

B 8677 no 10; Witch 164, Jeanne femme Demenge Claude Martin, de Mandray

14 November 1596; confronted with Jean Blaise Laisney, who maintained accusation that he had seen her at sabbat. Also confronted with Claudatte veuve Estienne Jean de Saulcy, who maintained charges.

24 November 1596; informations préparatoires

Noted that she had been tried in 1589, presented to the question, and renvoyée (15 June)

(1) Colas Henry Finance, 45

Testified against her before, and noticed she bore him ill will since. 4 or 5 years earlier he had struck one of her sons, since when she had ceased to frequent his house as she had previously done. Soon after he lost a mare and a foal; suspected this had been her doing. Under suspicion since time of her father Jean Babey, executed long before.

(2) Marie veuve Demenge Jacquemin, 35

2 years earlier her late husband was doyen to maire Demenge Martin Girard, and was occasion when several people did not want to drink in customary fashion at maire's house after a deal - this was because they feared his wife. Husband came home and said he had drunk in her house, and was sure he had taken his death there; went straight to bed and died in 5 days, maintaining same story. Long reputation.

(3) Demenge Claude Menginot, 45

Around Easter previous year was ploughing with Jehenne, and said to her he was surprised that whenever they made a deal the old maire Claude Jean Didier Cunin and his son Claude were asked to drink at the house, although her husband had so many disputes and lawsuits with them. She replied that he could be sure that if they came again 'elle feroit des choses que l'on parleroit d'elle'. They did come a week later, but would not drink because they feared her; Demenge Jacquemin and Didier Grand Colin of Entre-deux-Eaux did drink, and both became ill, former dying as stated by his widow, latter recovering after long time. Believed she might have put something in drink; long reputation, previous arrest.

(4) Magdelaine veuve Jacques Valentin Finance, procureur, 36

3 years before next winter her husband had gone to poisie where girls and young women were spinning. Dancing had begun, and Jehenne came up to him, blowing on his face, so that he felt bad-smelling breath enter his body (une alene ordre et puante). When he got home said she had poisoned him, and was sick for 3 months with unknown illness before he died, always maintaining that she had poisoned him, and that he had never known such a bad smell. Long reputation, and

she had recently fled on rumour of arrest; when she returned previous Tuesday had said angrily to witness as she passed 'qu'a cest fois auroit elle ses joyes et scauroit la verité de la mort de son mary'.

(5) Cathellon veuve Jean Anthoine, 50

Had heard Jacques Valentin Finance maintain to death that she had poisoned him as suggested by widow. Had also said that Colatte Vincent had helped by placing herself in front of candle so that she could breathe on him more easily. Long reputation.

(6) Martin Jean Gabourel, 40

3 years ago last May had dispute with husband over tax they were levying together, and was threatened by him. At harvest time grain he had cut was scattered by whirlwind, which did not affect her husband's grain on surrounding land. Believed she had caused this, also losses of animals which followed within days - 2 cows, 2 bullocks, 6 calves, and 7 sheep, most of which died suddenly. Also told story of illness and death of Demenge Jacquemin, who had drunk water from pewter pot in kitchen.

(7) Claude Colas Woinier, 30

16 or 18 years earlier, when she was still living with her father Jean Babey, later executed, heard her say 'qu'elle yroit bien a l'eglise de plein jour sans estre apperceue de personne, et que en aultant de temps que le prebtre pourroit mettre a chanter la messe elle feroit bien ruyner l'eglise dudit Mandray et en oster les pierres l'une l'apres l'autre.' Witness said she must be a witch, and her father must have taught her 'de ses recetes', to which she replied by denying she was a witch, but had always had reputation.

(8) Didier Jean Didier, 36

2 years earlier had been angry because he outbid them for a house next to their own, and he was afraid some misfortune would follow. In view of this and long reputation thought she had caused death of a cow a week later - became swollen after drinking, and died in 2 hours in strange manner. Had also lost a mare which had been beaten when it strayed into their field - thought this was result of either beating or witchcraft.

(9) Claude Anthoine Laurent, 40

Had deposed against her 7 years earlier; nothing to add since, but rumour she was witch had persisted.

