

B 8678 no 2; witch 169, Marion veuve Demenge le Masson, de St Dié

1 August 1596; confrontation with Laurence femme Colas Viney, who had accused her. Marion said 'qu'il y en a desja eues des bruslées au vieu Marché qui estoient plus proches que la detenue et ne l'ont poinct accusée et que sy elle a esté soubconnée par quelque personne qu'elle le dise et que beaucoup de personnes se peuvent ressembler'. Laurence insisted she had seen her twice, advising her not to allow herself to be tortured as she had been, adding later 'que lors qu'elle aura sentie les tourmens de la question elle changera bien de propos'.

2 August 1596; informations préparatoires

(1) Michiel Diey, de Grattain, 50

He held 'admodiation la moictresse' for her at Grattain; had never heard her suspected, until a few days before when Jacquatte Hault Rue was being tried, and she came to tell him she expected to be arrested at any time. He said that if she was a good woman she had nothing to fear.

(2) Colatte femme Jean Chenal, de Grattain, 45

7 years before they quarrelled when Marion wanted to make garden in front of house, which obstructed road. She told Marion she already had enough, to which reply was that she would repent. Witness said she did not fear her, to which she reiterated that she would repent, although she was no witch. Lost 2 fine cows, which she had always imputed to her - general reputation.

(3) Jean Chenal de Grattain, 60

16 years before her geese were regularly damaging his crops, so he warned her he would kill them if she did nothing, and finally put threat into effect. She told him he would repent, and he lost 2 foals. Then quarrel over roadway as described by wife. A few days earlier had told his wife that if she maintained her accusations it would only need 3 similar charges to have her arrested.

(4) Colin des Gottes, de Grattain, 70

Reputation 30 years, but no personal suspicion. had heard quarrel with Jean Chenal 7 years earlier, and knew of loss of cows; had seen one of these fall dead suddenly as it was grazing, and felt sure this was witchcraft, although did not know if she was cause.

(5) Demenge Marsal, de Grattain, 60

Reputation 20 years (residence).

(6) Michiel Demenge Milan, de Grattain, 40

Reputation 16 years (residence).

(7) Alison veuve Colas Robinet, de St Dié, 40

10 years earlier sought caution for rent owed her by Marion's husband for 3 years. When she went to house Marion said that the devil should break her neck and legs, and a week later suddenly had great pain in thigh and leg around midnight. Went to seek healing from Diey Bazelaire (apparently a surgeon), but without success, also consulted surgeon of Houville. They finally told her they could do nothing because she was bewitched. Unable to walk for a year, then had to use crutches, still unable to walk or work properly. No abscess, but place on thigh was white and trembled constantly; believed this was Marion's doing, and she had long reputation. Demenge Masson had met her in street and asked her why she blamed his wife's witchcraft, so she reminded him of threats and said she would rather she had broken her neck.

(8) Marguitte femme Demenge le Cueffre, de St Dié, 40

5 years before had been helping move straw at her house, and was given some soup made with herbs; there were some grains as black as coal at bottom of this. Felt great pain throughout body, and ran up and down like a person 'incensée et enragée' then became all swollen as if pregnant. Had been unwell ever since, stomach full of animals which gave her no rest, except when she drank cold milk. Forced to eat and drink at all hours of day and night. Spat up black and infected matter every morning; animals could be seen running about in body when she was in bed. Was sure Marion had given her illness by means of soup, and had always said so in public.

