

Witch 277C; B 8713 no 3, Mengeotte femme Vincent Yclon, de Pajaille

Extracts from confessions of Laurence femme Vincent Bandesapt of Pajaille, November 1611, and Marguittre veuve Jean Colas Arnoulx d'Ayefosse, December 1611, in which accused is named as having been at sabat. Was confronted with second, who maintained her charges. Then further accusation by Claudon Marchal of le Vivier, with confrontation on 3 July 1614 at which he maintained charges.

9 July 1614; informations preparatoires

(1) Catherine veuve Jean Grand George, 40

Some 12 years earlier her late father Gerard de Bay had rented a meadow, and when he was cutting hay had dispute with husband of accused. She was angry, and soon after he became gravely ill, dying within 3 weeks. Always claimed she had caused this, as he passed her house one evening after drinking at le Vivier. He has asked her to house to see if she could heal him, and she said they had been too hasty in having last rites given to him - this added to suspicions. 15 years before she had been fined for going to woods of Benay, and complained to husband of accused, who asked why she had not been to those of la Haye; she replied that in that case she would go there, 'et puis le diable viendroit qui la tenteroit.'

(2) Colatte femme Michiel Colas Michiel, 25

Had quarrelled 2 years earlier, then accused came to house with some 'laytres' for her to eat. Suspected that she wanted to cause her some harm, and indeed that night a pig sickened, dying next day. Mengeotte then asked her if pig was still ill, to which she replied 'qu'il estoit desja au diable au Sabat, et qu'au diable soit donne la sorciere qui l'auroit fait mourir' - other went off without saying a word. Had always suspected this was her doing - long reputation, and accusations.

(3) Marguittre femme Vincent Ban de Sept, 40

First husband was Mengeon Jean Parmentier, brother of accused, who was eldest, so had some land belonging to late father in preference to her, sister Jacquatte, and brother Paulus. She was angry and complained; a few years later he fell ill with dysentery and died in 9 days. Suspected her, mainly since she had been made prisoner on accusation of witchcraft. When she heard of suspicions she threatened to beat witness 'avec une cholere extreme'; a week later a pig died suddenly, which she suspected was her doing.

(4) Mengeatte femme Mengeon Clerc, du Mesnil, 30

Her husband had rented a house belonging to children of late Mengeon Jean Parmentier from husband of accused as their tutor, then had dispute because he bought another house and did not want to pay rent for full year. 3 weeks after they moved house they lost a cow after illness of a week, and suspected this was her witchcraft.

(5) Jacquatte femme Jean Aubry, 28

2 or 3 years earlier had refused to sell her some grain; next day an ox sickened, dying a week later as if rabid. During this period there was a great noise in hayloft, which only ceased after animal died - sometimes seemed like hens, other times like toads. Believed this had been her witchcraft - reputation and accusations.

(6) Jean Aulbry, 40

9 years earlier she had been angry because his wife did not want to take child of her sister who was married at Azerailles 'en pension'; soon after a child died, which he suspected was her doing in view of reputation and accusations. Later wife sickened and died in 3 or 4 days; day before death accused sent her some peas to eat, but witness would not allow this. A day or two earlier she had asked him if wife was still ill, and when he said she was replied that she too was often ill, but his wife would die first - this increased his suspicions.

(7) Nicolas Marquis, 60

Previous year had quarrelled with husband of accused, then his wife fell strangely ill and died after 17 weeks. Suspected this was her witchcraft in view of reputation and accusations.

(8) Georgeatte veuve Claudon Henry, 50

3 years earlier Mongeotte had been angry because she would not take one of her children to guard animals; cow sickened saw day and died next. Suspected this was her witchcraft, in view of reputation and accusations. Had heard her say that people spoke against her because of accusations, but she knew how to rebut charges, and was a good woman.

(9) Vincent Ban de Sapt, 50

Had visited neighbour Gerard de Bay on day before death 13 years earlier, and heard him claim she had bewitched him and was cause of his death. His late wife Laurence, later executed as a witch, had told him several times she was certain Mengeotte was a witch.

(10) Gerard François, du Mesnil, 40

8 years earlier had been in service of late Demenge Gaillot, whose wife had violent dispute with accused - had given her a plate of 'milot', then she failed to return the plate. Did not hear any threats, but within a few days she sickened and died within a week, claiming until death that accused had bewitched her. Reputation and accusations.

(11) Mengeon de l'Estang, du Mesnil, 40

9 years earlier his late wife had great quarrel with her over some manure they had bought jointly. One day she gave his wife some 'pattenere' to eat in her house; she became ill immediately, and died 5 or 6 days later, saying to the last that Mengeotte had bewitched her. Reputation 15 years, accomplices.

