

Witch 006, Françoise Bourguignon 1

B 2199 no 2; witch 006, Françoise femme Bastien Bourguignon, dite la Vilaume, du Bourget d'Amance

23 December 1615; confronted with Colatte veuve Cezar Laurette, who maintained her charges that she had seen her at sabat.

2 January 1616; second confrontation with Colatte as latter was attached to stake ready for execution; she maintained her charges before large number of people.

3 January 1616; order from substitut of PG de Lorraine for her arrest, following accusation by Colatte and in view of general reputation.

5 January 1616; informations preparatoires

(1) Gerard Marchal, laboureur, 50

General reputation. 6 years erlier had agreed to bring some logs back for her, but his men found them so large and difficult they did not do so, and she was very angry. Soon after a cow sickened, falling as if strangled, and he had to have it killed. Suspected this was her witchcraft, also death of several other animals including cows, pigs, and horses.

(2) Anthoinette, femme du precedent, 54

Same story, but quarrel 14 or 15 years back. Logs were 'pleine d'espines'.

(3) Jean Charton, paistre du menu troupeau, 30

6 months before was at home for dinner and holding 6-month-old son in arms, when accused saw them as she passed, and said 'qu'il en faisoit des minnes et d'estat, d'aultant que c'estoit un garçon et qu'ilz en avoient desja un et qu'ilz auroient encore assez d'enfants, et ne falloit tant faire d'estat des premiers'. She touched child's clothes, and 2 or 3 days later he fell ill; died 2 weeks later, and he was sure this had been her witchcraft. General reputation.

(4) Bastien Bourguignon, husband of accused, 60

Had become suspicious of wife, and discovered she had been accused by man and woman accused at Neufchâteau - had checked this with member of Change de Nancy (Sr de Bernecourt), who had possession of the papers in the case. Had therefore watched her carefully, but could add nothing except that he had sometimes been angry with her and beaten her, driving her out of the house, yet had found her sleeping in a separate bed in the morning. Asked how she had got in when he had bolted doors, would only say she had returned by the door and had not wanted to sleep outside.

(5) Marie, veuve Claudin Vosgien, 50

15 or 16 years earlier her husband had enforced payment by first husband of accused, Jean Wilaume, for some grain he owed them. She addressed herself to them very angrily, then 4 horses died, which they believed had been her witchcraft.

(6) Hublotte, veuve Nicolas Piers, 40

Reputation as witch, 'et qu'elle luy sembloit telle, de cause qu'à tous propos, en jurantz et maulgreans, elle donnoit son ame au diable'.

(7) Barbe femme Demenge Angnevin, 60

Common reputation only.

(8) Marguerite Jeune, fille Claudon Martin dit Cordonnier, 24

Was servant in house of sieur Blanche Charrier. Sent down to close doors of house, she had a frightening encounter with the accused, and fell down stairs; accused explained that 'son mechant homme de marit' had chased her out of their house.

(9) Clement d'Agincourt, vigneron, 50

For two years had been suffering from strange illness, and if she was witch suspected she had caused this, because a woman who was treating him in his house had twice said the accused was a witch.

(10) Claudon femme du precedent, 50

General reputation; added 'que le plus souvent quand elle veut affirmer quelque chose, et quasy de tous propos, elle donne son ame au diable, et qu'elle luy a ouy dire en plusieurs fois, que sy elle estoit sorciere, elle feroit merveilles, et feroit mourir son marit'.

(11) Waultier Poirillon, arballestrier, 35

Had several times seen her after being beaten by husband, making great complaints, but producing no tears, saying he called her witch and that if she were such she would kill him.

(12) Bastienne femme du precedent, 34

Accused had been known as witch for 9 or 10 years; always giving herself to devil in her speech.

(13) Jean Saffrois, dit Prevost, arbalestrier, 70

Had heard husband say he would have her burned, and calling her witch.

(14) Catherine femme Nicolas Symmonet, dit Pacquatte, vigneron, 60

Generally reputed witch, and had heard her called such several times; once witness advised her to have patience, and she replied 'que dieu la delaissoit'. Some 15 years earlier she had a son aged 3, and was frightened of smallpox which was then raging, and from which children of accused were suffering. Asked her not to bring them to poisle where they both went, but she replied 'qu'ils y iroient et n'en feroient rien pour personne'. 2 days later child sickened - although not obviously

with smallpox - and died 3 days later. Suspected her the more because she never came to sprinkle holy water on body like other neighbours. On another occasion she was selling white bread, and refused to let accused have some on credit; saw her in street when carry water home, fell down and hurt forehead, but pitcher she was carrying was unharmed.

(15) Nicolas Symmonet, 50

Confirmed wife's testimony about child.

(16) Mengeatte femme Jean Symmonet, vigneron, 50

Had only heard her being accused as witch by her husband.

(17) Jean Symmonet, 36

Had heard her called witch by husband, and in reply she gave his soul to the devil, saying that if she were witch she would kill him.

