

B 8673 no 1; witch 152, Jean Colas Claude Martin, and his sister Jennon, de Lubine

18 November 1593; informations préparatoires

Taken by prévôt at St Dié at request of Rémy, supported by Change de Nancy, following accusations by Jean Demenge Olry of Lubine.

(1) Didier Doienney, 50

Always heard their father reputed witch; once when witness had lost keys to a chest he laughed at him, asking how much he would give him to open it, then threw hat at it from 18 feet, and it opened. This confirmed his belief that he was a witch. Some 4 or 5 years before had quarrel with Jean when he caught him in one of his trees; told witness he would repent, and lost a cow 3 days later. 8 years earlier had been present when 'une sarazine' told Jennon she was not a virgin, but had relations with 'noir homme disant le diable'. Had heard her called witch by Jean Olriot, and called her so himself, without any action following.

(2) Colas Guillemotte, 36

2 years earlier his animals had damaged a garden of which Jean was co-owner, and he had been angry; then witness lost an ox suddenly. This was heavy loss, 'et ne se peut contenir d'en arguer ledit Jean Colas Claude Martin, encor que c'estoit couvertement, toutesfois de ces propos pouvoit il bien entendre que c'estoit de luy qu'on parloit'. No reparation sought, although he did tell others that witness was very angry with him. Had always heard him reputed witch, but knew nothing of sister.

(3) George Jacquemin, 55

Heard they were feared. 3 years earlier Martin Claude had died after quarrel with Jean, and told witness he blamed Jean for his death. Jean Bauldomin lost a cow after being threatened by him.

(4) Jean Andreu, 35

Some years earlier was elected to collect taxes, and had quarrel with Jean who claimed he was being overcharged. Became ill same day, and cured when his wife took 'joutte' from Jean's garden and he ate it. Believed illness was his witchcraft, and had always heard him, father and sister reputed witches.

(5) Jean Olriot, 60

Some 6 years earlier they had been working near one another, and had to shelter under a tree during rainstorm. Felt a thorn in his hand, and could not get it out. so asked Jean to look at it. He raised hand and blew on it, then witness felt great pain and hand started to swell up. Had it in sling for 13 weeks, and surgeons could do nothing to help. Suspected Jean because of reputation, but dared say nothing for fear of losing his property. Then thought how in various churches he had seen legs and hand in iron offered to secure intercession of saints, and collected iron to have one made for him. Jean and his late brother worked as smiths, and took it to their

forge, complaining bitterly of pain he was in - suddenly recovered same day, without needing the iron hand. Believed this had been his witchcraft.

Previous Lent, just after soldiers had left the village, the children of his son-in-law Jean Demenge Olry took some wood from his garden fence to burn; accused told witness about theft, saying that if he knew who had done it he would show them not to come again. 2 weeks later Olry lost a fine calf, which they had always blamed on him. After another quarrel previous May Olry lost a fine bull he was leasing - again blamed him, and always reputed a witch.

(6) Zabel femme Didier Demenge Doinney, 42

Reputation of both 26 years (residence).

(7) Benitte femme Demenge Doinney, 25

3 years earlier, when Jean 'faisoit l'amour' to his present wife, the late father of the witness, Demenge Chapel, met the woman and reproached her with 'le peu de respect qu'elle portoit a son parentaige qui avoit esté de tout temps en estime fame et renommée d'honnesteté et vertu sans qu'il y ait eheu soupcon de quelque malefice' - now she was going to marry Jean, who was commonly reckoned a witch. Same evening his sister brought 2 apples for him, after eating which he became ill and died in a week, suspecting that the apples had killed him. Had also heard first husband of Jean's wife say Jean had given him apples, after eating which he became ill and languished a long time until his death.

A little earlier her husband had an ox which was ill, and could find no cure. Thinking about a quarrel he had had with Jean, went to tell him about the illness, and he offered to treat it. Removed a black object from its hoof, after which it recovered - the maire had earlier tried to open the hoof without success. Believed he had caused the illness; they had always been feared as witches.

