

B 8702 no 9; witch 248, Jean Pierron Geliat, de la Neuveville-les-Raon

19 November 1609; informations préparatoires

(1) Didier Chottey, 50

Reputation 12 years.

(2) ?, 65

Reputed a witch, and witness (male) said 'que lors qu'il faict du temps et tempest, ledict Jean est ordinairement au champ, ou par chemin, au contraire que les autres Gens reviennent en ville, mesme qu'il faict estat de guarir le bestail comme un devin.'

(3) Zabel femme Demenge Ganaire, 33

6 years before he had contracted with her husband to cure their sick horse, but after long treatment it was no better. Subsequently died, while he complained he had not been paid, although he had received a franc, and not cured it as he promised. 4 years earlier he told their servant he had not been paid, and made threats; next day another horse went lame, and remained so for a long time. Finally husband, who suspected his witchcraft, took horse to him and demanded that he cure it; immediately recovered, but later lameness returned and it finally died. 2 months before his pigs got into their garden, and witness sent her maid Fleuratte to tell him to remove them. Did so, but girl suddenly fell ill and died a week later. Believed he had caused all this if he was witch as long reputed.

(4) Jean Forgeat, 38

Reputation 10 years. When living in Nompatelize had heard story that he had caused one Idoult to fall from a tree.

(5) Jean de Sainct Pierre, 50

Two and a half years earlier had been building house, and accused said to him 'en desdain qu'on voyoit bien ceulx qui avoient de l'argent que de sa part il ne pouvoit faire cela pour bastir la sienne et qu'il n'avoit point de deniers'. Next day witness had bad hand, then whole body became swollen, until he was 'perclus et en chartre'. Still in pitiable state, while 'un chacun peut juger qu'assurement c'est de sortilège' - if he were witch as reputed was sure he had caused this.

(6) Catherine femme du précédent, 40

Repeated story about illness; unable to find cure despite great expense. 2 years earlier he had touched one of her cows as she took them to drink; sickened next day and died after 10 or 12 weeks, which she believed was his doing if he was witch as reputed.

(7) Mongeon Jacat, 32

Had quarrelled with him and called him witch without reparation being sought. Also story about harm to one Chrestien who had been fetching wood (damage here) - had said that he 'pensoit tout faire mais qu'il seroit empesché'.

(8) Annon veuve Bastien Piernille, 24

Believed that if he was witch as everyone thought, he had caused her husband's death 14 weeks earlier. Had been dispute because husband owed him some rent for house, then husband was frightened when he met him while carting wine; fell suddenly ill and died in a week, continuing to say he suspected it was his witchcraft.

(9) ? femme Didier Ganat, 37

Had called him witch without reparation being sought.

(20 November 1609)

(10) Estienne Pescheur, 30

Long reputation. 3 years earlier had called him witch, saying he and his wife should be burned, but no reparation sought.

(11) Marguitte veuve Claudon Estienne, 40

7 years earlier her husband had quarrelled with him over a fence; he had been angry and said those responsible should be burned. Husband replied 'qu'il estoit ung nigromancien et ung sorcier et que luy et sa femme ilz les failloient brusler.' Cow then lost milk for rest of year, which they suspected was his witchcraft if he were as reputed.

(12) Jennon femme Demenge des Boeufs, 65

4 years before they lost 2 cows which languished miserably; suspected that if he was witch as reputed he was responsible. Previous dispute over going to fetch wheat, when they took another than him, 'toutesfois que presentement elle ne scait que penser'.

(13) Claudon Houchart, 27

Two years earlier he and Chretien Brabant had been in woods with accused loading timber, and having trouble with one piece; accused said the devil was behind, where he was alone himself.

(14) Chretien Brabant, 32

Believed he had used witchcraft to make various animals ill, in hatred for some quarrels between them, some ten years earlier. Added 'que comme il se mesle de guarir le bestail ca et la, il depositant luy a ouy dire qu'il prenoit des jours pour cueillir des herbes et des heures, et qu'il faict beaucoup de ceremonies a l'entour du bestail, et de faict qu'il donneroit ung breuvage a la femme de luy depositant pour le

mal de la mere qu'elle estoit detenue, mais qu'elle n'auroit plus d'enfans, toutesfois il ne s'y voulut confier et le laissa'.

(15) Demenge Ganaire, 30

Repeated wife's story about quarrel over payment for horse he failed to cure, and its subsequent death outside house of accused. When second horse went lame he took it to his house and told him he suspected him; he and his wife were 'fort esmerveillez' and made some sign, after which it made temporary recovery, but went lame again 10 days later. Suspected wife as much as him, and thought one of them responsible for death of chambermaid if they were witches as reputed.

(16) Idoul Bon Temps de Blainville, 40

Some 15 years earlier, when accused was living at Blainville, they were tithe collectors together; was angry with witness, who had taken his 'paulx de disme', and wished that he might have it 'au creu du ventre'. Immediately afterwards he fell out of a tree and injured himself on post of fence; accused went to fetch surgeon from la Fosse, whose father told him he was a witch. Believed that if he was witch as reputed he had caused the fall.

(17) Colas Charey

Reputation 12 years.