Earlier that week, when there were rumours she would be arrested, was called to house of Jacquin Martin, nearest neighbour of Marion; he told her that she should keep quiet about her accusations. Then Marion and the wife of Lienard le Papellier arrived, and latter said to her 'qu'elle avoit dict de gros propos contre ladite Marion de dire qu'elle luy avoit donné le mal, et qu'elle mette cela soubz les pieds et n'en plus parler et que pour l'honneur de dieu elle en crie mercy a ladite Marion, et faisant refus de ce faire ladite Marion se print a elle de bonne façon et dict qu'elle en parleroit au maire Jean de Sarrux et a Ferry Ferry, ses nepveux et la feroit prendre et qu'il luy cousteroit plustost cent francs ou elle luy feroit prouver son dire, Elle deposante cestante lors seulle entre ces personnages qui la persuadoient les uns par prières et les autres par menaces, de crier mercy a ladite Marion, et craignant que ladite Marion ne luy face encor quelque autre plus grand mal elle luy cria mercy, que toutesfois, ce fut par force ce qu'elle en fit et par craincte, et persiste nonobstant ce que ladite Marion luy a donné le mal qu'elle a presentement dans ladite escuelle de potage.' Had always heard her reputed a witch - father's house was closest to hers.

(9) Claudatte femme François Pelletier, de St Dié, 35

18 years before was in service of accused when ther was rumour that her husband had made their 'moictresse de Grattain' pregnant. She went to find out truth, and on return called husband 'putié et marcot', then went to back of house, took head in both hands, and banged it against the door, saying repeatedly 'vient diable, vient serpent, viens moy querir'. Witness rushed out for help, but she was still calling on devil when she returned, although now on bed by fire. She was absent that night, but heard from niece of accused (now married at Raon) that she continued speaking in this way during the evening, and that around midnight something tried 3 times to lift her out of bed, but she was held down by her husband - he said 'qu'il veoit bien qu'elle estoit sorciere et qu'elle avoit tant de fois appellé le

diable, qu'il la venoit querir.' Around this time she also told her maid about meeting a big black man on the road, so perhaps this was when she was abused.

(10) Barbeline femme Lienard le Papellier, de St Dié, 60

Long reputation, but no personal suspicion. Last Saturday had sought witness in her house, and asked her to fetch wife of Demenge le Cueffre, who accused her of causing her illness. She had done this, and told her she should beg forgiveness if it were not true; after refusing for long time she finally did this. Had intended no harm, and only fetched her because asked to do so.

(3 August 1596)

(11) Jacquin Martin, de St Dié, 65

Last Saturday previous witness had asked to use his house for meeting with Demenge le Cueffre's wife; he reported conversation very much as latter had done. She did not want to ask for mercy, but said she did not charge Marion - had not heard any more.

(12) Gerard Ladouic, de St Dié, 40

17 years earlier had contracted to marry her niece, who died suddenly on Sunday, day before marriage was to be solemnized, so that all arrangements for feast had been made, greatly to his cost. Had always suspected Marion, who had long been reputed witch. 3 years earlier had refused to do some carting for her, then had horse sick for 3 weeks, with everyone saying it was bewitched, and unable to eat, until it suddenly recovered - suspected she had caused this.

(13) Jean Vaguenaire, bourgeois de St Dié, 50

12 years earlier was doyen to her husband when he was maire of St Dié. One day there was a thunderstorm, and he went into her house; was no-one in kitchen, but in poisle there was a woman under a bench, with hands and feet on floor, and body arched. Could not see face because it was against floor and scarf was over it, but clothes suggested it was Marion. Went back second time and she was still there. Reputation 30 years.

(14) Honn Homme Diey Bretault, bourgeois de St Dié, 36

Had lived for several years in house of late father, adjoining that of Marion, and had 3 children dead, over which he suspected her. Very long reputation. Sister Margueritte was Demenge le Cueffre's wife - illness and suspicions.

(15) Jennon veuve Demenge Bretaux, de St Dié, 35

Her late husband had suspected her over horse which died after bieng ill for a year, 3 years earlier.

(16) Marguitte femme Jean le Rouet, de la Bolle, 40

Story of incidents 17 or 18 years before when she quarrelled with husband about infidelity; had heard her cry out around midnight 'Jesus Maria, il y a quelque chose qui m'en veult emporter'.

