quarrelled with a brother, and was then found drowned in the stream - searched long to find him, and thought he had gone out to feed oxen before ploughing (it was March, and time to sow oats).

Second marriage had been at Remeymont, 24 years earlier, to Colas Masson, which lasted 9 years. Asked about her boasts concerning profit from cows, denied this, and said they had been told a lot of lies.

Agreed she had been accused of witchcraft by five people convicted of the crime; Jean Blaise of Entre-deux-Eaux 7 years earlier, then Catherine femme Didier Jean Charpentier of Remeymont, Colas Girard of Benifosse near Mandray, and in recent days by Dieudonné Jean Demenge, dit Rohard, of Coinche, and Catherine femme Mongeon Dion of Fouchifol. Confronted with all these, and had also heard she was named recently by Colatte femme Didier Henry, with whom she was not confronted.

Denied string of specific charges, but admitted remark that she would never wish Claudatte femme Colas Jean le Rouyer well after she deposed against her. Said she was not responsible for bad arm of Vincent Gerard, 'et que si dieu vouloit que ledit Vincent aye heu cette maladie, si elle vouloit courir au devant, et comme l'on luy eut enseigné qu'il allast demander du fer en neuf maisons puis en faire ung bras de fer et l'aller offrir a St Lienard aussy tost fut il guery.'

Curious reply when asked to renounce the devil and all his power - said 'qu'elle renonce bien au diable, mais pour l'esgard de Maitre Persin, elle le laisse pour tel qu'il est, et n'a point veu de mal en luy, partant ne le veult renoncer.' No comment by judges.

10 July 1604; confrontations

No reproaches, but strongly denied that she was a witch or had been responsible for various losses. Did now admit remark about devil going to see wife of Vincent le Rouyer in childbirth - had no reply when asked why she previously denied this.

10 July 1604; procureur for chapter of St Dié asks for question ordinaire.

12 July 1604; Change de Nancy approves.

14 July 1604; interrogation under torture

Given thumbscrews, then racked; after some hesitation began to confess. Had been seduced by Persin 26 years earlier, when to her great regret she had been married against her will to Colin Jean Aubert. Approached her in garden, promised

to get rid of her husband and give her a lot of money - usual seduction scene. Money was dung, while powder was black/kill, white/cure. 3 weeks later agreed that he could kill husband, which he did. Tried powder on one of her hens, which died.

Had been angry with brother-in-law Claude Anthoine, who called her witch and threatened to have her burned - killed him with powder in soup. Had also killed Marion veuve Colas Henry, with powder on piece of bread, and given consent to her master to kill son of Jean Dieudonné Laurent.

Claimed to have committed no other maléfices, and when told this was impossible, said she had given Persin a hen every year to be exempt from attending sabbat or performing other acts unless she wished. Had only been to sabbat once a year; standard description, had only identified those already executed.

Confirmed confessions later that day. Added that she had seen Marguitte veuve Jean Bonipaire of le Chasnoy, whose father and mother had already been executed, at sabbat, also Jehenne fille Demenge Martin of Mandray, Jennon femme Henry des Aulnes of Remeymont, and Colatte femme Didier Henry de Fouchifol, who had accused her.

15 and 16 July 1604; confirmed earlier confessions

16 July 1604; procureur asks for death sentence

17 July 1604; Change de Nancy agrees

20 July 1604; sentence carried out at St Dié