(8) Colin Claudon Doinney, 20

Had been present when Jean's current wife, then married to Claudon Demenge Olry, claimed that he had been poisoned by Jean, talking of getting something from his house to cure him, but did not know if she had done this. General reputation.

(9) Jean Demenge Olry, 36

Previous Easter had difficulty with him over payment for artillery horses, which he did not want to make like everyone else - told witness that perhaps he would not be paying tailles for long. Soon after he lost a bull; earlier had lost a calf after his children had taken some firewood from Jean's hedge. Also told of loss of bull which had trespassed on Jennon's field; she threatened his children, and it fell ill next day.

(10) Claudon Colas Andreu, de Salle, 60

Some 3 years ago at last St Jean Jean Claude Olry of Colroy had fallen ill and died after languishing some time. When visiting him heard that Jean was blamed; motive was his subsequent marriage to widow, which the inhabitants of Lubine would have prevented if they could, since she was of 'bon ligniage' while he was

generally reputed a witch, as was his sister. At time wife had blamed him, saying 'le diable soit de genox de la haute rue', which was where he and sister lived.

(11) Anne femme Claudon Guillemotte, 30

Native of village, had always heard them reputed witches. As child had a great illness which was blamed on them, after she let animals stray on their land; mother went and threatened to have them burned if she did not recover, after which she got better. Also told of sickness of pig belonging to neighbour Colin Guillemotte, following quarrel, which recovered after she took 'joutte' from garden of Jean's father (still alive on both occasions).

(12) Jennon fille Didier Guillemotte, 15

General reputation. Had seen Jennon driving away bull of Jean Demenge Olry, wishing it to devil and threatening to make sure it did not return, shortly after which it died.

(13) Jennon femme Colas Guillemotte, 40

Long reputation. Told of death of ox which had trespassed 2 years earlier; husband had reproached him in public without action following (but see deposition of husband, witness 2)

(14) Jennon veuve Didier Guillemotte, 35

Some 4 years earlier her late husband had quarrelled with them and father after damaging a fence. Then fell ill and remained so for 3 months, vomiting yellow matter, until she took some 'joutte' and gave it to him, after which he recovered. Believ'd this had been their witchcraft. 5 weeks earlier found some stones they had thrown into her field, and threw them back; Jennon was angry, and soon afterwards witness lost a cow, which she believed one of them had caused.

(15) Jean Bauldomin, 38

Previous year as paistre des menus bestes a goat ate some of Jean's cabbages, and he threatened witness that he would pay him for them. A fine cow became ill, and he had to have it killed; could not get full value because many people did not want to eat the meat. Thought Jean had caused this - always reputed witch. Previous spring he was very ill, and suspecting Jean he asked his sister, who was servant in his house, to get bread, salt, and ashes. Made soup with these which he drank on 3 separate days, and recovered - this increased his suspicions

(16) Benay George le petit Colin, forestier de Lubine, 36

6 years earlier had quarrel with Jean and his brother over ploughing, after which he had a cow sick. In view of reputation he suspected them, and could find no cure, but Jean's mother told him that if he suspected someone he should get 'joutte' from their garden. Did this, and cow recovered, which increased his suspicions. Had also had a pig which was coughing continually; heard that cress seed was cure, and wife got some from Jennon, but animal then became worse, ceasing to eat or drink. Wife then got bread, cheese, and salt from her, and after

eating these it recovered. Martin Claudel of Lubine had died after languishing miserably for a year, saying that they had given him illness because he had persuaded a girl not to marry into such a suspect family.

(17) Dieudonnée femme Jean Demenge Olry, 34

Claimed that after death of bull which Jennon had driven out of field (reported by George Jacquemin), she asked her why she had not come to treat the animal when sent for, saying 'que des gens de bien y avoient bien estez sans appeller, mais que les meschant n'y avoient volu aller, que savoient faict des genox et des genoixe qui l'avoient faict mourir. Laquelle Jennon ne luy feit aultre responce sinon que sy elle pouvoit faire paroistre qu'elle l'eust faict mourir qu'on la chastie bien'. Also shared husband's suspicions over death of other animals.

(18) Jean Demenge de la Borse, 36

8 or 9 years earlier had quarrelled with Jean's mother, after which he lost some piglets which sow refused to feed, also a fine cow. Believed this was doing of their household - general reputation.