(4 August 1596)

(17) Claudatte femme Claude Petit Demenge, de St Dié, 29

First husband had been Claudon la Hiere, tabellion, whose late father was called by same name. Latter had great quarrel with her over marriage she had agreed between her niece and another of his sons, when she gave the girl to another (Richard Didier Anthoine). Case which resulted went to 'cour de Rome'. Soon afterwards father-in-law went out late at night to pee, came back saying that a hot air had passed in front of his face, and died as soon as he got into bed. Everyone in household blamed Marion, and her late husband said this in public. Had heard from her mother-in-law, wife of François Petit Demenge, substitut, that a maid (since dead of plague) told her how 3 years before one named Barbelline was in prison, and condemned to be burned. Died in prison after eating 'millet' cooked in kitchen of maire Jean de Sarrux, nephew of Marion, after which she was made to clean out the cooking pot 6 or 7 times. Late husband had also quarrelled with Marion shortly before death, and if she was witch thought she had killed both him and his father.

(18) Chrestienne femme honn homme François Petit Demenge, substitut à St Dié, 55

3 years earlier, during trial of Barbelline, Marion told her she was frightened officers would come and arrest her from behind. Witness told her she should not fear if she was a good woman. Then story of how maid of Jean de Sarrux told her about cleaning pot, in which rice had been cooked for Barbelline, and how Jean's father had put something in it from a cornet of paper. Witness told her 'qu'elle parloit de terribles choses', and should be careful, but she said it was the truth.

(19) Annon femme de noble homme Gilles Padoux, lieutenant de M. le bailli de Nancy à St Dié, 35

Had previously been married to older Claudon la Hiere; told of quarrel over marriage, when 'empechement' was declared by other suitor. Then story of husband's death, as told by others; she claimed that when body was being visited they did not hesitate to blame her in her presence. Very long reputation.

(20) Jeanne veuve de Claude Henry, fernaisaire aux mines de la Croix, 50

Her daughter Roson had married Nicolas de Padoux, and for first year lived in house of accused, but daughter did not like this, and they rented another house next year. Within a few days of moving he became very strangely ill, throwing himself on tables and benches with feet against wall, saying he felt something in his body which gave him no rest. Were told by 'experts et medicoens' that it was witchcraft, and he died after 8 weeks, claiming that it was her witchcraft. Very long reputation.

(21) Sebille veuve Claudon Blaise, porte enseigne à St Dié, 50

2 years before had quarrel with Marion over debt, which ended with witness selling her a cow for 21 francs. Same evening went to bed, suddenly felt as if she had been punched in stomach, then as if suffocating. Remedies of apothecaries could not help, and they said it was witchcraft. After a week sent for Marion and asked pardon for disputes, without accusing her, but still did not improve. Wife of apothecary and others advised her to get bread, salt, and ashes from her house, and a niece obtained these; made soup and started to recover. Could not affirm that Marion had given her the illness.

(22) Sebille femme Claude Barbier, bourgeois de St Dié, 24

Had been living with previous witness during illness 2 years earlier, and had obtained items for soup from maid in Marion's house. Did not know what quarrel they had had previously.

(23) Jean Barré, bourgeois de St Dié, 30

Story of death of Nicolas de Padoux, whose wife Roson was his sister-in-law.

4 August 1596; interrogation

Said she was about 58, had been married to Demenge le Masson for 38 years; asked about disputes, said there were hardly any married people who did not have these, and husband had sometimes beaten her several times, but she had forgotten why. Asked about quarrel over time when he made other woman pregnant, agreed she had called him 'putié', but denied calling on devil. As for quarrels with others, only mentioned wife of Jean Chenault of Grattain. She had heard from her tenant Michiel Diey that she blamed her for her illness, but she swore by the devil it was untrue, so she had taken matter no further. Admitted conversation with her previous week, and that she had asked Michiel Diey if he had heard rumours of her arrest, which she expected any hour.

