

B 8719 no 3; witch 292, Dion veuve Jean Remy de Raon

25 October 1617; Demenge Potier declares himself partie formelle against Dion, who is commonly reputed witch, and against whom there are several indices. Pledges his goods against costs of case.

31 October 1617; informations preparatoires

(1) Gerard Godat drappier de Raon, 43

Reputation more than 7 years.

(2) Barbe femme Idoul Odinat, 33

Some 8 years before they were renting house owned by her last husband, and back of building collapsed. Witness was helping husband of accused replace tiles when she appeared and made angry and threatening remarks. Shortly afterwards her husband, who was carting cloth, became ill near Rozieres, and was at St Nicolas for 3 weeks, thought to be dying, before he gradually recovered. Some 10 weeks later had an accident when carting more cloth, with leg and thigh broken, so that he was bedridden at Baccarat for 19 weeks and at Raon for 22. Was now on crutches and forced to beg for livelihood. Believed that if she was a witch, as she was long reputed, she had caused these misfortunes, particularly because none of the other workers with her husband had been hurt.

(3) Jennon femme Gerard Godat, 40

Some 2 years before Dion had been angry with her, alleging that she had not called her when she made a 'buée', although witness claimed she had sent her son to her house. When she said she had been in all day witness realized that she had been caught out; were not in habit of calling her anyway, since she lived some way off. Soon afterwards she became ill, as did both her children, one of whom died; all had dysentery, which they could not cure for long time. Believed that if she was witch as she was reputed she had caused this.

(4) Jean de la Court de Raon, 24

Shortly before last St Jean, when they were neighbours, had been angry when his wife was too busy to put some lettuces with her own. About a week later lost a pig, which he suspected had been her witchcraft if she were as she was reputed. Both he and his wife had been ill when they were neighbours, and although they did not suspect her over this, wished she would not frequent their house so much.

(5) Anthoine Gerard de Raon, 30

Some 5 years earlier had lived in her house, with agreement to keep it heated. She often quarrelled with his wife, and while he was working (he was a

cobbler) his knee swelled up painfully, then trouble spread over half his body. Was ill for 3 weeks like this, then gradually recovered, during which time she always followed him about. Suspected that if she was witch she had caused this; reputation more than 7 years. Also had a small baby, and he and his wife did not like her to be near it, as she always wanted to be; she told neighbours about this. Later child fell ill and died in 2 days, during which she said she hoped it would not die because they would suspect her. Had often called her witch without any reparation being sought.

(6) Demenge Didon boulangier de Raon, 25

Some 2 years before had been her neighbour, and Demenge Potier asked him to tell her that if she gave him her 'jazerant d'argent' he would not have her arrested. Witness had been drinking, and did not think about consequences, so went and told her this privately. She was 'fort deplaisante', and he had repented afterwards. Some days later his wife told accused that he was going to buy a horse, to which she replied that if he did so he would have no luck, and that his father had been ruined like that. Bought an expensive horse for 38 ecus, but it suddenly died on third time he took it out; blamed her for this, and she was commonly reputed a witch.

(7) Bastienne femme Colas Moictrier de Raon, 35

Some 3 years earlier, when she had been pregnant, accused came into her house on return from mass, asking if she was ill, and then asking to hold child at font. Witness said she would not ask anyone until moment came; when son was born she asked her to feast, but not to be godparent, and she would hardly speak a word to her for anger. Later brought her a sheet to use for child, but it fell ill, and seemed to get worse after she visited it; was dry as wood, but with stomach swollen, and died after a year. Believed she had caused this, and she was reputed witch for several years. On another occasion when she came to house she and her husband had openly accused her of being a witch and causing illness of child.

(8) Blaisette femme Demenge Didon, 24

About 2 years earlier, when wife of Demenge Remy was executed as witch, Dion came to house, and they had conversation about horse, as reported by husband.

(9) Collate veuve Idoul Vigneron de raon, 70

Some 5 years ago she had not been invited to 'recor' after birth of child of Chrestofle Remy and his wife Zabel (both now dead), although she was his sister-in-law. Suddenly lost her milk, and suspecting her they asked her to dinner with others, including witness. She said milk would come back, as it slowly did, and witness had heard them say that she had caused its loss by her witchcraft.

(10) Nicolas Moictrier de Raon, 46

Reputation 20 years. Repeated wife's story of death of child.

(11) Charles Commis de Raon, 40

General repute. Living in same house around previous Christmas, had found her in a kind of trance, and had to put her into bed. Some nights she cried continually, blaming remarks made to her by the partie formelle. Witness did not think she had caused him any harm.