(19) Magdeleine femme Simon Demenge Benay, 46

First husband Martin Claudel, as forestier, fined them, and Jean's father paid, but a year later he fell very ill, and died after two and a half years. Sometimes thought the illness had come from their household, in view of reputation.

(20) Mengeotte fille Gaspard Thirion, 20

5 years before had been servant in house of Arnould Didier Arnould, and had cow which lost milk for 3 days, until she fed it pears she took from garden of accused - recovery confirmed suspicions that there were witches there.

(21) Le maire Jacquot Masson, 45

18 months earlier his sow did some damage in Jean's garden, after which he threatened the witness that he would repent. A week later a bull sickened and died in another week, giving off terrible smell. Blamed him, and one day when he was in house of witness started to talk about his loss, saying 'au diable soit le jardin ou a esté ma cache', at which Jean got up and left. Had heard of threat to Jean Demenge Olry and losses of animals, also of his present wife blaming him for illness of first husband.

(22) Benite femme Jean Andreu, 40

Told of husband's dispute with him over taxes 2 years earlier, after which he became ill, but recovered after she gave him 'joutte' from their garden. Believed this had been his witchcraft - general reputation.

(23) Mengeotte Jean Bauldomin, 30

Told of getting bread, salt and ashes for her brother, Although she had been in service in their house for a long time, did not think they had caused her any harm.

(24) Catherine veuve Arnould Didier Arnould, de Colroy, 24

Told of how when they had sick ox 3 years earlier they took 3 kinds of 'joutte' from garden of accused, and gave them to eat on 3 separate days. Recovery increased their suspicion over the illness.

(25) Jennon fille Jean Demenge Martin, 15

Same story as previous witness - had been their servant at the time.

(19 November 1593)

(26) Demenge Doienney, 30

Told how his late father-in-law, who was her relative, had tried to dissuade Jean's wife from marrying him, and of subsequent death after eating apples. Also told of lameness of ox for 20 weeks previous summer after quarrel with Jean, which recovered as soon as he treated it.

(27) Claudon Guillemotte, 34

Quarrel with Jean a month earlier after his servant Jean had struck son of witness, who then attacked the servant. A bull had then sickened, with abscesses, and was still in poor condition - in view of reputation believed he had caused this.

(28) Claude Mengey, 40

Some 4 years earlier he and Jean had been taking two cartloads of planks to St Marie. He told off Jean's servant when one of his oxen became detached, and they had a slight quarrel over this. Later when they approached a bad place in the road he told Jean they should each take position by wheels so that it did not tip over - they did so, but it fell on him and he had to be carried back home with injury to side, was in bed for 5 weeks and not expected to live. In view of reputation imputed this to him. His wife suggested making a soup with 3 sorts of 'joutte' from Jean's garden, and since he recovered after drinking this was sure it had healed him.

(29) Catherine femme Claué Mengey, 36

Repeated essential of husband's deposition.

(30) Claudon Jean Bouillon, 30

5 years ago had quarrel with Jean because he crossed field sown with wheat; Jean told him he would remember this a year later, and within that time lost a fine horse which died suddenly - in view of reputation blamed him for this.

1 December 1593; interrogation

Jean said he was about 40, son of Colas Claude Martin, native of Combrimont (dead 2 years) and Alison, native of Lusse, still living. Had been married 3 years and had one child; wife was native of Lubine. Had been 18 months at Stiege in Val

de Viller with Claudon Gros Jean du Bourg, carpenter, to learn trade, then 6 months with another carpenter at Brusviller, 3 months with Simon de Viller, and 6 months at Tambach. Then went back to de Bourg and was in partnership for 3 years; believed none of these would say any ill of him. Had returned to Lubine 5 years earlier on Good Friday, living with his parents; had bought own house previous Whitsun, and left mother and sister in parental home.

Agreed that he had seen animals of Colas Guillemotte in his garden, and spoken to him about it, but had wished no evil to him or his animals. If he had lost some Jean was not cause, 'Ja Dieu ne les laisse tant vivre que de faire telles choses'. Guillemotte was angry when reproached with swearing a false oath, and had not accused him in company. Denied causing death of Martin Claude, saying he was a good man and they used to go out shooting, sharing any hares they killed.

