

B 8712 no 6; witch 277, Claudon Marchal du Vivier

Denounced by Laurence femme Vincent Bandesapt, de Pajaille, in November 1611.

27 June 1614; informations préparatoires

(1) Claudatte femme Jean Sagaire du Vivier, 46

Reputation several years. Had lost three animals after quarrels, although could not say for sure it was his doing, unless he confessed it.

(2) Jacquatte femme Claudon Agnes du Vivier, 46

Dispute 5 years earlier with accused, who was nearest neighbour, over guarding animals, followed by fine cow losing both milk and calf; believed he had caused this. Common repute.

(3) Eponn femme Colas Burquey du Vivier, 36

2 years before last Christmas accused was trying by all means to become herdsman of cattle for the village; her husband was successful, however, because he offered lower price per animal. Was angry, and soon afterwards lost a cow attacked by wolves in middle of herd, when no other animal was touched. Had also lost another cow since, and blamed losses on accused; long reputation. Some 6 weeks before had asked his wife to pay a debt; she replied that she would pay in 3 days 'mais que cela luy cousteroit ou vaudroit'. Did not know if he had told her to speak in such a way, but a week later lost another cow, found dead in woods.

(4) Barbon veuve Claudon Mengeot du Vivier, 70

15 or 16 years before a company of soldiers had come to village, and accused had told them her house was one of the best, so that they had more lodged on them. Quarrelled with him over this, and a week later a cow became strangely swollen around neck, having to be destroyed. Believed he had caused this; common repute.

(5) Mengeatte femme Colas du Chemin du Vivier, 32

Accused had 'grand desdain' against her husband, because he was dissatisfied with work he had done for him as shoemaker, although he did not show this openly. Had lost several animals, notably horses, which she blamed on him, particularly since arrest. General reputation.

(6) Catherine veuve Nicolas Menurgier du Vivier, 60

3 months earlier, during trial of Jean Caillerey, accused told her that Caillerey 'avoir esté un grand sot de se laisser apprehender, que de sa part s'il scavoit qu'on ayt délibéré de l'apprehender, il n'attenderoit qu'il soit pris, ains seroit filé. Elle

depositing replicqua sur ce, que peult estre il n'avoit loisir de s'enfuir, adjoustant qu'elle prioit au bon dieu que tous les sorciers et sorcieres soient bruslés.' He made no reply; general reputation.

(7) Claudatte femme Claudon Jean Claudon du Vivier, 58

Some three years earlier her son Curien had a quarrel with one of Claudon's sons. Same day a foal belonging to them was strangled by a wolf in the middle of the herd; which refused to let go even when burning sticks were put against its throat. Believed this was his witchcraft; general reputation, and previous accusation.

(8) Mengeon fils Mengeon Gerard de la Fosse, serviteur a Curien du Champ, 20

Told story of quarrel cited in previous deposition; had been because Claudon's son Colas had allowed horses into an area where they should not have been. He said to Curien 'qu'il l'auroit ou bien le diable l'auroit'.

(9) Dieudonree femme Jean Marguis du Vivier, 36

18 months before had refused to sell him some butter; two months later a fine cow lost both milk and calf. Was cured after more than a month when she obtained 'semence d'ornelle' from his wife, which she gave cow to eat. She suspected this misfortune and recovery to have been his witchcraft; common repute.

(10) Claudon Jean Claudon du Vivier, 56

Told story of sons' quarrel and death of foal. Common reputation; had himself called him witch without reparation being sought.

(11) Claudon Jacot Estienne du Vivier, 50

A year ago last winter they had been threshing together, and had a quarrel over division of money. Following night developed strange illness in left arm, unable to work for 17 weeks, which had cost him 140 francs, still unable to use the arm. Believed this was his witchcraft; long reputation.

(12) Mengeon Colin du Vivier, 40

Some 7 or 8 years earlier had thought accused overcharged him, so decided to go to another blacksmith. Soon afterwards had horse and other animals sick, lost a fine calf. Believed this was his witchcraft - long reputation.

(13) Colas Jeandon du Vivier, 36

At last harvest had agreed to pay for damage done by animals in accused's field with a cartload of wood; he became angry because he was slow to deliver this, but witness eventually did so. Later he lost a pig which died in 24 hours; suspected

him of witchcraft in view of long reputation. Had been reported to him that Claudon said he would not have lost pig if he had sent it to be sold at Saint Dié as he had done.

(14) Colas Burquey paistre des bestes rouges du Vivier, 45

Told how Claudon hated him because he had become herdsman; attributed loss of two cows to his witchcraft, long reputation. When arrests were made at Etival, notably 3 years before, he had been talking of selling the little property he had and fleeing.

(15) Jean Claudon du Vivier, 66

Some 2 years before accused had been playing 'quilles', and taking bowl said 'qu'il s'en alloit jouer de par le diable', then knocked down four 'quilles'. Other players who heard him then withdrew their money, saying they did not want to play with someone who played by the devil. Previous winter a number of pigs had died in village, and he heard him say 'que beaucoup de porcs se mourroient audit vilage, mais qu'il en mourroit encor bien d'avantage'. Common repute.