(12) Mengeatte femme Nicolas Bernard de Raon, 32

Reputation some 10 years. Told story of loss of milk by Zabel Remy. Accused had made her drink some wine, then suggested damping some coarse cloth, warming it by fire, and putting it on her breasts; when she did this her milk returned.

(13) Thomas Jacquat de Raon, 30

Reputation 15 years; no suspicion himself, but his late father believed she had caused him various losses.

(14) Jennon femme Nicolas Parisat, 40

About 12 years before Demenge Charpentier, first husband of accused, was godfather to their daughter Jennon; as latter grew up did not want to call her godmother, although they were neighbours. Witness had quarrel with Dion, and a week later daughter fell ill suddenly, unable to speak or eat for 3 days. She came, saying she had not been asked but would come anyway, and spent day next to girl, who then recovered; believed that if she were witch as reputed she had caused illness. Had heard her say that Clemence femme Thomas Jacquat had not asked her to childbed, although she was near neighbour, and they would see what came of this. Within 3 or 4 days child became ill and then died, with no-one knowing what was wrong, and had heard them blame her for this.

(3 November 1617)

(15) Marguite femme Demenge Voirat de Raon, 26

Had lived with her around last St Jean, and had various disputes. Son aged 2 became ill for 6 weeks, as if demented, so they had sometimes to hold him down, and he could get no rest. If she were witch believed she had caused this.

(16) Clemence femme Thomas Jacquat de Raon, 28

Told story of death of her small child 4 years earlier, after 2 week illness. Had been preceded by argument over a bed she was renting from the accused. Feared her greatly; had heard her called witch several times without seeking redress.

(17) Jehenne veuve Claude Brabant tabellion de Raon, 56

Reputation more than 15 years.

(18) Chrestienne femme Jean Tourneur, 40

Some 7 years before had bought some goods from her, and were to pay her in bread and other commodities from their bakery. Some 2 years back had asked to make reckoning, but witness said she was not ready, at which dispute followed. Witness's son Claude, aged 12, told her to leave house, which she did angrily. That evening saw enormous spider on his forehead, which he brushed off and could not find again; hand became swollen, then had 'grosses boteilles' over whole body, and was ill for 6 weeks, thought to be dying. Surgeon said he had never seen such an illness, but when accused visited him she said he was only ill, and then he gradually recovered. Firmly believed that if she was a witch she had caused illness.

(19) Jean Pierson de Raon, 40

Some 7 years before had been living in her house, and had quarrelled with his brother Nicolas; she told him 'qu'il le laisse courir, qu'il estoit bien hault luy et sa femme, mais qu'en peu de temps, ilz ne seroient tousjours sy haultain'. Some time later brother became strangely ill, bedridden for 9 months, and then slowly recovered, but had subsequently died. Witness and widow both believed Dion had caused illness; reputation as long as he could remember. Had often called out loudly around midnight, and when he went to investigate told him it was 'des meschants gens', cursing her two late husbands. When he reproached her she told him to go to the devil with them, and he had several times called her witch.

(20) Babon femme Mre Pierre Charles de Raon, 45

Previous Monday the accused, who had come to fetch wine from their house, started complaining that the word was going around that she was to be arrested. Witness said she must have patience and console herself with God, to which she replied 'qu'il y avoit plus de sept ans qu'elle le pryoit et qu'il ne luy avoit rien faict, qu'elle voyoit bien qu'il ne la vouloit garder, ou elle debvoit aller, et qu'elle ne pardonneroit les personnes, qu'elle ne s'en souciolet de sa part, et que la justice estoient des meschants gens'.

(21) Barbe Braconnier de Raon, 54

Said that some 35 years before her uncle Nicolas Barbier died, and his widow Sebille suspected Dion; he had passed in front of her house just before sudden illness, and she had hated him over a previous quarrel. Since then had always heard her reputed a witch.

(22) Idoul Odinat de Raon, 40

Repeated wife's deposition, with details of his accident.

(23) Michel Parmentier de Raon, 35

Reputation more than 7 years.

(24) Marguitte femme Charles Commis, 50

One day in house of a neighbour a coal had fallen on accused, who said 'qu'elle seroit encore assez bruslée', which gave them all a poor opinion in view of her reputation. Had heard her called witch by wife of Nicolas Moictrier.

(25) Claudatte femme Jean de la Court, 29

Previous year had lived in adjoining house, and had asked her to dinner after birth of child; few days later alleged that witness had complained that women had paid her no attention since dinner. Witness denied saying this; later fell ill for 7 weeks, and when she wanted to leave house accused would try to force her to go back in. Her hands were very cold, and witness was so frightened that when she touched her she trembled all over. One day accused found her doing washing, and said she was still working although she was ill; replied that she must have some occupation, and that if her legs were as good as her arms she would have no problem. Immediately lost use of arms as if they were broken, and remained in this state for some 10 weeks. Believed that if she was a witch she had caused this.

