

B 8684 no 1. Witch 188, Jean Demenge le Clerc dit Mandray, de Hurbache

25 January 1599; Valentin le Souche of La Chapelle accuses Colas Anthoine of Denipaire, Jean Mandray, those of la Chapelle already executed, and Dediel wife of Ydoult Willaumé of le Paire of being at sabbat.

24 March 1599; informations préparatoires

(1) Demenge Curé, 60

Neighbour for 20 years, had never seen any ill in him. Had heard him tell of quarrel with Claudette Thierry (subsequently executed), when he called her witch, and she replied 'beau Jean beau Jean taisé vous et je me tairay'.

?

Had lost various animals, and feared him, particularly since they owed him money they could not pay - if he was witch might have caused losses.

(3) Colas Demenge le petit Nicolas, 30

Had seen no harm in him, although had heard in village that some feared him.

(4) Catherine veuve Berthremin Rembault le drappier, 36

As near neighbour had seen no harm in him. One day someone had come to beg, and when he refused to give called him 'genax'; merely said they ought to take a stick and give him a good beating. Previous year had been coming back to village with him during thunderstorm when they heard noise as of many people - then son of Barbelline was found dead. He had not wanted to go and see, saying he was tired and had a bad leg.

(5) Marguitte femme Colas Jeannel, 60

2 years earlier a tree husband was sawing up had rolled on him, and afterwards he said he had an evil meeting on way to woods - this was Jean Mandray, whom he believed to have caused accident. Was still bedridden, because of accident and his age. Also told story about thunderstorm.

(6) Claudon Benifosse, 40

Had known him 24 years, and been nearest neighbour for 5; had seen no harm in him. On various occasions at 'corraille' had heard him predict dearth of grain, beans, hay, and other crops, although sometimes this happened, sometimes not, 'par fois il en estoit hay du peuple, parce qu'il prevoioit que mal arriveroit'. Also told of quarrel with Claudette Thierry, whom he threatened to have burned, and of her response.

(7) Missing - damage

(8) Demenge le petit Nicolas, 40

Had known him 24 years, and never seen any harm in him, nor known him have disputes with anyone, reckoning him a good man.

(31 March 1599)

(9) Nicolas de la Rolbe le jeune, 30

Knew him for 20 years, and had never seen any harm in him.

(10) Michiel Holbin 26

Had never heard any harm of him, except for rumour in last year that he was witch.

(11) Missing - damaged

(12) Jean Ralbes, 38

5 or 6 years earlier had been ploughing together and talking of 'belles filles et femmes'. Witness said a woman would be 'bien honteuse' if she found herself naked in a group of men; accused replied 'qu'il ne se donneroit guerre de peine d'en afire venir une par devant son lict et la feroit deshabiller tout nue mais qu'il seroit plus honteux qu'elle'.

(13) Jean Alloffs, 34

Had no suspicion against him, but sometimes going ploughing had heard him say it would be good to buy grain, since it would sell for more next year. In last year or two had heard rumour that he was a witch.

(14) Estienne le grand Claude, 45

Knew him well, and had ploughed jointly with him., without seeing ill in him, nor hearing any accuse him in the streets.

(15) Missing - damage

(16) Estienne Olry, 60

Knew no harm of him, thought he was a good man.

(17) Nicolas le petit Nicolas, 30

Had only heard anyone talk about him since accusation by Valentin le Soulche.

(18) Estienne le Menant, 40

Had often ploughed with him, had never seen any harm in him.

(19) Phelice femme Girardin Didier Masson, 60

During previous wars they had oats from him for horses of some soldiers billeted on them, and had been slow to pay. Lost various animals, and told husband to pay him, saying that they had misfortunes, and often one attributed them to one cause when there was another - but did not suspect him

(20) Mising - damage

(21) Beniste ?

Story about his having talked of being able to bring along a naked girl.

(22) Claudatte femme Jean Ralbes, 34

Could say nothing but good of him.