(8 January 1616)

(18) Nicolas Jacquart, laboureur, 36

Reputed witch as long as he could remember. 18 years earlier had come to house of father for some reason, immediately after which a horse worth 30 écus died in stable. Mother called her to house and accused her of being witch and killing horse, for which she sought no reparation.

(19) Barbillon, femme Claudin Thierion, 24

Reputation 5 years (residence). At time of last Brandons, had just given birth to son. Husband had sold 'huys' to accused, but had lost key, and she made repeated visits over next week asking angrily for it. On one visit said that baby's cried were weak, and child promptly stopped feeding, dying in 3 days. Came to see body, saying she wished she were as dead as the child, and repeating comment about crying; suspected that death had been her witchcraft. Around last autumn one of their cows was giving milk which turned, and when she complained of this accused asked to have some, but did not give her any. Soon after cow had stomach injury as if butted, but herdsman had seen nothing, so suspected her again.

(20) Laurence fille Nicolas Symmonet, 26

General reputation only.

(21) Demenge Angnevin, vigneron

Reutation 7 years, but no personal suspicion.

(22) Anthoine Cherier, sergent de justice à Lanfroicourt, 52

In 1601 had to collect debt of 18 francs owed by her first husband, and had quarrel when he tried to sell property, because she then offered him the money. He

called her 'cocquine', at which she said his wife was one too, and he struck her saying his wife was not reputed a witch. 2 weeks later his daughter aged 4 became sick, and was bedridden for 4 or 5 years until she died; wife called accused to see her, but she did nothing; had great suspicion this had been her witchcraft.

(23) Jehenne femme Colin Aubert, moictrier, 50

7 years earlier husband was receveur at Lay-sous-Amance, and accused was called in to help with sheepshearing, but damaged all the animals she handled (debagoullat et decrattellat). Next time they needed shearing witness told her to go away unless she could do a better job, at which she left indignantly. Shortly afterwards was very ill with stomach pains, and suspected this was her doing, but since she recovered next day no longer thought this.

9 January 1616; interrogation

Said she was about 50. Believed she had been inculpated by confessions of la grosse Collotte, Admitted that in time of first husband Jean Vilaume she had been taken to court by wife of Sr Faleze, after being caught in his vines, but denied having taken any grapes, since they had already been harvested.

Had heard that a certain Toussaint, executed at Neufchâteau, had accused her. Believed that this followed occasion when he had put a dead skull outside their house, which her husband took to cemetery of Amance. Later discovered that he had done it, and told him off severely. Asked why Collatte had accused her, said she did not know, having never frequented her or quarrelled with her.

Could not remember very much about dispute with Gerard Marchal about carting wood, but his valets had said 'des bougres et des diables de fagots.' When cow then fell sick Marchal's wife asked her to go to house, then accused her of causing illness of cow and child, saying she would have her burned if she did not heal them. She had declared her innocence, but could not get reparation because there were no witnesses.

Asked if her husband, after discovering about accusations at Neufchâteau, had kept watch on her and reproached her with being a witch, 'a dit que ouy, mille, mille, mille fois.' He had beaten her at night, and driven her out of house on occasions, but she had used a small piece of wood to open the door again.

Agreed there had been dispute with late Colas Vosgien, 15 or 16 years earlier, about payment of debts. Otherwise denied all charges.

13 January 1616; confrontations

No reproaches to witnesses, denied all charges.

15 January 1616; PG (C.M. Rémy) asks for question ordinaire et extraordinaire

18 January 1616; Change de Nancy approves

25 January 1616; interrogation under torture

When given thumbscrews admitted she had been a witch for 6 years, but claimed she had done no harm. Phantom, which was soft as a cat, had appeared to her as she as sleeping in 'chambre a fourq' because of ill treatment by husband. Would say no more, so was racked, and now confessed that she had been seduced

by Persy. Had been to sabat twice, where there was some dancing, but she knew nobody. Persy had intercourse with her, and had given her money which was oak leaves, and powder which she had thrown away.

Was now threatened with greater torture, and changed story. Seduction had been 14 years earlier, in year of first husband's death, when angry because he had been fined over carpentry he had done. Persy first appeared to her in form of cat, then seduction as before. Admitted using powder to kill Jean Charton's child; this had been 'a cause que ledit Charton le tenant entre ses bras et faisoit trop de mines de luy'. Had also killed horse of Jean Vosgien. Still denied numerous other charges, but asked to be put to death for her crimes. Said she had not caused hailstorms, because 'elle avoit trop besoin des biens de la terre'. Admitted she had twice tried to poison husband with her powders in soup, but he had detected bitter taste. Named two accomplices, Jacquotte femme Nicolas Tixerand and veuve Mariatte.

26 January 1616; confirmed earlier confessions and accusations. Confronted with two women she had accused, maintained her charges, even though Mariatte went down on her knees begging her to retract - she said she must tell the truth or be damned.

29 January 1616; PG asks for death sentence; Change de Nancy approves, adding that she should be strangled (which he had omitted)

1 February 1616; final death sentence from court at Amance