

B 8693 no 1; witch 230, Marion femme Demenge Husson, de Colroy

21 November 1603; informations préparatoires

Taken by prévôt at request of substitut for PG de Lorraine at St Dié.

(1) Colas Jean le maire, 60

Long reputation.

(2) Colas Jean Olry, 60

General reputation.

(3) Jean Gros Demenge, 50

Long reputation.

(4) Jacat Jean Masson, 50

Long reputation. 12 years earlier visited his sick relative Demenge Houillon, who said he thought this resulted from drinking a bottle in her house with her and her husband. Died maintaining she was cause, and on day of burial her husband Anthoine Davict also died. This caused several, notably the witness, to suspect her - had been very angry because they often drank together.

(5) Dieudonné Benay, 50

Reputation more than 20 years.

(6) Colin Housson, 50

She was married to his brother, but all he could say against her was that she was reputed a witch, 'estant souvent soubconnée d'avoir causé perte de bestail, notamment par ceulx a qui elle a heu quelque dispute'. Had warned his brother, who replied that he thought she was a good woman, and they wronged her to suspect her.

(7) Catherine femme Colas de la Maix, 50

General reputation.

(8) Didielle femme Demenge Coliney, 46

Long reputation; had heard her called witch, and her children sons of a witch. Once she 's'en formalisa', otherwise pretended not to hear.

(9) Colas Chappel de Colroy, 60

Long reputation. Previous harvest time, as laboureur, was bringing in his grain, and because road was so bad had to go close to her house. Later was working in fields near her and her husband, but they had not seen him - heard her complain

they were making a terrible noise every morning, then husband saw him and changed subject. Warned his son that she might try to harm them, and few days later a horse went lame, which smith could not cure. On his suggestion son took 'joutte' from her garden and fed this to horse, after which it recovered, with 'ordure' coming out of leg. Also told of visiting Claudon Betel on his deathbed, who said he was dying; witness and his wife told him to take courage and trust in God, but he said it was one of her relatives who was cause of his death. Revealed to witness that he meant Marion.

(10) Demenge Colas Chappel, 25

Long reputation. Repeated father's story about horse.

(11) Jean Baret, 40

General reputation.

(12) Benitte femme Jean Demenge Grand Haneiss, 40

Was sister-in-law, but had never seen harm in her. Knew of reputation, while she was 'bien fiere', and they had sometimes had bitter quarrels as a result.

(13) Demenge Gros Demenge, 30

Long reputation.

(14) Didielle femme Jean Gros Demenge, 50

Reputation more than 20 years. Had deposed against her previously, but could not now remember what she had said; Marion had always treated her well since.

(15) Catherine fille Didier Housson, 30

Was sister-in-law; knew of reputation, but had seen no harm in her, except that once she had been well beaten by her.

(16) Catherine femme Colin Housson, 80

Had only heard she was suspected since she had been prisoner at St Dié five years earlier.

(17) Didier Housson, 80

Was married to his son; had seen no harm in her, although she was already suspected of witchcraft before marriage.

(18) Colas Masson, 70

Long reputation.

(19) Mengeatte femme du precedent, 50

General reputation.

(20) Thomas Gaillat, 30

General reputation.

(21) Dieudonnée femme du precedent, 25

Knew nothing of her.

(22) Jeannon femme Demenge Gros Demenge, 34

General reputation. Was near neighbour, and some 7 or 8 years earlier had been dispute over piece of land between accused and Dieudonnée femme Colas Boulengier. Latter was friend of witness and came to her for advice; though Marion was angry about this, and they lost an ox which had a broken leg for no reason they knew, and had to be killed - suspected her.

(23) Jean Fleuratte, 50

Near neighbour for 10 years, but knew nothing against her except reputation.

(24) Anthoine le Maire, 36

Long reputation, and he and his brother Jean had sometimes quarrelled with her. 8 years earlier horse had become ill as if rabid; his late mother advised him to give it bread mixed with 'quenelle' of one of Marion's sheep. Immediate recovery made him suspect her.