(12) Michiel Colas Michiel, 40

About 2 years earlier she had been angry because his wife had been getting milk left over after cheesemaking by Jean Charrey's wife for her pigs, so there was none for her. Soon after a pig died suddenly, which he thought had been her witchcraft - reputation and accusations.

(13) Mengeon Clerc, du Mesnil, 30

Same story as wife about renting house 3 years earlier. Had told her of suspicions over death of cow, but she said she knew he would take matter no further. Laurence femme Vincent Ban de Sapt had told him that he suspected her over losses of animals, but Mengeotte was the cause.

(14) Estienne Henry, 22

Story of death of mother's cow 3 years earlier, which they both suspected was her doing.

(15) Demenge Jean Arnoult, du Mesnil, 50

5 years earlier her son Jean, keeping herd of pigs, allowed them to trespass in his meadow, and he told him off. Did not know if she was angry, but soon after a pig died suddenly, which he suspected was her doing - reputation and accusations.

(16) Jacquot de la Ruelle, de St Remy, 36

6 years earlier his wife had failed to invite accused after childbirth, although Mengeotte had told her that if she were not invited 'elle y porteroit sa cele ou siege'. Then he borrowed a bottle from her in order to fetch some wine for his wife from Raon; as soon as she drank this she lost her milk and the baby died. They suspected this was her witchcraft - reputation and accusations.

(17) Jean de Sambois, de la moictresse des dames, 32

3 years earlier he had her daughter Catherine as maid; she had head trouble commonly called 'la rache', which she passed on to his small son Colas, who slept with her. Had quarrel over this, and later passed her on horseback, after which horse suddenly fell and threw him. Believed this had been her witchcraft, trying to injure him or the horse - long reputation.

(18) Françoise femme Mengeon Jean Chappouxat, 26

Had heard her mother-in-law Fleuratte, presently in prison as witch at Etival, say that Mengeotte had told her they had been very hasty in marrying their son to the witness, when she had expected they would choose one of her daughters. She was nursing her first child, but lost her milk for 2 weeks, so that baby became very ill, but recovered after 10 weeks - in view of reputation thought this was her doing.

(19) Jehennon femme Bastien Mathis, du Vivier, 30

6 or 7 years earlier had promised to give daughter of accused a coiffe for some help she had given, but did not do so on hearing of stories Mengeotte had told

against her. One of her children then sickened and died in a few days, and suspected this was her witchcraft - reputation and accusations.

(20) Marguittre femme Demenge Cugnin, du Mesnil, 30

2 years earlier had dispute with her over not taking one of her children to guard animals when turn came round. 3 weeks later her child aged 8 fell ill, and died 6 weeks later; had always suspected her, in view of reputation.

(21) Louys Chappon, 50

Had heard late Demenge Gaylat claim she had caused death of his first wife in hatred after a quarrel. General reputation and accusations.

11 July 1614; interrogation

Said she was about 45, daughter of Jean and Mongeatte Parmentier of Pajaille, both long dead, and had always lived in village. Knew she was accused of witchcraft, after charges made by three people already executed, which she insisted were false.

Denied series of charges. Did agree she had made remark about being ill herself, but that Jean Aulbry's wife would die before her. Added 'Mais beau doux Jesus elle n'y pensoit point de mal, et prie au beau doux Jesus, et à sa chere mere, que jamais personne cy apres ne puissent plus mourir, et que cela estant, l'on seroit quicte de dire que les sorcieres font mourir des personnes, et les charger de telle chose.' Otherwise continued denials.

Followed by confrontations. No reproaches to any witness, but continued her denials. Was also confronted with Fleuratte femme Jean Chappouxt, who had admitted she was a witch, and accused Mengeatte of being at several sabats, which she denied.

12 July 1614; procureur d'office asks for question ordinaire et extraordinaire

14 July 1614; Change de Nancy approves

21 July 1614; interrogation under torture

Withstood thumbscrews, but confessed when racked. Had been seduced by Napnel some 20 years earlier, when she was angry because she was called witch and husband would not pursue those who said this. He offered to help her obtain redress; no sexual element, but gave her money (dust) and yellow powder to kill people and animals. Tried this out on one of her hens. Confessed series of maléfices as alleged by witnesses, usually committed with powder.

Taken to sabat on côte de Repy a month after seduction, where there were more people than she could count. Ate unsalted meat, danced back to back to sound of flute, made hail. Others she saw included Jehennon femme Jean de la Scye and Jehennon femme Philippe Monat, both of le Mesnil, and Fleuratte femme Jean Chappouxt. Named 3 others already executed in addition.

Repeated confessions later same day. Now said that Napnel had been in her until she was given holy water to drink, after which he left and she was able to confess.

22 July 1614; confirmed previous confessions. Procureur d'office asks for death sentence.

23 July 1614; Change de Nancy approves

24 July 1614; sentence carried out at St Dié