(10) Jean Claude Cunin, doyen de Mandray, 30

On eve of last St Jean he had been in dispute with her husband; she came to see him, and said 'qu'il leur en vouloit mais qu'il n'en gaigneroit guiere et s'en repentiroit'. Same day a foal sickened and died, which he suspected was her doing, in view of threat and long reputation.

(11) Claude Cognol, 36

Confirmed testimony of previous witness.

(12) Georgeatte femme Didier Jean Didier, 25

Repeated husband's testimony.

(13) Demenge Jean Finance, 40

Reputation only.

(14) Dieudonné Jean de la Gotte, 50

Referred to previous deposition. 4 years before he had leased 4 bullocks, and she told him he was 'bien avarieieux', but had made little profit in the past, and would make even less this time. 3 of the animals promptly died in strangest fashion, leaving him with debt of 100 francs he still owed; believed this was her doing. Shortly before had lost 22 cattle within a year; did not know whom to suspect, but since her remarks suspected her. His sister Barbelline, mother of Jehenne's husband, had believed her to have caused her strange illness, calling her 'nourre et caigne et qu'elle luy avoit ensorcellé et luy donné la mort', after which she died. After losses of animals had gone to live far away from her, since when his animals had flourished. Long reputation.

29 November 1596; interrogation

Said she was Jehenne, 'fille bastarde' of late Jean Babey, executed as a witch; was 36 and had been married to Demenge Claude Martin some 18 years. Had lived with her father until marriage, but denied that he had taken her to sabat or taught her anything but good. Knew she had been accused by two convicted witches, but they did her great wrong.

Admitted that she had fled out of back door when she saw armed men coming to arrest her. Went to house of her uncle Henry le Tisserant, then to relatives at Clemecey to get advice, after which husband (following their advice) brought her to St Dié where she was made prisoner. Reminded that when released (11 July 1589) had promised to return when required; said 'qu'elle estimoit qu'en s'en esloignant quelque peux, son marit en pourroit traicter quelque accord'.

Denied all other charges absolutely.

4 December 1596; confrontations

Said that she had heard of Colas Henry Finance that he was a coiner, and that his wife's daughter was his wife every 3 weeks. Had heard that Marie veuve Demenge Jacquemin had stolen a loaf and some turnips, and that Magdelaine veuve Jacques Valentin Finance had stolen 5 hams and a chicken. Latter added new story to testimony.

Said that before first arrest of accused, her husband had brought home a pear she had given him for witness. Did not eat it then, and 2 days later had become all black; when stalk was pulled off saw it was full of grease, and husband said she had surely intended to bewitch her. Threw it in field where there was a sow 'pour l'esprouver'; sow ate it, then she and piglets all died suddenly.

Claimed that Didier Jean Didier was said to have stolen some fish, Cathelon veuve Jean Anthoine a hen, and Claude Colas Woinier an iron chain. Denied all charges.

5 December 1596; procureur for canons asks for question ordinaire et extraordinaire

8 December 1596; Change de Nancy approves

16 December 1596; interrogation under torture

Withstood thumbscrews, but started to confess when racked. Said Percin was her master, and her father had taken her to the sabat. This had been 21 or 22 years earlier; had gone to place called la Bouze between Mandray and Entre-deux-Eaux, wher they found other people and talked with them. Included two who had recently accused her, Jacques Gabourel, Barbelline femme Mengeon Jean (arrested with her last time), Bolline femme Henry Finance, and others she could not remember.

2 or 3 days later went back, and approached by Percin, dressed in black, who asked her to renounce God. Refused at first, but agreed when father insisted; was then taken aside for intercourse. Were given powder and danced. First maléfices were all on orders of father, with powder given by him, usually sprinkled in field to kill animals of those with whom he had quarrelled.

3 months after father's arrest Jacques Gabourel told her to go to sabat with him, and she was given powder for her own use. After marriage killed cow of Jean Didier Rabat which damaged ther field, and goat of Cunin's Mathiatte's wife because she had stolen their grain. Husband wanted her to stay up and tend sick cow at night, so she killed it.

Questioned about accusations of witnesses, denied killing mare of Colas Henry. Admitted being cause of death of Demenge Jacquemin; had put powder in water she intended for Claude Cunin, and Demenge drank it in kitchen, to her great regret.

