

Paris, February 25th. 1952

TRIAL OF MARIE BESNARD

Poitiers and Loudun

February 23-24-1952

Other competition unknown

Camera ~~man~~ Jacques BATTON

POSITIVE : 125 meters = 412 ft

Marie BESNARD is a village woman, of over 50 years of age and she is accused of having murdered by Arseniate poison 12 persons of her connections and family to inherit their wealth. It is a regular black-roman of far off countrysides, and she now stands before her judges after 31 months of justice inquiries to find the proofs of her guilt. She has always denied the twelve or any murders, but a heavy and enormous file (over 900 different sheets of reports, in a pile of 75 centimeters high) is before the State prosecutor and Judge who intend to sentence her for her deeds. A thirteenth charge of murdering her first husband Auguste ANTIGNY has been dropped; because it is over 12 years old, but arseniate poison was also found in his remains.

Our picture shows :

- General views of the town of POITIERS where the trial is taking place,
- exterior views of the Palace of Justice, in Poitiers
- Arrival at the Palace of Justice of the Police-car bringing MARIE BESNARD, who comes out and goes inside the Palace surrounded by gendarmes of her guard.
- Interior views of Marie Besnard arriving in the prisoners' booth in the trial Hall.
- general views of the Trial Hall, with crowd, accused and Judges.
- shots of State Prosecutor, and of Judges
- Shot of President Judge
- Shot of State Prosecutor,
- general views of Trial room
- shot of Marie Besnard in her booth

- Views of village of LES LIBOUREAUX where Marie Besnard lived with her first Husband Auguste Antigny. She inherited from her first husband a small farmhouse, shown here; and where her second husband LEON BESNARD was taken ill after eating a soup she had made for him while visiting the old farmhouse.
- Shots of Saint Pierre de Maillé's village cemetery and of Auguste ANTIGNY's grave. He was buried there 12 years ago.
- views of village of LOUDUN, where Marie Besnard lived with her second husband Leon BESNARD, showing the houses she owned with him, and the one (Nr.6) where she lived. Léon BESNARD died there two years ago, but before dying confided to one of her friends that she had poisoned him, as others; which started the whole accusation. While investigating for Leon Besnard's death, the police found other charges, and people in the village began talking about her whole life, and long list of inheritances and death

TRIAL OF MARIE BESNARD (2)

- ..//... - shots of small Loudun church (St-Pierre) where Marie Besnard used to come and pray for her dead(?)
- shot of Marie Besnard's houses which she inherited from her second husband Léon Besnard.
- a coffin is carried in the small cemetery of Loudun; views of same, a woman prays on the grave of the RIVET family, husband and wife, whom Marie Besnard is accused of murdering because they left her by will a house and 178,000 Francs. The man, Toussaint Rivet died in July 1939, and left Marie Besnard a sum of 178,000 Francs, his widow, Blanche RIVET died in 1941 after having sold her house agains a rent during her lifetime to Marie Besnard.
- another funeral enters Loudun Cemetery
- shots of grave of BESNARD Family with signs of LEON BESNARD (Marie's second husband) Marcelin BESNARD (his brother whom she is also accused of murdering) and Marie-Louise GOUIN, wife of Marcelin Besnard, whom she is also accused of murdering.
- main street of LOUDUN, on the right is a house, which was owned by Lucie BESNARD, sister of Léon Besnard, second husband of Marie, whom she is also accused of murdering. Lucie Besnard was found on March 27th, 1941 hanged in her attic. But after examination of her remains by the Justice, it was found that she also had taken arsenic, and been hanged after her death. Marie Besnard inherited from her I farm with 16 acres of land.
- shots of Lucy Besnard's windows, a string hanging from the ceiling with a noose...
- shots of Cemetery with another funeral, close up of coffin, a ~~man~~ grave, that of Lucy Besnard,
-) shots of digging a grave and putting a coffin down.
- shot of Leon BESNARD's grave, a woman who might have been Marie comes and prays in front of the grave.
- shots inside the small village church, a woman prays before the Madona.
- Big close up of the accused MARIE BESNARD, who still pretend she never killed anybody. Will the Justice sitting at POISSIERS prove her guilt?