

A.D. Moselle, B 9142: witch 350: Agathe, femme Martin Thomas, Corny, and Mengeatte Triboul veuve Antoine Harel

27 August 1596: : Laurent Jean Laurent and Nicolas le Guinet, maimbours of Corny, appear as parties formelles on behalf of 'une grande partie de la commune', accusing Agathe of witchcraft.

1 September 1596: similar charge against Mengeatte.

2 September 1596: confrontations (Agathe)

(1) Jean Molet cousturier demeurant à Corny, 32

Had known her as resident at Corny for 12 years, but had heard that she was native of Vilcey-sur-Trey, and knew nothing of her family. General reputation as witch. 4 years earlier he had allowed Martin Thomas to have a small house, about which witness's wife Barbe had been very angry, telling Agathe she had 'encharicey son mari'. Soon after Barbe had still-born child, following week two more. Agathe said she had suffered 'une grande fortune', and she should make a child of wax to take to Madame St Cire, after which she would not be afflicted in same way again. Had allegedly learned this from woman at Vilcey-sur-Trey who had suffered in similar fashion. Claimed that when first child was born he was angry with Agathe for intervening during birth, but she told him they should bury it in some secret place so that no-one would speak of it.

Other witnesses were Mariette femme Martin Jean le Clercq (death of a cow), Jannon femme Jennot Poirez, Mariette femme Regnauldin Grand Jean, Mengeatte femme Drion Brocquax, Mengin de Dompierre (greffier en la justice de Corney), Mengin Adam, Drion Brocquax, Regnauldin Grand Jean (death of horses), Didier Michiel, jeune fils (causing illness of daughter of Didier de France), Paulin Maurice, Marie femme Pierron Maurice (illness of children), Nicolas Bregeat, Lucyé femme Nicolas Bregeat, Siron Brion maire de ? (occasion when husband had beaten her), Didier le Meuxet. 16 confrontations in all.

5 September 1596: interrogation (Mengeatte)

Around 7 p.m., as her supper was being brought, Mengeatte confessed that some 7 years earlier she had been at law with late maire François Jennin, when around midday in her room 'vint à elle le diable habillez en homme vestu de noir qui luy dict tu es bien desolée sy tu veux faire pour moy je te feray gagner ton proces.' She did so, and he scratched her forehead to remove chrism, then had intercourse with her.

She repeated this confession the next day.

9 September 1596: interrogation (Agathe)

Said she was about 60, native of Vilcey-sur-Trey, father was Nicolas le Maire, mother Marguerite Grosse Oye. Had lived with them until first marriage with Claude Dieu, marchal, which only lasted 6 months. Second marriage was with Girard Thiry, manouvrier and fuzelier, with whom she spent 15 years at Vilcey. Had now been at Corny more than 30 years with third husband.

Said that Barbe femme Jean Moulet had asked for her help when she feared to lose child she was carrying because of maltreatment by husband. Also agreed to story about house, since which dispute Barbe had often called her witch. Had only seen one of still-born babies, but had heard about others. Agreed that she had advised use of child made of wax, but denied suggesting that curé of Corny should say 'une messe seiche' over it.

Agreed she had quarrelled with Marie femme Pierron Maurice, and that Marie had eaten one of cooked apples she had taken to creigne, but denied being cause of her illness.

Denied that when Pieron Marchal's child had been at point of death she had said they should make an offering, or she could do it for them. Also denied saying that people wanted to arrest them, and were talking of her and her husband as witches.

9 September 1596: interrogation (Mengeatte)

Now said her confession had been made 'par crainte qu'elle avoit d'estre mise au fond du fossé ou d'autre peine qu'on luy eust pu faire.'

Admitted that she had been called witch, and had taken no action. Asked about a cat which had jumped in her face out of Jean Moulet's garden, said this had happened and frightened her. Asked about day after Toussaint when she had been in her room 'le cul en hault', said she had been ill, and on her knees praying.

Admitted that when witches had been burned at Creney Claudio Michiel said she was one too; if she had been strong enough she would have thrown herself in his face. Denied that she had been angry after daughter-in-law and others spoke about her at 'creigne'. Agreed that Barbe femme Claudio Michiel had been ill (apparently soon after incident at creigne); had made her a soup 'par bonne amitié' and she soon recovered.

Asked if during lawsuit with maire she had not become as if rabid, scratching the ground and saying 'qu'elle estoit femme perdue et mal conseillée' - agreed that she had often said 'qu'elle mourroit de faim', followed by such words, but denied rest of behaviour.