(25) Demenge Claude Jean le maire, 50

Reputation more than 20 years, and around then he had heard from Colas le Maire of Lusse that she had sought him in marriage, saying she had an uncle at Colroy who would make him maire. He refused, saying 'qu'il n'en avoit cuer', but soon after had bad leg which lasted a year, until he was advised to get bread and other things from her house. Recovered after eating this, so suspected she had been cause.

Some 5 or 6 years before, after her imprisonment, maire Claudon Betel had been very ill. Witness fetched a man 'qui se mesloit de medicamenter telles maladies'; gave him drink which made him better, and told him not to leave his house. He was bored with being shut in, and went out as soon as he felt better. Fetched man 3 times, who always repeated same prohibition, and once told them Marion had bewitched him; since he could not stay at home he died. Also told of incident 4 years earlier when he was carrying two sheaves of grain, and she passed him with cart. Immediately afterwards piece of wood he was using broke, and he was thrown down so that earth and sky seemed to be reversed. When he recovered thought she might be cause - called her witch, but she pretended not to hear.

(26) Jean de la Roue, 34

Had served her for a year in his youth, but saw no harm in her, despite long reputation.

(27) Jean Colin le Maire, 36

Long reputation. 7 years before his father Colin le Maire had a cow ill, and his wife (later executed as witch) took bread which she rubbed on 'quenelle' of Marion's sheep. Cow recovered after eating this, only to die later; did not know if she had been cause.

(22 November 1603)

(28) Jennon femme Claudon Xanrey, 28

Long reputation. When witness was small her father Demenge Houillon died after drinking with husband of accused; suspicion she had put something in bottle, and he had vomited 'de grandes vilenies'.

(29) Jennon femme Colin le Bourguignon, 52

Long reputation, and had heard her called witch by Demenge Chappel, who had a horse lame.

(30) Jean Betel le viel, 55

6 years earlier had been at Taintrux when she was accused as witch to the last by one Benitte, executed there. His brother Claudon, then maire, said to chatelain that she should be imprisoned, but this was not done. Later he sickened and died after languishing for long time - heard she had said 'que le diable en avoit ja emporté, et qu'il en emporteroit encor d'autres', which made him suspect her. Some years later brother's wife also died.

(2 December 1603)

(31) Jean Bastien Gaillat de Colroy, living at Val, 40

16 years earlier had been servant in her house when first husband and Demenge Houillon were drinking from bottle. Invited him to join them, but she insisted he use a glass. At this Houillon got up and left; found him outside complaining loudly and saying he was a dead man. Died within a week, and husband within a month; since then had heard her reputed witch, although he had seen no harm in her. Had deposed on previous occasion.

11 December 1603; interrogation

Said she was daughter of Jean Barre of Leusse and his wife Marion, both of whom had died without being suspected of any crime. First marriage had been 23 years earlier, to Anthoine Gros Demenge of Colroy, by whom she had 4 children, all still alive, over 7 years of marriage. 15 years earlier had married present husband, Demenge Housson, by whom she had 7 children, 3 still living.

Asked if she had brought children up in fear of God, and not allowing them to blaspheme, which was a very common fault. Claimed she had taught them their faith, but said her husband had bad habit of swearing, as did the children of the village.

Thought she had been arrested because of accusation by Jennon femme Colas le Maire of Leusse, recently executed there, who had also accused her brother and sister and others. Had been to execution to try and speak to her, but was prevented from doing so.

Said she had had a dispute with Demenge Chappelz; previous hay harvest time he had damaged their field with his cart, and husband had approached his father about this. Later he had a horse lame, and spoke to her son, saying it had been caused by a witch over whose land it had passed, and he would have her arrested. When she heard this from boy she went round and reproached the father, telling him that if his son said she was a witch he lied. Asked whether she bore him ill-will for damaging pavé outside house, said she did not - had defended him to another neighbour, because river had broken its banks. He had borne her ill-will for a long time; 7 year earlier had blamed her over loss of horse which went missing for 3 weeks. Said 'qu'elle l'avoit emmené a la montagne d'Ormont menger du loup, et publioit telles parolles parmy le village, toutesfois ledit cheval ayant suivy quelque autre, il fut retrouvé a Saint Diey, depuis ce la femme dudit Chappel le retrouvant, maudissoit les devins qui luy avoit dit la perte estre dudit cheval, mais qu'elle luy demandoit pardon du tord qu'on luy avoit fait.'