Said she had fed wife of Demenge le Cueffre not once, but a hundred times, with bread as well as soup. When she claimed that latter had begged her pardon, was asked if there was any officer present, with suggestion that her withdrawal had been procured by threats. Denied being under bench during thunderstorm, saying that when she heard thunder she always rushed to 'ung cierge benyt et a ses heures'.

Asked about accusation by Laurence, said she had lied like a witch, and that she had never been to sabat; since she had been in prison 'elle a été continuellement en prières envers dieu, de l'illuminer par son St Esprit a ce que sy elle avoit été quelque fois tentée et abusée par l'ennemy et faict quelque chose mal a propos elle s'en puisse resouvenir pour en faire la confession, mesme se resouvenant de tant de fois qu'elle a été par les champs tant seulle qu'en compagnie aucune fois faschée les aultres non, sy est ce qu'elle ne s'a peu mettre en memoire qu'elle ayt jamais este tentée ou abusée de l'ennemy.'

No other admissions of any importance.

7 August 1596; confrontations

In preliminary interrogation reiterated claim about praying continually - had been awake until 4 that morning doing this. Had been asking whether when she was in fields 'il se seroit présent a elle quelque personne d'autre forme que ne sont les hommes naturelz qui ait tasché de la seduire et tenter, comme l'on dict qu'il se

faict ordinairement a l'endroict de celles qui se treuvent avoir esté tentée de l'ennemy.'

Said that witnesses 'scauront doncques davantage de ses faictz qu'elle ne faictz pas et qu'elle eust bien plus eu d'occasion de faire mourir son mary lors de leursdite querelle et de tant d'autres qu'ilz ont euz, mesme durant l'espace de trois ans qu'il a este malade (sy elle fut esté sorciere) que non pas de faire mourir de ses bons amis ausquels elle n'avoit jamais eu querelle et la mort desquelz on luy soubçonne comme elle entend.'

In response to Colatte femme Jean Chenal, said she might have threatened her, but memory was so short that 'elle ne se resouvient de guiere loing'. Said to Marguritte femme Demenge le Cueffre that if she had given her the illness she would not have left her to linger so long, but would have cured her.

No reproaches to any witness. Was confronted again with Laurence, who maintained her accusations.

7 August 1596; procureur asks for torture

9 August 1596; Change de Nancy approves, with moderation appropriate to her age; if Laurence discharges her, only to be shown instruments.

12 August 1596; Laurence confirms her accusation once more.

12 August 1596; interrogation under torture

Claimed that on day of great wind, when Laurence claimed to have seen her at sabat, had been in house at Grattain, which would be verified by Pierron Malland and others who had been present. Also said that during quarrel with husband had called on death to come and fetch him, not the devil.

Given thumbscrews and rack, but would confess nothing.

13 August 1596; interrogation

Was threatened with greater torture, and begged not to be tortured again, asking for 3 or 4 hours to think if she had ever been tempted. Note that Laurence was to be executed that day, so judges thought it best to wait and see if she persisted to the end with her charges.

14 August 1596; interrogation

Told that Laurence had maintained her accusation until death, still denied she could remember any attempt at seduction. Asked what she had complained about in her cell, where she said something had chased her and tried to abuse her. Replied that on Friday night there had been something walking over her hands and face, but she had invoked name of Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, praying that if it were some visible or invisible evil spirit it should not have power over her. Had been in torment all the night, using sign of cross to protect herself, and thanks to God it had no power over her. Next night heard 2 bangs below the floor, but felt nothing more. Asked if this had not been the devil come to exhort her not to confess, denied this.

14 August 1596; statement from Demenge Ferry, porte enseigne, that in absence of prévôt he had supervised execution of Laurence. She had finally discharged all those she accused, save for Marion and Demenge Milan.

26 August 1596; additional depositions

(24) Jean Gerard, de Neufviller, 60

Story of quarrel with husband, including invocation of devil and threats to kill herself; he had been asked to watch over her, but had seen nothing more. Reputation several years.

(25) Le maire Claude le Clerc, de Bertrimoustier, 50

Similar deposition; suspected since then.