Agreed that five years earlier she had told wife of Claudio Michiel that her husband had put about rumour that the vines of Corny would be spoiled, but hers would be preserved. Asked if she had hated him since then, 'A dict l'avoir bien hay et que c'estoit en bonne cause.' If he had suffered a bad leg since this was not her doing; she had given him some grease she had bought, and he had soon been cured.

Asked if she had given his daughter Barbe milk or soup, after which she became ill, said that she did not remember, although she knew she had been ill. Had been to see girl once, but denied girl told her she was cause of sickness; agreed mother had told her she was cause of her death.

Asked about occasion when she and her son François were returning from Mey and found three heaps of powder on doorstep which turned into vermin, she said there had been one small heap, she did not know how it had come there, and they had burned it. Agreed that she and daughter-in-law had quarrels when they called one another witch and 'ribaulde'.

Asked why she often had swollen head and eyes, said she was sometimes ill; denied being beaten by her master.

Asked whether after a quarrel with Mariette femme Regnaldin Grand Jean she had said 'sy elle estoit prinse que se seroit la premiere qui en diroit contre elle',

she agreed. Admitted she had taken Martin Thomas to court for insults, and that he had then hurt his leg by falling from a tree, but denied she was cause.

10 September 1596: interrogation (Agathe)

Had said to Claudin Gillot that they should arrest Mengeatte Tribou, with whom he was at law - this was because she allowed everyone to call her witch.

Asked about saying that if the lawsuit between her and a wicked woman had not been terminated they would not have suffered from hail at Corny, and this was a good warning; she seemed to admit this, suggesting that if she had had means she would have had her taken.

10 September 1596: interrogation (Mengeatte)

Again admitted that master Joly had appeared to her, had persuaded her to renounce God, and had intercourse with her despite her resistance - but now claimed to have prevented him from removing chrism. Had never seen him again and had not committed any act of witchcraft.

11 September 1596: confrontations (Mengeatte)

Mariette femme Regnauldin Grand Jean added that daughter-in-law had told her since arrest that accused had remarked that she had given her an old chemise, then when told there were no more white ones that were any good said it was all the same, that she knew she would be arrested, and she could send her another in prison. When arrested had kissed them all and told her to look after children well.

Other witnesses were Jean Moulet, Martin Thomas, Cladon Michiel and his wife Barbe, Babon Biexotte, Didier Thomas jeune fils.

11-12 September; confrontations (Agathe)

Mostly with same witnesses, no additional information.

24 September 1596: interrogation (Agathe)

Said woman at Vilcey who taught her about wax figures was Yzabel femme Didier L'Auyr (?) - had no idea if she had been a witch. Denied parents had ever been suspected of witchcraft. Was not responsible for husband's lameness, and had not caused hail six weeks earlier. Confirmed that lawsuit had been with Margueritte Tribou.

Asked why she had taken bones from cemetery to cure husband, said she heard he had 'la fourchette avalée . . . et qu'elle alloit voire sur les oz de mort ce que c'estoit' - denied using them to make powder. Various questions about what she was doing in vines before hail.

To suggestion that her daughter would not drink soup she made during pregnancy, and didn't want to keep linen together, said she was 'une mauvaise fille'.

Had not taken action when called witch because she lacked the means to do so.

Agreed that her daughter had told her that her husband would beat her if she came round their house, and that she did not want her to touch their bread.

Told story about how she was giving husband a bath, evidently after his injury falling from tree. Tried to prevent his shirt from getting wet, as he had asked, but failed, so put it to dry by the fire. It was very thick, so she had to get it hot, and it caught fire. (Not very obvious where story was going, but does confirm injury he had suffered.)

Denied charge made by Mengeatte Tribou that they had beaten water 2 years earlier to make hail, or that they had been to sabbat together.

24 - 25 September 1596. Mongeatte confesses to being witch, and to having been at sabbat twice. Had not been able to recognize other witches because they wore masks, but had known Agathe because they went home together.

25 September 1596: interrogation (Agathe)

Only further admission was that daughter had said people were charging her with causing illness of Didier de France's daughter.

1 October 1596: confrontation. Mengeatte repeated charges.

2 October 1596: procureur asks for death sentence against Agathe, with previous torture to discover names of accomplices. No more documents relating to her.

5 October 1596: final condemnation of Mengeatte, with marks of seven members of court, including maire Jean Petit, and just one signature (fairly good) - Mengeon Larchien.