

B 3325 no 2; witch 035, Clemence veuve Claudon Marchal, de Domjevin

16 September 1603; informations préparatoires

(1) Demenge Niclas de Domjevin, 50

Dispute some 12 years earlier when he had contracted to cart some manure for her husband; she had secretly loaded more than was agreed, then he called her witch. She took no action against him, but he did not believe she had caused him any harm.

(2) Vaultrin Loys de Domjevin, 52

Since his marriage in village 24 years earlier had always heard murmurs that Clemence was a witch, but had no precise suspicions.

(3) Jean Henry de Domjevin, 72

Had known her 30 years; were always murmurs that she was witch. Some 12 years before had met him when he was taking 2 cows to pasture, and said 'que'elle estoit tout esmerveillée de veoir ses vaches sy gras at en si bon estat, et qu'il n'estoit pas possible qu'il ne leur donne de l'avoine, a laquelle il fit response assé rigoreuse que son avoine estoit pour ses chevaux, et non pour ses vaches'. Next day one of them had trouble with hind leg and died same day, followed quickly by the other with foreleg trouble. A few days later met her, called her witch and blamed her for losses, 'dequoy elle se formallisoit disant qu'elle n'estoit pas telle femme'. No other suspicions.

(4) Nicolas Godot de Domjevin, 70

Reputation more than 7 years. Some 3 years back his daughter Claudatte had asked her whether she wanted to heat her poisle so that the women and girls could spin according to local custom; she replied that she did not, so his daughter went elsewhere. Then she came in while they were eating dinner to ask her why she was not going to her poisle. 'et voyant ledit depositant qu'elle parloit rigoureusement, il luy respondit avec mesme rigueur, qu'il ne vouloit pas estre importuné sur son disner qu'elle sorte de sa maison, laquelle respondit qu'il s'en repentiroit et se pensoit en luy mesme, que sy c'estoit ung homme il luy romperoit la teste, laquelle sortit sur ces mots de sa maison.' Some 9 or 10 months later had two cows dead suddenly, then 5 or 6 weeks later two heifers lost milk and died after 15 days; suspected Clemence of causing these losses.

(5) Henry Mulnier de Domjevin, 32

Long reputation. Some 16 or 17 years before he and other boys returning from pasture had passed through her garden, and she had been angry, speaking ill of him in his absence, as he had been told. Within three days began to suffer from illness affecting right leg below ankle, with holes appearing; was 'un mal mangeant' which caused him great pain. About 3 months later an 'Egipsien' named Pierre passed by, who said he knew what it was. Witness told him he suspected Clemence, he replied that he needed to obtain bread and yeast from her house. Promised to do this himself; witness did not know if he had in fact done so, but he gave him

ointments which cured him. Reproached Clemence and called her witch; had also heard maire Demenge Niclas call her witch, and on neither occasion did she react.

(6) Jean Colin de Domjevin, 30

Native of village, but mother had made second marriage at Veho, so he had only been back since own marriage 3 years before. Had heard she was a witch, although she was his cousin. Told of incident in house of his father-in-law Nicolas Godot, when he had been present, and subsequent deaths of animals.

(7) Annel femme Henry Mulnier de Domjevin, 26

Reputation more than 7 years.

(8) Henry Goudot de Domjevin, 70

Reputation some 7 years.

(9) Claudatte fille Nicolas Godot, 22

Reputation 5 or 6 years. Quarrel some 2 years before when she did not want to go to her poisle, loss of animals.

(10) Demenge Wamiot de Domjevin, 27

Reputation some 16 years; since then his father Colas Godat had a number of animals dead. Told of quarrel over poisle, when Clemence had called his sister 'glorieuse', and said they would all repent. Later the witness had gone to her house, called her witch, and told her 'que s'il leur arrivoit quelque mauvais accident que ne seroit pas tout ung, et qu'ilz luy soupconneroient'. She and her son were angry; later losses of animals.

(17 September 1603)

(11) Zabey femme a Demenge Pierson de Domjevin, 40

Long reputation. Some 13 years before witness had returned from Blamont, where she had deposed against Jennon, currently prisoner at Blamont, and the late Chrestienne femme Jean Diez. When she was in house of accused her husband asked 'qu'est ce qu'on disoit de ces pauvres femmes prisonnieres disant que ladite Clemence sa femme les abuseroit, quoy entendu par ladite Clemence replicqua belles gens oyez ce fol cy ce qu'il dit sans se donner grande peine, ce qui donna une pensée mauvaise a ladite deposante contre ladite Clemence, veu aussi que sondit mary l'avoit en mauvaise oppinion.'

(12) Demenge Boulengier de Domjevin, 50

Had known her long time; thought reputation only went back to denunciation by Mengin Lours of Dompgevin, executed at Blamont 12 or 13 years before. For himself no suspicions or quarrels.