(26) Jean Pierrat, du Vieux Marché, 46

15 or 16 years earlier had been a witch executed at St Dié, who accused a young girl from Moyenmoustier, servant to Marion. Trial showed that she had been to sabat, but had not done much harm, so in view of age was only sentenced to be whipped. As this was being done passed Marion's house, and called out 'Ho que le diable soit la meschante genoixe, elle est cause de ma ruyne, elle m'a mené la premiere fois la ou que je suis esté'. Marion heard her, and witness saw her face, while remarks were heard by many.

A year earlier Demenge Marsal of Grattain had told him he had seen her talking to herself, and thought there was 'certaine beste comme un grillot' with her, although he did not see it; heard them talking to one another. Finally asked her what it was, suggesting it must be the devil. Reputation 12 years.

(27) Jean Gaixatte le jeune, de St Dié, 26

5 years earlier she had wanted his father to exchange sow and piglets against another sow which had yet to litter. He refused, after which she went to house when he was absent and asked to see them. Were 4 fine calves in stable, 3 of which died within next few days; had always suspected her, and long reputation. Nicolas de Padoux had claimed she had given him fatal illness.

(27 August 1596)

(28) Jean Gaixatte le vieux, de St Dié, 54

Same story as son about loss of calves. Had been called witch by his late wife and another woman at the butcher's one day, without reparation being sought.

(29) Jean Paticier du Vieux Marché, 50

Long reputation.

(30) Mengeatte femme Mongeon Gille, de St Dié, 50

Previous year, when living in house owned by Marion, she and Jean Paticier's wife (who also lived there) were talking about her reputation, and agreed they should test it. She instructed a boy to put a new, uncut broom over a door after she had gone up stairs, but he anticipated too much and did this before they had passed. Marion, who was going to look at damaged roof, tried to mount stairs 3 times, but stopped each time. After witness moved elsewhere heard that Marion was cursing her because she still owed 9 francs in rent; then fell twice from loft and dislocated rib, also having abscess on knee, so that she had to go around with a crutch for a month. Finally went to pay her, telling her she had cursed her well, and complaining of her fall. Marion gave her 6 deniers with which to buy something from apothecary, which she should boil in water to make drink. As soon as she took this started to recover, and next day was walking normally. When she thanked Marion, latter said 'que les pauvres vieilles gens, comme elle, n'osoient plus enseigner de remede a raison que quand elles enseignoient quelque remede pour guerir quelque maladie l'on disoit incontinent que s'estoient des mauvaises gens et qu'elle n'avoit de besoing de dire ce qu'elle luy avoit enseigné'. Still suspected her, and had long reputation.

(31) Marguitte femme Colas Gros Didier, de St Dié, 55

Recently, when Jacotte fille Michiel Demenge Anthoine of le Vieux Marché had been arrested as a witch, Marion had talked to her as she carded flax. Was crying, and saying there was rumour she too was to be arrested. A few days later asked if she had heard whether Jacotte had confessed anything, and witness said Colas Chertemps (local hangman) had told her she had not. Marion replied that she would now make her journey to Moyenmoustier much more happily. Long reputation.

(32) Demenge Marsal, de Grattain, 60

12 years before had seen her in kitchen with animal the size of a rat, and thought she had been talking with it. but was too far off to hear what was said, as she spoke in low voice. Long reputation.

2 September 1596; Marion was confronted with Libaire femme Guillaume Bouchier, who maintained charges that she had seen her at sabbat behind Cambas, with Barbelline femme Holbin le Jalley and others already executed. (Libaire was also confronted with Barbelline).

3 September 1596; interrogation

Asked about charge by girl who was being whipped, 15 or 16 years earlier, said 'qu'il est aultant vray qu'elle scache de ceste interrogat qu'elle est Reyenne de France'. Said she could not remember giving Mengeoatte femme Mongeon Gille money for cure, and denied remarks about cures leading to charges of witchcraft.