Asked about affair of bottle and death of Demenge Houllon, denied having anything to do with it - said she had been in kitchen attending to her children. Added that God must pardon her, but she had not prayed for Houllon willingly, because of the story he put about - recorded that while saying this she 'se demenoit fort en plorant avec larmes tombantes.'

Denied any quarrel with Claudon Betey, but when he was ill 'il envoia au devin pour scavoir d'ou, ou qui luy avoit causé le mal, lequel devin luy dit que scavoit faict une sienne tante qu'estoit la mere d'elle detenue et tante audit Betey qui luy avoit donné le mal, et le bruict qui en fut par le village que c'estoit la mere d'icelle detenue, qui demeuroit lors a Leusse, ou elle est decedee, qui estoit sy femme de bien.' For herself would never have harmed him 'ains l'aimoit fort, comme ung de leur bon supporte'.

After previous arrest Anthoine le Maire had called her 'genoxe racheptée', and she and her husband obtained reparation at Taintrux - had written record in her chest. Asked whether she had wanted to marry maire Colas le Maire of Leusse, agreed 'qu'elle l'a heu aymé', but it was her father who had persuaded her not to marry him. Added 'qu'il ne tenoit audit maire de luy oster son honneur, d'autant qu'une nuicte il entra avec leur serviteur, en la chambre en hault, ou elle estoit au lict.' Aded that he was a murderer, and that when in Allemaigne learning the language he knifed a boy who died, so that he had to flee.

Asked whether she did not wish to confess and save herself from eternal damnation, seeing she had been accused by one executed at Taintrux 7 years earlier, and recently by wife of Colas le Maire, she insisted she was a good Christian, and 'que le bon dieu et sa chere mere scavent qu'elles ne les a jamais oblié en ses pieres, qu'il luy envoye telles adversitez qu'il leur plaira, et qu'il luy donne patience de supporter le tord qu'on luy faict en ce disant ne cessant de pleurer.'

In general did not reproach witnesses, but insisted that they wer not telling truth. Did say of Jean Colin le Maire 'qu'il est ung sorcier qu'il gaigne l'argent des autres somme il veut que s'il l'a veu au sabat qu'il le dise'.

Additional witnesses were also heard

(32) Jennon femme Claudon Grand Maire de la Bonne Fontaine, 50

General reputation; quarrels, but no apparent effect.

(16 December 1603)

(33) Colas Didier Andreu de Lubine, 40

Had been servant of Demenge Houllat at time of death - returned with cartload of salt from salines to find that his master was ill, and blaming accused. Had also heard story of how she made the valet, Jean Bastien alias Gormant, drink from his own glass rather than bottle.

(34) Claudon Demenge Anthoine, de Nayemont, 40

During fatal illness Claudon Betey had told him she was cause of it.

(35) Colas Le Maire de Leusse, 50

Said that he had frequented her and borne her 'bonne amitié' before her marriage; if it hd not been for opposition by his parents, on grounds that her mother was already suspected as a witch, thought he would have married her. Asked about meeting at mill and his illness, said he did not remember any such meeting. As for illness, did not believe she had been responsible, as she had no such reputation then. Had been to various doctors, even at Strasbourg, without finding a cure, but was healed by remedies given by a man of Viller who said it was witchcraft.

19 December 1603; Rémy asks for previous trial to be joined with present one, since some of the witness had deposed before. Had to ask for this again on 19 January.

3 February 1604; Rémy, who had now seen first trial, asked that she should be presented to the torture, and actually tortured if she appeared to be on point of confessing, since there were some new indices.

14 February 1604; Change de Nancy concludes that she should be renvoyée.

20 February 1604; released from prison with warning about future conduct.