

B 8682 no 9; witch 187, Claudatte femme Jean Parmentier, de Ste Marguerite

Had been accused by Mengeatte femme Claude Tendon du Chenoy du Saulcy, tried July 1597 (Witch 175, B 8680 no 5). Extract from confessions of latter, with long list of names.

22 April 1598; informations preparatoires

(1) Mengeon Demenge Henry, 36

2 years earlier had lent her husband 10 écus for a week, but when he went to ask for payment she refused angrily, saying they would have to sell a cow to pay him; only got money back some 7 weeks later. Lost animal (damage here) after passing before her house, and was sure this had been her witchcraft - reputation even before execution of her mother. Previous summer had heard Jean fils Colas d'Avould (alias Demenge Henry) claim that she had bewitched him because he would not guard her animals, and maintain this until his death.

(2) Colas Demenge Henry, 30

2 years before she had come to get fire from his house when he was still in bed; had seen her remain motionless for some time in middle of room. Later, as he was taking animals to fields, a fine sow broke a leg outside her house, although way was smooth. (Section missing here) Then story about his son Jean, aged 7 or 8, who claimed he became ill after refusing to guard her animals; she had not touched him, but her daughter pushed him, and he immediately felt ill. Died after 4 weeks, claiming she had bewitched him; during this time witness told her of suspicions and asked her to heal him, but she said that if she was a witch she would rather drown herself - told other villagers she would never heal the child. Long reputation, before execution of mother.

(3) Didielle femme du precedent, 30

Similar testimony to that of husband.

(4) Catherine femme Jean Mulnier, 27

A year earlier her sister Zabillon, aged 15 or 16, who lived with them, suddenly became strangely ill. Told witness this had followed immediately after she refused Claudette some salt she asked for. Ill for 6 weeks, as if possessed, and last words were to say that Claudette had bewitched her. 18 months earlier had been outside house, and said she had two fine children and knew how to treat them, while she only had one and 'n'en pouvoit encor venir au bout', after which one fell ill (damage here). Was bold enough to go to her house, said that one named Xallatte said in public that accused had caused death of two children, and now her child was also bewitched. If it did not recover quickly 'elle en parleroit sy avant, qu'on en sauroit des nouvelles'; Claudette replied 'qu'il conviendroit bien mal que sondit enfant soit ensorcelé'. Immediately afterwards child made complete recovery, so she was sure she had bewitched, then cured, the child. Long reputation.

(5) Simon Hougney, 31

A year ago previous Christmas her husband was helping him with threshing, and she went to ask his wife for some milk, which she refused. Came to barn to tell him about this, and he immediately fell ill. When she came back to house 3 days later his wife told her she was sure she had bewitched him, and if she did not heal him she would have her arrested. Rapid recovery followed, so was sure it had been her doing; long reputation.

(6) Demenge Hougney, 38

Long reputation. Had heard son of Colas Demenge Henry accuse her of having bewitched him. Around last St Rémy his wife refused her milk, then one of their cows lost its milk. Some exchange (damage here) then it recovered, so he believed she had bewitched it. Had often heard his father, the maire Colas Hougney, say that she had bewitched his wife, stepmother of witness, and caused her death.

(7) Dieudonné fils Dieudonné du Hault, 15

3 years earlier she had asked him to guard her horses along with sheep he was minding, promising him a good piece of bread and cheese. Asked her for this several times, and finally gave it to him with wish 'qu'en le mengeant tu t'en puise crever et estrangler'. On return home mother sent him to fetch water, but decided to try cheese first. Became stuck in throat with burning sensation, until he pulled it out and threw it on the fire, where it burned like wood, with something like grease coming from it. Throat felt as if it had been burned for a day, but then recovered.

(8) Pierratte femme Henry Dieudonné Henry, 30

18 months earlier had been to see late wife of Colas Hougney, who was in most pitiful state imaginable, and heard her say that Claudatte had bewitched her because she refused her some milk - died in this belief. Long reputation.

(9) Barbe femme Colas Malramey, 30

2 years before had borrowed something from her (damage here; apparently a child was killed by burning in strange fashion). After eating cherries she had from her became so ill everyone thought she was dying, and when Claudatte came to see her she asked if it was true she suspected her of having caused her illness. Replied that she did, because it had begun immediately she ate the cherries; immediately after the visit she recovered. Believed her misfortunes had been caused by her witchcraft - long reputation.

(10) Honn Homme Colas Hougney, 50

Story of how wife had fallen ill a year earlier and died after languishing for 6 months; refusal of milk, belief she had bewitched her. Long reputation.

(11)

Long reputation.

Said she was about 30; had married husband some 6 years earlier, after both their mothers had been executed at St Dié as witches, 's'estans treuvez par ensembles, conlurent de se prendre en mariage, et qu'ilz n'auroient point d'occasion de se rien reprocher l'ung l'autre.'