4 September 1596; confrontations and interrogation

Confronted with additional witnesses; no reproaches. Maintained denials when interrogated, but asked to be given change of clothes. Questioned again after this, still insisted she was not a witch. Said she did not want to be confronted again with Libaire, but repeated that she was lying. Said that when her husband was

maire she had seen those accused of witchcraft by more than 30 witnesses who had been released, and there were not so many against her.

4 September 1596; procureur asks for question ordinaire et extraordinaire

7 September 1596; Change de Nancy says that there is insufficient fresh evidence for renewed torture, and she should be renvoyée.

19 September 1596; confrontation and interrogation under torture

Confronted again with Libaire, who maintained accusation. Then asked about animal like rat; when she said animals could not talk, response was that the devil could change himself into form of man, woman, or animal. Continued to deny she was a witch.

Court then invoked opinions it had obtained from M. de Rozieres and M. Gondrecourt, councillors in sovereign court of St Mihiel, of M. Gillet and M. Ruttan, advocates in the same court, and other judicial experts. Was then racked, and after initial denials said that the thing which lifted her three times from the bed had told her his name was Percin. Had promised to make her happy, so she renounced God and took him for master, 18 years before. 2 years later gave her black powder, which she tried out on one of her hens, and it died. Killed 2 cows of Jean Chenal. Consented to master's suggestion that he make Sebille veuve Claudon Blaise ill; had been agreement that he would do this against anyone she wished.

Admitted making Marguitte femme Demenge le Cueffre ill with powder in soup; asked if there was any cure, said she had long regretted it and wanted to cure her, but did not know how. Her master had made Alizon veuve Colas Robinet ill after she cursed her in his name. Asked why she had not confessed before, said that when husband was maire several persons had endured torture and been renvoyé, so she hoped to escape too. Named among these Bastien Stablo, one named Dion, and 'la doyeneresse' of Mazellay.

Could not remember how often she had been to sabbat, but at least 6 or 7 times. Had been carried in air by sudden wind to côte St Martin, where there were many men and women. Those she recognized were la femme Stablo, l'hospitalliere du Vieux Marché, widow of Michiel de la Haute Rue, and Laurence of le Faing, all executed, and the wife of Guillaume Bouchier, who had accused her. Danced to sound of 'bombardes, haultbois et tabourins' then made hail, but this only damaged woods of La Magdelaine.

Claimed that some 10 years earlier she had opposed plan to spoil crops, saying it would cause great misery to poor, and proposed instead to damage belltower at St Dié - as had happened. Would confess no more maléfices, despite threats of further torture, and insistence that she must have done more over such a long period.

20 September 1596; interrogation

Admitted a couple more killings of animals. Asked whether she had ever confessed to curé, said that l'hospitalliere had said during her trial that her husband had persuaded her to go to sabat, saying that since Marion went she should go too. Was very upset when she heard of this, went to confess to curé, complaining of these words. When he asked if she had been tempted by the enemy she said she had not; had confessed in her heart when she went to confession, begging God to free her from the devil's power, but said nothing.

Asked whether she had put something in rice to kill Barbelline before her execution, denied this, but said her master might have done so. Said she had been seduced some 16 years before, when angry because of rumour that husband had seduced servant, and because he gave her such a bad time with his 'paillardise'. Had been quarrelling, and calling him 'ruffien et marcot', when Percin (unrecognized at that point) appeared to her in bed, promising to prevent him misbehaving in future. Then essentially repeated previous confessions to maléfices and attendance at sabat.

21 September 1596; interrogation

Repeated earlier confessions, saying she merited death, and asking to be executed by next Tuesday if possible.

21 September 1596; procureur asks for death sentence

25 September 1596; Change de Nancy suggests that confession appears to have been made under fear of torture, and that she has not confessed to anything contained in supplementary testimony. Death sentence only approved after she has reiterated confessions in another room without any threat of torture.

26 September 1596; interrogation

Further repetition of confessions.

30 September; sentence carried out.