(13) Le maire Mongenot Estienne de Domjevin, 66

Reputation some 12 years.

- (14) Zabey femme Colas Claudat de Domjevin, 40

Long reputation.

- (15) Claudon Crounesier dit le Grand Claudon de Domjevin, 50

Reputation since execution of Mengin Lours; had heard it said that she would have been arrested at that time had she not been in childbed.

- (16) Jean Marchal de Benamesnil, 45

Had known her for a long time, and had served her first year after her marriage, when she already had reputation as witch. About 6 years back witness was heating a charcoal furnace for his brother Demenge Marchal, and saw Clemence around his sister-in-law for some time. Immediately afterwards she fell sick and died in a week; suspected Clemence of causing this, on account both of her reputation and various quarrels between her and his brother.

- (17) Demenge Marchal de Domjevin, 40

Reputation over 20 years. Repeated story told by brother; he himself had been away at Oggreviller and heard it on return. Believed she bore him envy because he pursued same trade as her husband.

- (18) Estienne Louyot de Bures, 38

Like Clemence was native of Ambermesnil. 25 years ago when he was a boy and neighbour of her father, and she had long been of marriageable age, she asked if he could go to Reillon with her to take some yarn to a weaver and see some cloth. On way back sat down to rest and eat by a spring near a wood, when suddenly saw a man in black on a powerful black horse. Clemence told him not to be afraid, then went directly up to man; they immediately disappeared, and he could not see what had become of them. Fled back home and told his father, 'qui luy deffendit sur peine de la vye de n'en dire mot de poeur de la scandaliser', so that he had never spoken of it again until he heard of accusation, when he told his brother Victor.

- (19) Jean du Pont, maire pour Mgr de Vaudemont à Domjevin, 48

Had always been reputed witch over 9 or 10 years he had known her. Had heard her relative Demenge Niclas call her witch, and blame her for 'beaucoup de dommage', to which she replied that he 'disoit ce qu'il vouloit et que sy elle avoit ung bon soustenant, elle l'en feroit bien ressentir'.

- (20) Jean le Clerc sergent en la justice de Domjevin, 32

Reputation 10 to 12 years. He had been associated with her since they had only one plough (?team) between them, and one day went together to field to cart some hay. A great wind and cloud came up, so that everyone else took their carts

back to village, but she did not want to return; he finally went back without her, telling her she was a witch if she did not fear the weather.

18 September 1603; interrogation

Said she was about 50, native of Embermesnil, daughter of Jean Jacquemin and Alison Niclass; had lived at Domjevin for 26 years, widow for 6 years.

Admitted going to house of her neighbour Nicolas Godat, but not to threatening him, or knowing of his losses. (Note that she should be confronted with other witnesses who had supported his statement). Denied all other suggestions.

23 September 1603; confrontations

Nicolas Goudot added that there had been a quarrel with his son Demenge over a coat lost by son of the accused, to whom it had been lent. She recognized him as homme de bien 'pourveu qu'il puisse avoir accord avec ses voisins'; suggested his animals had died more than 4 years back, but could not suggest any witnesses. Claimed Henry Mulnier was commonly a liar. Suggested that wife of Jean Marchal was already ill when she spoke with her. Otherwise general denials.

25 September 1603; procureur fiscal asks for question extraordinaire

26 September 1603; Change de Nancy suggests use of thumbscrews only

15 October 1603; interrogation under torture

Given thumbscrews, then racked. Before latter Jennon was brought to suggest that she should confess. Made no confessions at all, but persisted in denying all charges.

17 October; procureur fiscal suggests that she be renvoyée unless further evidence is forthcoming.

31 October 1603; Blamont court orders taking of further evidence. Second set of depositions taken same day.

(1) Andre Pierson de Domjevin, 48

Reputation 20 years or more. Some 3 years earlier his very sick wife was being attended by a surgeon from Marieviller, when Clemence came into house and asked for some ointment for her thigh (was limping). Later she returned with offer of payment, which surgeon refused for something so small; then offered a dozen eggs, which neither he nor surgeon wanted to take - he feared her the more because surgeon said she was a bad woman. Became suspicious that she had caused illness; when curé came to administer sacraments she entered with others, and when they all left remained behind, sitting down and looking intently at patient, but saying nothing. As she left said that his wife was very ill 'et que dieu la veuille ayder'. Wife died some 18 days after receiving last sacraments, had been ill for 8 years. Although no quarrels, suspected Clemence for her ill fame and comments by surgeon.

(2) Claudatte femme Nicolas Henry de Domjevin, 40

Reputation more than 20 years. Some 15 or 16 years ago witness had fallen ill (with headaches etc, bedridden 6 weeks) after quarrel with Clemence over a pig. Suspected her after she was accused by condemned witch.