On death of Jacques Valentin Finance, said that he had quarrelled with Colatte femme Vincent Jean Laisné (an accomplice she had forgotten to name before), who told her one night at poisle that if he approached her 'elle ne faille de luy donner son reste'. He then came up to kiss her, but she put powder between lips and blew it into his mouth, which was cause of his illness and death. Had done this at instigation of Colatte, who was as much cause as she was, and Jacques 'estoit son meilleur amy et l'aymoit unicquement'. His wife had been jealous because they had

'quelque familiarité par ensemble', which was reason she tried to kill her with poisoned pear.

Finally confessed to having induced devil to cause whirlwind which dispersed grain of Martin Jean Gabourel, and to killing 2 of his sheep. Then sent back to prison because it was late.

(17 December 1596) Said it was her father who had boasted of being able to ruin church, and she could not do this herself. Admitted killing calf of Jean Claude Cugnin, because he called her witch 'en cachette'. Had been angry because Claude Anthoine Laurent said her father had been dragged on 'une claire' and his daughter would be too; had killed one of his pigs.

Said that 5 or 6 years earlier Jacques Gabourel wanted her to kill Claude Colnot or his son, but she was not willing to do so; Claude then fell strangely ill and died, which she thought was doing of Jacques himself.

Admitted some other maléfices against animals. Said she had been angry with mother-in-law, who wrongly accused her of causing illness, then agreed to Percin's suggestion that he give her fatal illness.

Said she had been to sabat perhaps 2 dozen times since father's death, always at la Bouze, usually carried in air by Percin. Had helped to make hail a few times, although it had not done much damage; her father and Jean Blaise, as two principal masters, had gone up in clouds to direct it.

Asked how husband had not known of attendance at sabat, said she always made some plausible excuse for going out, 'et est ledit son marit de sy bonne sorte qu'elle luy eust bien faict croire que l'eau alloit a contremont'.

Said her father made powder himself in a pot which was kept for this purpose; offered to tell them all ingredients, but they stopped her, not wanting to write this down 'pour la consequence qu'en pourroit arriver'.

Repeated accusations she had already made, added names of Catellon femme Cugnin Lienard and Demenge Claude Menginot (all were from Mandray).

Asked whether she had taken her eldest son Jean to sabat, agreed that 18 months earlier she had done so, and persuaded him to renounce God when Percin asked him. Did not think he had been given any power, but had come to sabat 4 or 5 times. She herself had given him some powder when geese of Gregoire Gabourel went in her meadow, telling him to sprinkle it before them, after which 2 of them died. Then said that after Jean had a fight with the son of Catellon Colin Percin had given him powder with which he killed her goat.

After she and her husband had quarrel and fight with Jacques Henry Finance, Jean said he would avenge them; a few days later told her Percin had given him powder with which he had killed 'naxon' belonging to Jacques. After a fight with son of Demenge Claude Menginot told her he had killed a 'reyllon' in similar fashion. He also fought with son of Vincent Jean Laisné, after which she herself gave him powder to kill a 'naxon' - in fact it became strangely ill but did not die.

Asked for Jean to be brought before her, so that he could be persuaded to amend his ways. Judges said she was 'une mere de meschante et maudit nature' to have been cause of son's downfall as well as her own.

Asked if Percin could be seen by others when he spoke to her in fields, said good Christians were assured against temptation by the devil, and could not see him whatever form he took. Asked 'sy les sorcieres ont puissance de faire mal

indifferement a toutes personnes qu'elles ont hayne', replied 'qu'une personne qui s'est bien signé et recommandé a dieu le matin Il est bien asseuré que le diable ny sorciers ne luy pourront nuire quant a son corps mais qu'indifferement avec leur pouldre et poison elles peuvent faire mourir et malade le bestail de quelque personne qu'elles auroient envie de luy mal faire'

Asked how they could know when individuals were not protected, said devil told them, and if they could not act themselves would do so for them, if they only gave their consent.

Asked if witches were really present at sabat, 'en leur propre forme, ou sy c'est seulement par songe ou imagination'. Said they went in their own form and in ordinary clothes, either on foot or carried in air by devil. On a few occasions when she could not make an excuse to her husband she had been carried to sabat in form of a cat, but was changed back to ordinary form when she arrived there.

8 December 1596; confirmed previous confessions

20 December 1596; procureur asks for death sentence

23 December 1596; Change de Nancy approves