Asked if he knew any secrets to shoot well, said several had thought he must have such, but did not know or use any. Had heard someone at Colroy talk about method which involved fasting before feast days and picking seeds of heather or grass, but was not sure of details and had never tried it.

Denied story about Jean Olriot's hand; no memory of any of this, or of being asked to make iron hand. As for Demenge Chappel, said he had been 'un vray homme de bien', who had been cause of his marriage, and without him he would not have been married. Asked about how he cured the ox of Demenge Doienney, said he cut away a little of the hoof to let the pus out - there were others present, and one of them put on vert de gris to destroy the rotten flesh. He had never caused such harm, and his wife was close relative of Doienney.

Said of Jean Demenge Olry's animals that his boy had told him they were so ill-nourished that he had to go and visit them by night. Otherwise denied most of the quarrels and other claims which were put to him. Said he had never made anyone ill, 'et que Dieu l'en garde que s'il vient ung maladie a ung on n'en doibt charger son voisin que de luy il en a bien heu qu'il n'en charge personne.' Asked about cart which overturned, said he had told Mengey not to stand by the middle of it.

3 December 1593; confrontations

Accused Colas Guillemotte of having committed perjury, which he denied. Said of George Jacquemin that he had once struck him after latter reproached him for wanting to have a girl - did not know if he bore him ill-will. Said that Benitte femme Demenge Doienney was relative on mother's side of his 'partie contraire' Jean Demenge Olry, and might have advantaged him in her testimony. In case of Olry said that according to maire, when accused and his sister sought reparation Olry said 'que s'ils ne se retroient il leur monstreroit ung tour d'homme'. In reply to Jennon veuve Didier Guillemotte said he had been away working at Mesangoutte or Repas at time in question. Also said that Claudon Jean Bouillon was relative of Olry and might have deposed against him for that reason. while Jean Olriot was Olry's father-in-law. Said of Jean Demenge de la Borse that he wa a good man, and that a year earlier he might have married his sister 'n'eust esté une parole'. Generally maintained his innocence, and in some cases said he had been away at time of events in question.

3 December 1593; interrogation (Jeannon)

Said she was about 30, and had always lived in household of parents. Believed she had been arrested because Jean Demenge Olry claimed she had caused

death of his bull. As Mengeotte femme Jean Gourmant of Lubine, who had been present, could testify, she had not touched it or uttered any threats when his boy drove it out of her field. Asked about brother's marriage, said it was Demenge Chapel who had taken initiative and gone to speak to her father proposing it. Agreed that Olry's wife had made remark of kind alleged about not going to see their ox, and she had asked her what she meant; when she asked if she meant she was cause, the other said she did not name anyone. As for Jean Baldomin's illness, had been told he had 'le mal St Fleurent'. Denied series of alleged disputes.

3 and 4 December; confrontations (Jeannon)

Made no reproaches, and no admissions.

6 December 1593; Rémy asks that Jean be given question ordinaire et extraordinaire, but torture of Jennon only to be 'mediocre'.

9 December 1593; Change de Nancy agrees

14 December 1593; interrogation under torture

Was given thumbscrews, racked, and subjected to kind of tortillons, but would confess nothing. Tortured a second time (more lightly) same day, then briefly the next, continued to deny. Did say at very end 'que l'on luy a rapporté qu'on a menassé les tesmoings s'ilz ne depositent tel l'ung tel l'autre.'

14 December 1593; interrogation under torture (Jeannon)

Lightly racked only. She said the 'sarazine' had come asking for lard, which she refused, and said 'qu'elle luy feroit une belle dance'. Otherwise denied all the charges.

23 December 1593; Rémy agrees that they cannot be convicted, but in view of weight of evidence against Jean asks that he be banished, adding that the denouncer is exempt from 'presumpta calumnia'.

24 December 1593; Change de Nancy decides that they should be renvoyés, with admonition to conduct themselves in future so there are no complaints. [Released 26 December]