(3) Margueritte veuve Cugin Mongelay de Domjevin, 60+

Had known her 27 years; reputation only since accusation by Mengin Lours, when fact she was in childbed saved her. No personal suspicion.

(4) Nicolle femme Pierson Claudon Nicolle de Domjevin, 22

Knew her since marriage 3 years before; reputed a witch. Her son Demenge had told witness 'qu'il avoit oppinion que ladite prevenue sa mere auroit plustost fait mourir le pere du mary de ladite deposante que son propre pere'.

(5) Jean Francois d'Embermesnil, 40

Both she and her mother had reputation of being witches at Embermesnil; story of their both being seen dancing with a broom in their hands.

(6) Pierson Claudon Nicolle de Domjevin, 27

Reputation since accusation. Over last two weeks had heard from Nicolas Goudat that illness in daughter's leg had been identified as her work by a devin. Knew that her son Claudon, aged about 20, normally slept in same bed with her.

(7) Jean Marchal d'Embermesnil, 36

Mother already had reputation. Some 18 years before had served her for 2 and a half years; during that time a man from Domepvre called Brehier was burned at Blamont as a witch, 'et comme son maître fut retourne de verrir le supplice luy demandoit sy ledit executé avoit bonne repentance demandant de mesme sy on brusloit tous les sorciers et sorcieres. Et qu'il avoit aussy bon estre bruslé pour lors que de plus attendre et qu'il avoit oppinion qu'ilz ne pouvoient mourir qu'ils ne fussent bruslé, a quoy replicqua icelle prevenue qu'ilz en mouroient beaucoup sans estre bruslé et qu'elle le scavoit bien a quoy repartit ledit deposant et dit qu'il n'estoit pas possible qu'elle le sceut bien au vray laquelle maintenoit que sy et qu'elle scavoit a la verité qu'une nomme la Marievillée dudit Embermesnil combien qu'elle fut decedeé et qu'elle avoit fait mourir des veaux a son pere.'

(8) Jean Ferry de Nogeprey, 50

Long reputation.

(9) Catherine femme a Jean Ferry, 44

Long reputation.

(10) Lucy veuve Claudon Pierson de Domjevin, 55

Her late husband, who had died some 16 years before, had often helped husband of accused with forging. They had various trivial disputes, of which she

took no special notice, 'et arrivant la mort de sondit mary, ne la mescreut pour lors a personne'; since execution of Mengin Lours had become suspicious that Clemence might have been responsible.

(6 November 1603)

(11) Catherine fille Jean Deditat de Domjevin, 20

Reputation as long as she could remember. Some 6 years earlier a daughter of accused named Allison had told her that a black dog often came down their chimney; when her mother saw they were frightened by this she sent them off to bed.

(12) Jean Gabriel le jeune de Blamont, 24

When he had been taking her food in prison, she claimed to have seen 'une clarté' at night, which had lasted two hours, and had been the grace of God.

(13) Margueritte femme Jean Gabriel, 24

Deposed nothing against the accused.

(14) Didier Cherier bourgeois de Blamont

Had nothing to depose.

(15) Allison, daughter of accused, 18

Denied story of dog and chimney. Said that she knew her mother had been accused of witchcraft, and this had caused her to weep, saying that she was innocent.

(16) Jennon femme Claudon l'Hoste de Thiebaumesnil, 30

Some 16 years before she had lived next to accused; witness was running her father's household after death of her mother 'estante la plus aymée', and they had various quarrels. Had previously been quite healthy, but later developed trouble in a thigh, so that she was in constant pain and virtually crippled. Claimed that during quarrels Clemence had said to her 'qu'elle courroit bien fort, mais qu'elle ne coureroit pas tousjours sy fort, et laisseroit bien faire les autres.'

(17) Jennon femme Jean Mongeay de Domjevin, 35

Reputation 12 or 13 years, since accusation.

(18) Mathis Marchal de Conicourt, 40

Had served her husband as apprentice for a year some 22 years earlier, but had heard no ill of her.

(19) Catherine femme Jean Quirien de Domjevin, 24

Reputation since accusation. Told of daughter Allison's story about black dog, which she placed 14 years back.

(20) Clemence veuve Estienne Mariotte de Domjevin, 40

Was cousin of accused; had only heard talk about her since accusation by Mengin Lours, did not suspect her herself.

(15 November 1603)

(21) Francois Cherier sergent en la justice de Blamont, 32

During confrontations she had told him she wanted to speak to him in secret, so on return to prison he allowed her to warm herself by fire and asked what she wanted. She asked him to send a letter to her son Claudon warning him to flee, raising what money he could on the animals, and that he well knew why. Witness arranged for prévôt to come secretly into kitchen so that he could hear them talking.