(26) Claudatte femme Claudon Quentin, 50

Her husband had sold a cow to her late husband, and had not been paid; after his death had quarrel with her over this when he asked her to pay. Previous summer he approached her again, and she touched him on shoulder, after which he was ill for 6 weeks. Believed that if she was witch she had caused this, and had told him not to importune her again, for fear of suffering further harm.

(27) Demenge Potier partie formelle, 48

Reputation more than 7 years. Had heard her called witch in public, in presence of Jean Barron, then Mre echevin, without taking any action. She still owed him 20 francs for a 'casaque' he had sold her late husband, and 'la voulant faire gaiger', he went to take property from her house. She was in bed 'faisante la malade et bigote', but then jumped up in fury, took him by throat and tried to strangle him. He had great difficulty in throwing her off, and had to throw her to the ground, where she lay for a quarter of an hour without moving, so they feared she was dead. Finally recovered, and started to dispute with him again; believed that if she was a witch, as she was reputed, 'qu'elle luy vouloit causer par ses sortileges quelques infortunes'.

(28) Jennon femme a honnorabile Nicolas Fournier archer des gardes de S.A., demeurant a Raon, 44

Reputation 7 years; nearly that long ago husband had been at festival at Gerberville, and when children said he was returning accused told them he would not come back yet. Fell from his horse and was in bed for 3 weeks, over which she suspected her.

7 November 1617; interrogation

Said she was Dion, widow of Jean Remy of Raon, aged 79 - would be 80 next Chandeleur. Second marriage had been 12 years earlier, had lasted 5 years. Previously married to Demenge Charpentier; she was native of Raon, father was Claudon du Puix, mother Jennon.

Said wife of Nicolas Fournier had warned her she would be arrested, but did not know why. Admitted that 'le mechante homme' Demenge Potier had called her witch two years before, while claiming no-one else had done so. Asked about child of Anthoine Gerard, said she had wanted to help him, and 'sy a tout coup lors qu'il y a des personnes malades, on vouloit les charger d'en estre cause qu'il en y auroit plusieurs mal a propos'.

Agreed to exchange with wife of Nicolas Moictrier about baptism of child, but denied being put out. Said Demenge Voirat's child was already ill when they came to the house, and had then had a fever. Admitted complaining that she was to be arrested, but denied other words attributed to her. Did say she would never pardon those who accused her of being a witch. Now admitted that Nicolas Moictrier's wife had called her witch, but said there had been no witnesses.

Asked why she had disposed of her goods, so that when inventory was taken very little was found, said she had given them in return for services people had done for her. Asked why she had not pursued her complaint against Demenge Potier 18 months earlier, said she thought Jean Barron, then mre echevin, would pursue it on her behalf.

Said she was 'femme de bien, et sy on luy faict plus grand tort, tant plus de merite aura elle envers dieu'. Denied all charges, only made marginal admissions as above.

8 November 1617; confrontations

Said Anthoine Gerard's illness had been 'mal St Anthoine'. Had not caused death of his child, and had loved it too much for that. Barbe Braconnier claimed that her mother and father had already been suspected of witchcraft. Made no serious reproaches to witnesses.

13 November 1617; Change de Nancy approves question ordinaire et extraordinaire

15 November 1617; interrogation under torture

Given thumbscrews, then racked, she promised to tell truth if she were taken down, but then insisted she was innocent. Began to confess after being racked again. Said she had been seduced by Mre Persin 7 years earlier, when very angry that her husband had gone off to the wars. Promised her money, and she gave in 'fort legerement'. Gave her black and white powders to kill and to cure. Tried

powder out on own cat, then used it to make Nicolas Parisat's daughter ill and cure her. Interrogation broken off because it was late.

(16 November 1617) Confirmed previous confession, said she had made Claudatte femme Jean de la Court ill, after being told they had drunk all the wine when she went to banquet. Said she had committed no other maléfices. Pressed by judges, said that Persin had given her powder 3 times, but she had thrown it on fire, and resisted his repeated suggestions 'pour faire du mal, et tirer vengeance de ceulx qui luy causoient déplaisir'; had been beaten by him for this.

Said she had been to sabbat on cote de Repy 5 or 6 times, where there were more than 100 persons; her master took her by the neck and carried her through the air. Everyone was masked, and she had only recognised Annon femme Jean Clauderat, already executed. Standard description of dancing and feasting; said that young people were always 'au hault boult', and the old like her at the bottom, held in less regard than the others.

Confirmed confessions later same day, and again on the next day. Asked to be put to death as soon as possible.

18 November 1617; Change de Nancy approves death sentence

20 November 1617; execution carried out