Denied being a witch. Also denied getting lard from house of Demenge Henry, but then admitted this was true. Also admitted accusation of witchcraft by wife of Simon Hougney, after initial denial, and of bewitching cow of Demenge Hougney. Made a few other admissions, but constantly denied she was a witch.

confrontations

In response to Didielle femme Colas Demenge Henry, said 'que le diable emporte qui a faict mourir leur enfant, que l'avons belle et vouldroit que tous ceulx qui ont envie sur elle, l'eussent au ventre'.

Barbe femme Colas Malramatte, sister-in-law of accused, added to deposition that they had been talking of rumour she was to be arrested, and Claudette said 'que sy une fois elle venoit a confesser son fait son bien seroit confisqué aux Seigneurs, et que ses enfans n'en auroient rien, luy dict de plus qu'elle scavoit a la verité que Jacotte Haulte Rue du Vieu Marché avoit mangé le coeur d'ung enfant, et que cela estoit cause qu'elle n'avoit rien confessé a la question et avoit esté renvoyée hors de prison'.

No reproaches to witnesses, but continued denials.

28 April 1598; procureur for chapter asks for question ordinaire et extraordinaire

1 May 1598; Change de Nancy approves

5 May 1598; interrogation under torture

Given thumbscrews, and asked to renounce devil, would not do so, merely insisting that God was her master. When racked asked to be released, and said something had come into prison like a wind on first night she was there, had intercourse with her, then left. Pressed to say more, would only say there was no mercy in the world, and that she renounced God. Put back on rack, would say nothing more, then said that she had been tempted in prison, and at this point: 'Elle a de rechef nommé Percin, et au mesme instant son visage a de rechef changé de couleur et devenue noire comme charbon, et la face tellement hideuse qu'il n'y a eu celuy de la Compagnie qui n'ayt eu peur Voyantz apartement qu'il y avoit quelque chose dans son ventre qui remuoit et se debattoit strangement, Mesme nous a affirme le maître qu'en tournant la tour, il sentoit que la corde tiroit contre de luy, et avoit toutes les peines du monde de la tirer, et jamais ne s'avoir veu en telle peine. Ce pendant le petit banc surquoy le bout de l'eschelle est eslevé a froissé et rompu tout plat en sorte, que le tout a tumbé par terre. Ainsy elle osté a delibvre, elle est revenue en son pristin estat, parlant aussy asseurement que l'ung de nous, sans qu'il ayt aucune apparence d'avoir esté tirée en fasson que ce soit.'

Now said that 8 years earlier, 2 years before execution of her mother, latter said she must accompany her to find another master who would make them rich. Was then seduced by Persin in usual fashion, while mother incited her to yield; given 3 kinds of powder - black/people, red/animals, white/heal. Had used powder to kill a woman who failed to pay her for some eggs (name missing, but presumably wife of maire Colas Hougney), and son of Colas Demenge Henry. Also

Zabillon, sister of Jean Mulnier's wife, who had refused her some salt. At Persin's suggestion had caused burning of child of her sister-in-law Barbe, femme Colas Malramey.

Had made Simon Hougney ill, intending to kill him, but after threat to have her arrested she used red powder (!) to heal him. Similar process with child of Jean Mulnier, because she had particular hatred of wife; when latter threatened to talk so much that the officials would hear of it, her master instructed her to heal the child.

Said that Persin had been in her throat preventing her from speaking, and this was why she had changed colour. Had only been expelled on third occasion she was given holy water to drink. Also said that Persin transformed himself into a grey cat in order to carry powders.

Also admitted trying to kill Dieudonné fils Dieudonné du Haut, but he had not actually eaten the cheese with powder in it.

Had been to sabat on 'Cambas', where they danced and made hail; devil carried them up in the air to control the clouds. List of those she had seen there included Demenge Simoney and his wife, and le gros Mathieu Blaise, of Ste Marguerite, Jacotte Haulte Rue of Vieu Marché, la fille Guillaume le Boulengier of St Dié, le viel Colas Cayel, Colas Viney, and Agathe femme Colas Cunin of le Faing, Claude Tendon and his wife Margueritte (both executed) and their daughter Marguitte, femme Jean Benipaire, and Demenge Milan of Remomeix (executed) and his daughter (dead).

Confirmed her confessions that afternoon.

6 May 1598; interrogation

Again confirmed her confessions. Repeated list of accomplices - among those already executed or dead were also la mairese Masson, the wife of Guillaume le Bouchier, and the wife of Claudey Voinesson, of St Dié, the wife of Michiel Haulte Rue, of Vieu Marché, Laurence 'sa belle mere' (?) of Demenge Milan's daughter or accused), and her mother.

13 May 1598; procureur asks for death sentence. Approval by Change de Nancy missing (damaged).

20 May 1598; final confirmation of her admissions.

30 June 1598; execution carried out