(17 November 1603)

(22) Honnorable Homme Claude Seard, prevost de Blamont, 40

When he had been to arrest her, with procureur fiscal and receveur of county (they had to make inventory of belongings), in presence of the curé, they had been admonishing her to think of her salvation. She responded by saying 'qu'elle avoit été seduite par ung mauvais mariage, et comme ilz luy demanderent les causes pensant qu'elle entreroit en confession volontairement de son crime, elle se donna de garde et se reprint et interpreta son dire tellement et quellement par variation et obscurité qu'ilz ne peurent rien comprendre.' Then told of overhearing conversation with sergeant, when she wanted her son told 'qu'il s'en aille et qu'on avoit parlé de ce qu'il scavoit bien et que s'il estoit une fois pris seroit pour les ruyner tous deux'. Sergeant had asked her 'si sondit fils ne l'avoit poinct harpouillé', to which she replied by asking if she had not told him enough already.

(22) Honnorable Chrestien Mathiot receveur du Comté de Blamont, 50

Repeated story about marriage, but in form that she said 'que scavoit esté ad cause d'un mariage par ce que l'on ne luy avoit voulu donner ung jeune homme qu'elle aymoit fort a Embermesnil' - then started to muddle up story so that they could not understand it.

31 October 1603; interrogation

Agreed that her mother had sometimes been called a witch; said that she had placed a device made with cloth and a stick under a nut-tree to chase off the crows which ate the nuts 'et que l'on disoit gastoreux les sorciers qui estoient sur ledit noyer'. Admitted that her son Claudon shared her bed, and seemed to have no sensible reply when asked why she had not shared with one of her daughters instead.

31 October 1603; confrontations

Several of the new witnesses produced; no significant results.

6 November 1603; interrogation

Brief set of questions with negative responses.

17 November 1603; interrogation

Agreed to story of letter; had been concerned about her son because he had shared her bed for 7 years, with intention of keeping her warm because she was ill. Also agreed to remarks about marriage at time of arrest, saying 'il est vray qu'elle aymoit ung jeune garson dudit Embermesnil nomme Estienne et qu'on luy dit estante encore jeune fille maudisoit son bruict, sans ce mauvais bruict que vous avez, tu l'aurois en mariage'. Then spoke so confusingly that judges suggested her variations showed she was a witch, threatening her with renewed torture to extract truth, since kindness had not worked.

17 November 1603; confrontations

Witnesses to letter and arrest confronted with her; admissions made on same lines as during interrogation (which probably followed).

18 November 1603; procureur fiscal suggests question ordinaire et extraordinaire.

19 November 1603; Change de Nancy approves

22 November 1603; interrogation under torture

General denials when given thumbscrews, including that her mother had been reputed a witch - judges reasonably noted that she had earlier made free admission to the contrary. Agreed that she had made remark about running to Jehenne l'Hoste, but 'lors qu'elle luy dit cela, elle avoit desja mal a la jambe, puis a dit tout au rebours que ladite Jehenne alloit aux champs mieulx qu'elle, et que pour cela elle luy dit qu'elle courroit trop fort.'

Brought back after lunch, urged that it was not enough to deny her crime, but that she should confess and repent in order that God, seeing she was humble, might have pity on her. Then pressed on matter of incest, asked to speak to prévôt in secret. This was allowed, and after a few minutes she returned, to confess that she had had intercourse with her son on just three occasions. He had originally slept on bench beside her bed, to be ready to deal with animals in morning, had come into her bed because of cold. Judges suggested it must have happened more often, but she stuck to her story, adding that both she and her son had expressed regret.

Now racked; started by saying that son had intercourse with her as often as he liked, then denied everything. Racked harder, went back to earlier confession, taking responsibility for tempting son on herself. Still refused to confess to witchcraft.

24 November 1603; interrogation

Orders were now given for arrest of Claudon, his interrogation, and confrontation with his mother. During his interrogation news was brought that his

mother now wanted to confess to being a witch, so judges suspended questioning him to revert to her.

Said she was a witch, but did not want to say more until she was placed on the rack. Then said seduction had been some 12 years earlier, when she had been angered by her children, and had met 'malin esprit' named Guillot in garden behind house. Usual seduction scene - gave her a piece of money which turned into a leaf. Agreed that she had been to sabbat and made hail; judges asked if witches copulated with their masters, and she said they did.

Claimed she could not recognize any other witches because they were masked; judges eventually had her racked to try and extract names. Said she had been to sabbat nearly every Tuesday; when they made hail were carried up into the air by their master. Denied having committed any malefices, and had only received powder twice, which she threw away at cost of a beating.

30 November 1603; procureur fiscal asks that she be tortured again to secure admissions about accomplices and maléfices, but that even if she makes no more confessions she should be executed.

1 December 1603; Change de Nancy agrees

10 December 1603; execution carried out

Claudon was interrogated and tortured, but constantly denied charges of incest with his mother, and was eventually released.