(23) Mathillon veuve Jean Piarion, 34

Said he was 'honne de bonne recouvrance, que quand on avoit nécessité de luy pour guarir quelques enffans ou bestes il estoit assez tost prest'.

(24) Menette femme Estienne le Menant, 40

Knew him for 20 years, had seen no harm in him.

(25) Nicolle femme Nicolas le petit Nicolas, 26

Had only seen good in him, 'et sy on eut heu affaire de luy a minuit il eut secouru les personnes'.

? Interrogation

Said he was about 80, mother had told him he had been born in time of 'guerre des Luthers'. Native of St Jean d'Ormont, as was mother; father was from Mandray. Had been married 4 times, last time just before previous Christmas; only children were 3 by third wife. Believed he had been arrested because of accusation by Valentin; this might have been made after he refused him alms when he was begging, and he said 'qu'il en auroit souvenance quelque jour'. When prévôt had asked him to tell truth about accusation at stake, he had merely replied 'que ce qu'estoit dit estoit dit'.

Said he had been in service for 21 years, then had been laboureur for 42 years since marriage at Raurux. Asked about healing activities with animals, said 'que quant ung bestial a quelque playe, quelquefois il en at heu guery, faisant ouverture pour tascher de les guerir, ne s'en aiant meslé aucunement, disant que quant il en a quelqu'ung des siens malade, il cherche tous ceux qu'il peult trouver, aiant mesme esté en ce lieu de Saint Diez pour trouver quelques personnes qu'y peult remedier.'

Asked about thunderstorm, said he might have been asked to go and see boy who was killed by lightning, but had been far off, and had hurried after those with husband of Barbeline, who had also been injured. Denied predictions about crops; about 4 years before had said it was a bad year for him, because had reaped less than he had sown. Asked about claim he had said 'qu'il scavoit les moyens pour faire

dehabiller une fille ou femme toute nue', said he had made no such claim, but a lad who served with him at Raurux 50 years earlier had done so.

15 April 1599; confrontations

No reproaches; denied all charges.

24 April 1599; Rémy asks that he be presented to the torture, and tortured if he makes any damaging admissions. Response of Change de Nancy lost.

? Report that he had escaped from house, where he had been held prisoner. Climbed over two roofs, then used rope to get down from walls of town. Sergent to be called on to account for this, and wife of accused warned that he must appear to face charges.

After he failed to answer several summonses, on 25 June 1599 Remy declared him banished in perpetuity, with his goods confiscated. Approved by Change de Nancy on 26 June.

14 June 1600; interrogation

He had returned voluntarily to St Dié to purge himself of charges on 8 June. Claimed that because seigneurs of Hurbache were in dispute with duke over rights of hault justice he feared he would be imprisoned for a long time, which was reason for his escape. Had also wanted to confess and communicate, which he had not done at Easter. Had acted on his own initiative, without being solicited by anyone else. Had been in Hurbache all the time, but had hidden himself in house when they came to summon him, or wife had warned him and he absented himself. Said his 'bons amis' had advised him to come forward, purge himself, and recover confiscated goods.

24 June 1600; Rémy repeats earlier advice, approved by Change de Nancy on 28 June

24 July 1600; interrogation

Denied charges. Said remarks by Claudette Thierry had come when he refused to make reparation for accusation against her. Was placed on rack and tied, but not actually tortured, for a quarter of an hour. Noted that denials were 'sans s'estonner aulement de telles menaces'. Then sent back to prison. Strong impression that formalities were being gone through, although judges did try to insist that he was a witch and had caused boy to be killed by lightning.

26 July 1600; Rémy proposes that he be renvoyé, and Change de Nancy agrees.

29 July 1600; released from prison.

2 September 1600; document of obscure status (heading missing) settling expenses for case of 'pretendue sorcellerie'. Jean to pay some of them, but others not to fall on him. Costs recorded as some 35 francs, of which he paid 18.