(16) Nicolas Chatton d'Estival, 25

Previous year when in service in village he had gone with him to cart wood. A great cloud came up, and Claudon told him to shelter with him under a tree, because it would soon blow over. Witness did not want to do so, and said he would stay near his horses. Then accused went towards tree and seemed to disappear, only to come out again when weather improved. Confirmed witness in belief he was a witch.

(17) Curien fils de Claudon Jean Claudon du Vivier, 18

Told story of quarrel with his son; added that Claudon had been angry and told him he would repent. Same evening the wolf took their foal.

(18) Jean Aulbry de Pajaille, 38

Around last Martinmas accused owed him some buckwheat, and wanted to pay him with a small dog, but he preferred to buy another one from Colas Burquey. Claudon was annoyed, and same day witness became ill, unable to find healing since; he blamed illness on Claudon, who had long reputation as a witch.

(19) Mathis Jean Michiel du Vivier, 60

Story of quilles, long reputation.

(20) Mengeon Jean Arnould du Mesnil, 50

Some 7 years ago had dispute because Claudon overcharged him for shoeing a horse; same day horse became ill with swelling on neck, and died 4 weeks later. Blamed this on his witchcraft; common reput.

(21) Bastien Hermemand du Vivier, 50

Story of remark about deaths of pigs previous winter.

(22) Claudon du Renty du Mesnil, 40

Dispute 3 years earlier because Claudon charged too much for shoeing; within 2 days a fine foal was strangled by a wolf which damaged no others, although there were younger foals in the herd, and guards tried to stop it. Common reput.

(23) Jean Hannezo du Vivier, 60

Remark about pigs had gone round village - thought he might have caused death of one of his if he were witch as he was reputed.

(24) Claudon Thiriat du Vivier, 32

General reputation. Had heard story that when he was in 'allemaigne' he had taken two 'plomont' from a plague-infected house.

(25) Didier Banderat marchal au Vivier, 36

Had also heard him telling story about plague house; had sold 'plomont' to someone else from ban d'Etival.

(26) Curien Champs du Vivier, 30

A year ago last St. George had dispute when he asked to be paid second time for shoeing a horse. Some time later the accused passed in front of him and his animals in woods, and gave him good day; a horse immediately fell ill and died a month later. Believed this was his doing, and general reput.

27 June 1614; interrogation

Said he was 57, blacksmith, native of Le Vivier. Father had been Michiel Marchal, mother Marguitte was still alive, living with a daughter in val de Viller. Asked if mother had not left village because she was reputed a witch, said he did not know. Had lived some 30 years in village himself, after a period at La Vacherie. Knew he was accused of witchcraft.

Said he had had some quarrels, 'mais pour leger sujet, et neantmoins il s'a tellement contregardé, que jamais il ne luy est arrive donner aucune menasse pour ledit faict de sorcelerie'. Said that if he had committed the offences alleged, 'il seroit sorcier sans le scavoir, et que s'il se treuve convaincu de ce crime, nous pourrons

dire hardiment que c'est le plus fin sorcier qui soit jamais esté, par ce qu'il ne se trouvera que jamais il ayt usé d'aucune menasse, nonobstant toutes les disputes qu'il a heu.'

Asked if he had thought of selling goods and leaving, said that if he had it was not in fear of arrest, 'mais vouloit aller chercher meilleur pain que de froment.'

28 June 1614; confrontations

No reproaches against witnesses, but denial of all relevant charges.

Procureur asks for question ordinaire.

30 June 1614; Change de Nancy agrees

2 July 1614; interrogation under torture

Withstood thumbscrews and rack, then given tortillons and made to drink holy water. Now agreed to confess; seduced by Maitre Napnel some 7 or 8 years before, when he could not get his charcoal furnace to heat up properly; Napnel appeared dressed in black, promised him gold and silver, which turned out to be leaves. Black powder to kill animals, yellow to kill people, white to cure.

Made series of confessions in line with accusations. Had given consent for his master to strangle Claudon Jean Claudon's foal, and (in form of wolf) that of Claudon de Renty. Similarly had consented to his killing a number of pigs, because he had not been given job of guarding them.

Said that there had been 500 or 600 at sabbat. Hailmaking, dancing (some back to back) to sound of flute. Had seen Claudon Jean Claudon of Le Vivier, Fleuratte femme Jean Chappouxat (alias Menestrol) and Mengeatte femme Vincent Yclon, both of Pajaille.

3 July 1614; interrogation

Confirmed earlier confessions. Insisted that he had resisted many attempts by his master to get him to cause other misfortunes. Added to list of accomplices Catherine femme Claudon Pairson du Mesnil, who had been married about 6 months earlier, and Fleurent Jacquemin du Vivier, long absent after being accused of witchcraft.

Said that his master had deceived him, saying that he would help him endure the torture; had been in his throat preventing him from confessing, but accused had himself broken promise not to confess. Asked what he had done with other powders, since he had only confessed to maléfices performed with black, said he had thrown them away in fields, being unwilling to harm people. Judges asked if his master had asked for host to be taken to him; said no, but that he had told him to refuse it. To this he replied that he must take it, since otherwise he would rapidly be detected and charged.

Later same day made further declaration that all confessions and accusations were true.

3 July 1614; procureur asks for death sentence

5 July 1614; Change de Nancy agrees

8 July 1614; sentence carried out.