

B 8684 no 2. Witch 189; Marion veuve Demenge Arnoulx, de Sauceray

24 November 1599; informations préparatoires

(1) Mariatte veuve Curien Willaume, 60

A year earlier her son Jean Claude Willaume had quarrelled with Marion; she said he would repent, soon he fell ill with strange malady and died in 6 months, always maintaining she had bewitched him. Reputation 30 years.

(2) Jennon veuve Jean Claude Willaume

Similar deposition.

(3) Jennon femme Nicolas Girard, 36

Reputation as long as she could remember. Had seen her stealing beans from garden of Michiel Battaille.

(4) Marguitte femme Jean Didier Arnoulx, 50

Reputation 14 years.

(5) ?

Already had reputation as witch when she came to Saulceray 30 years before. After quarrel with her son Jean 3 years earlier he said he would repent, and within the week his wife and his son Nicolas (ready to be married) fell ill and died suddenly. Had always believed this was doing of Marion or her son.

(6) Demenge Martin, 50

3 years earlier his wife Didion had quarrelled with Marion, soon became ill, and languished 2 years with strangest sickness one could see before dying; always maintained that she had bewitched her. Reputation 30 years.

(7) Jean Didier Arnoulx, ?

Called her witch during dispute, and later lost several animals, believing this was her witchcraft. After a quarrel had some 5 children dead, and blamed this too on her witchcraft. Reputation more than 30 years. Witness had been to fetch her from Wichebure (native village) to marry Demenge Arnoulx, and several in village said to him 'qu'il s'en aille et qu'il emmenoit une sorciere'. Had visited Michiel Battaille, languishing with a strange illness 12 years earlier, on day before he died, and he told witness she had bewitched him after dispute over a meadow.

(8) Claudon Demenge Anthoine le jeune, ?

During quarrel called her witch, adding 'que l'on avoit bruslé plus de cent sorcieres, qui ne l'avoient pas sy bien mérité comme elle'. Soon afterwards a cow died mysteriously, and when some others were deplored this, she said 'Que par le

diable, ils perdoient encore trop peu de bestiaulx'. Then lost two calves, and imputed these losses to her witchcraft.

(9) Jean Willaume, 34

Some 6 or 7 years earlier he obtained judgement against her for a debt, and she came to ask for delay, which he refused, making her angry. At time he was watering three calves; one of them died same day, another 2 or 3 days later, and third sickened. Saw her, and before he said anything she asked if he was accusing her of causing their deaths; said he was, and that if the third died he would have her arrested 'y deut il exposer ses moyens'. At this she changed subject, and calf recovered next day. Believed she had bewitched calves, and also caused subsequent losses of animals to value of over 200 ecus.

(10) Colas Girard, 36

10 years earlier had been envious because he had two cows which were better than hers. Told him he had the better deal, and same day one of his sickened and died - had always blamed this on her witchcraft. 2 years ago she told him off because his calves were in field of Jean Pierre, although she had no interest in the matter; a week later one of them made strange noise in stable and died; this too he blamed on her witchcraft. Reputation 16 years (residence).

(11) Michel Galdrimey, 40

16 years before had serious illness which lasted 7 weeks after quarrel with her - had always blamed this on her witchcraft. Long reputation.

(12) Colas Demenge Anthoine, ?

5 years before a horse had damaged a field sown with oats, and she said it would not be able to cause damage the next year; it subsequently died.

(13) Claudon Jean Willaume, 30

Various quarrels over last 2 years, including one when his animals caused harm and she said he would repent. Immediately afterwards he had serious illness for a month, and lost two cattle; all of which he imputed to her witchcraft. Reputation 12 years.

(14) Michiel Battaille, 30

Father's illness; always claimed she had bewitched him. Witness had called her witch and said she did much harm without her taking any action, but soon after he lost several animals, believing her responsible. Reputation as long as he could remember.

(15) Demenge Willaume moictrier a Leschenal, 37

4 years earlier had come to ask him for payment after he and his brother bought a field from her and her children. Paid her, but withheld share due to one of the children, who was in his service, and she was angry over this, saying he would

repent. Within 3 days a fine ox sickened, and died in another 3; believed this was caused by her witchcraft. Reputation more than 20 years, even before marriage.

(16) Jean Gelyat le jeune. ?

Story about her son Jean calling her witch. Some 5 years earlier, being nearest neighbour, when he was feeding animals she often asked him for some hay for 2 calves she had. He always refused, and then fell ill with strange malady, thought to be dying - still suffered from it periodically. Believed this was her witchcraft - long and general repute.

(17) Demenge Thieriat, 35

Theft by her children previous year and quarrel - document lost here. Had called her witch several times without her seeking reparation.

26 November 1599; interrogation

Said she was 45, native of Vichibure in prevoté de Bruyeres, resident at Saulceray more than 30 years. Had been arrested because last Tuesday Jennon veuve Jean Toussaint of La Vacherie had alleged she had seen her at sabbat. Denied all accusations, but did admit to some quarrels. Said Claudon Demenge Anthoine might well have made remark about the hundred witches. Asked about death of Jean Willaume's calves, said 'qu'elle luy feit mourrir ses fiebres que luy puisse serrer le coeur de luy'. On subject of Michiel Galdrimey's illness asked if he was not alleging that his cat had also been ill. On accusations by Claudon Jean Willaume said 'que le mal loup les puisse manger'.