(18) George Colin Mongeat, 42

Reputation 12 years.

(19) Colas Blasat le jeune, 25

2 years earlier they had been sowing together when it began to hail and thunder; wanted to return to village, but accused looked up, clapped hands, muttered something he could not hear, then said there was nothing to fear. Storm passed over, but since then had suspected him of having some pact with the devil.

(20) Demenge Gros Demenge de Vazenal, 40

Some 3 years earlier accused told him 'qu'il scavoit bien comme les années pouvoient advenir, et quant il y auroit année de bled et de paxon'. Asked how, said 'aux astres du temps'; in view of evil reputation, had suspected him since.

(21) Pacquat femme Adam Vaulthier marchand de Raon, 27

Previous Easter had two horses 'entaschés du farcin', and called him in, since he was supposed to know remedies. Visited them twice, and forebade anyone else to look at them or touch them; cure did not work, one of them died and other had to be taken elsewhere. Lated heard he complained he had been badly paid, and in view of reputation suspected him of causing some harm.

(26 November 1609)

(22) Francois Mongeat, 40

Had been told by Chretien Brabant that previous Sunday accused had said witness suspected him of causing death of his first wife a year earlier, and that she was a bad woman to defame people this way. In fact had no such suspicion, but late wife had been modest and well behaved, so this made him suspect that if he was witch as reputed he might have caused her death.

(23) Jean Cuguin de la Chapelle

3 years earlier had called him in to treat horse which had 'farin'; a few days later, before he had paid him, he came to la Chapelle and asked him how horse was doing, asking to see it. Was afraid to allow this, so told him falsely that it was away, while repeatedly telling him to come and eat and be paid. Shortly after horse died, which he believed was his doing if he was witch as reputed - had several times called him witch without any action following.

? Interrogation

Said he was laboureur aged about 50, native of Blairville in ban d'Etival; father was Jean Gerard Gelliat, mother Fleuratte, both long dead. Had lived at la Neufville since marriage 16 years earlier with Jehenne, veuve Colin Jalley. Denied he knew cause of arrest.

Asked why he had been leaving by night with his animals when arrested, said he had not been fleeing, but taking them to sell them and buy others. Then admitted that he had been frightened of torture, while still insisting he was a good man. Asked if he had been called a witch, said this was only by Jean de Saint Pierre, who had paid fine to him. Claimed to have been comforted in prison by a figure 'comme de la lumiere', which was his 'bon ange'.

Agreed that he had tried to heal animals, using prayers; knew at least 3 which were very good, but had forgotten them and could not say them at present. Agreed to attempts at curing horses of Demenge Ganaire, but denied any wrongdoing, and said Ganaire had long wished him ill. Otherwise denied all charges, and claims that he had been called witch, apart from having tended some animals.

1 December 1609; confrontations

Said he had heard that Jean Cuguin had killed horse himself in the woods. Otherwise no reproaches, except for claim that Catherine femme Jean de Saint Pierre spoke ill of others. Denied all accusations.

2 December 1609; confession

Had been intended to continue confrontations, but judges were informed that he wanted to confess. Said that 4 years earlier had lawsuit at la Neufville with miller from Baccarat, and was condemned to pay money miller alleged he owed him, although he had already paid. He was 'fort contristé' at prospect of his losses, and on way back from seeing his procureur a black dog approached him outside La Chapelle, with a wind which struck him in face and dazzled him. Made sign of cross and animal disappeared, but 2 weeks later was going to woods when a big man in black called Jolybois approached him, promising to help him gain his case if

he would believe in him. Gave him money which turned out to be mud, and black powder.

Tried powder on his own calf, which died. Then killed cow of Demenge des Boeufs, who had asked him to cart grain, then used someone else. Only other maléfice was killing of cow of Jean de St Pierre. Told this was impossible, insisted it was true; seeing himself so deceived, had wanted to return to God, and had no desire to do evil.

Master had appeared to him again 8 weeks later at spot where he had seen dog, and reproached him for disobedience because he had not yet used powder; gave him more, black/kill, red/languish, white/heal. Judges insisted this must have been 'pour se venger de ses ennemis, parce que ce n'est le propre de Satan de les laisser en repos sans faire mal'.

Said he had been to sabbat once a year, on Wednesday evening between St Remy and St Martin, carried like a wind on master's shoulders. Many people there, more women than men, all masked. Usual dancing and feasting, but he did not join in, seeing it was all deceit; talk was of spoiling crops and doing harm. Was beaten by master for his refusal to obey him. Could not recognise anyone because of masks; made annual offering of a hen so he did not have to go more often.

3 December 1609; interrogation

Renewed earlier confessions, but added some more maléfices. Had quarrelled often with Chretien Brabant about water for their fields, and Brabant had 'tiré les oreilles a son fils', so used powder to kill his calf. Also killed calf of Francois Colin Mongeat, who regularly chased his animals away from his house, and two more belonging to maire, who had told him off about damage done by his animals. Insisted he had not recognised any of those at sabbat.

9 December 1609; death sentence from Change de Nancy

14 December 1609; execution has taken place

Expenses were 88 francs; included dinner for a confessor, because there was no curé resident at la Neufville.