Confrontations

Admitted stealing beans, but said she had often done this during dearth, and it was 'bien peu de chose'. If she had power she might have killed Jean Didier Arnoulx long before because of hatred she bore him, but had done him no harm. Had not killed calves of Jean Willaume, 'et s'il pense qu'il n'en meure point des autres que les siens'.

Additional deposition by Demenge Thieriat, who said he had woken and felt there was someone near him in room - put out arm and touched woman's clothes, but she got away from him. Thought he heard voice of Marion saying 'Ce diable icy nous ne l'aurons jamais'; other voice was he thought that of Barbeline veuve Demenge Mareschal of Saulceray. Called on wife to light candle, but there was no-one in room and door was locked. Had placed a grain of barley or wheat in his mouth; could not get it out, and had to swallow it. In same hour became ill, and was very unwell for over a month. Sure this had been caused by witchcraft of Marion and Barbeline.

1 December 1599; Change de Nancy approves torture

Interrogation under torture

Offered to confess as soon as thumbscrews were applied. Father and mother both dead by time she was 5 or 6, leaving her and small brother Colas. Had to guard animals to make a living, and one day was in fields, very hungry, was approached

by Persin and seduced by him. Had intercourse with her, gave her money (which vanished) and black powder to kill. Tried it out on cat, which died, then told brother, who was angry with her and told her to throw it away, so she did. Taken to sabbat 6 weeks later, saw 3 people she recognized from Vichibure - Jean Babel, Colas Wenneguey, and maire Jean Mongeot, all long dead. Denied any maléfices, but said she had often been to sabbat. Named several she had seen; Jennon veuve Jean Toussaint de la Vacherie, who had accused her, Jean Gelyat, Barbeline veuve Demenge Mareschal, the late Catherine Gelyat (sister of Jean), femme Mengeon Curien Willaume, and the late Jenne femme vieux Colas Bataille, all of Saulceray, Georgeatte femme Jean Wennequey, Marguittre femme Jean Jacquot (one-eyed), and Melline femme Colas Jean Charpentier, all of La Vacherie.

Still refusing to confess malefices, was placed on rack, and then started to make new confessions. Had killed Mengeon Galdrimey, who would not lend her animals for ploughing some 20 years earlier, with powder on bread - no one had accused her of this. Had killed Didion femme Demenge Martin, as he alleged, with powder in apple. Also killed horse belonging to Mariatte veuve Curien Willaume with powder on grass, and Michiel Battaille le vieux with powder in pears. Two cows belonging to Michiel Battaille le jeune, which had damaged garden, and an ox of Demenge Willaume.

(Mark of honnable homme Nicolas Aulbry, lieutenant de maire)

Confirmed confessions later that day. Added that she had killed a calf belonging to Demenge Thierat, and Mengeon son of Jean Didier Arnoulx, as well as horse belonging to him. Asked about attack on Demenge Thiriat by cats, said that Barbeline had instigated this, because she hated him (reason missing - damage). Their master Persin met them, stripped them naked, and rubbed them with grease which turned them into cats. Squeezed into room through shutters (with difficulty), and Persin then transformed them back into normal shape with clothes. Barbeline put poisoned grain in his mouth, then he woke and grabbed Marion - she broke away, and Persin turned them back into cats to escape, but he was angry because he said they had done nothing to Thierat.

Asked about accomplices, added further names to those she had seen at sabbat. These were Jean fils feu Mathis Claude Mathieu (whom she had also seen in his lifetime), Colas Guery, and Hanriat Mathieu, all of La Bourgonce, and Jennon la Mourratte, femme Bertremin de Laval, of Nompatelize. Had been many there, 'en sorte que c'est grand pitié de veoir tant de pauvres gens abbusez'. Asked about her son Jean, whom she had called witch when he said she was one, she said he was a witch. Had asked to go with her to sabbat some 4 years ago, where Persin had him renounce God and gave him black powder. Conventional description of sabbat. Said Jean was now about 20; had used powder to kill Colas son of Colas Jean Mariatte after quarrel and fight over some wood.

4 December 1599; interrogation

Said she had been to sabbat more times than she could remember. Some 18 months earlier Jean Gelyat had told assembled company that Jean Parmentier of Salceray, then maire of ban d'Etival 'avoit entreprins, sy on le laisseoit faire, de faire prendre tous les sorcieres de leur courral'. Damage here - some discussion of taking action against him, but decision not to do so.

Asked if any accomplices had asked her not to accuse them, said the only one was Jean Gelyat. Accused some 8 or 9 years earlier by one convicted at Estival, had

come to make agreement that neither of them would accuse the other. 6 years ago came to tell her of rumour a witch would be arrested at Saulceray, promising her a resal of wheat, and that he 'feroit tant de biens a ses enffans, qu'il ne les laisseroit jamais avoir necessitez'. He had several times hidden in the mountain for fear of arrest.

Said that Persin had been in her throat preventing her speaking when she was taken to torture; left in form of a fly, at which she began to confess.

Confirmed all confessions at a second interrogation same day.

18 December 1599; interrogation

Maintained all accusations, including that against her son (who was evidently now being tried, and had particularly asked to be confronted with her again).