

Witch 028, Marguerite Jobarde 1

B 3323 no 4; witch 028, Marguerite Jobarde, veuve Demenge Vaultrin, de Leintrey

21 March 1602; informations preparatoires

(1) Nicolas Chartey, manouvrier, 44

Reputation 30 years. Some 7 years earlier, when Jean Bon Claude had been banished for crime of witchcraft, rumour went round that he had denounced others. Witness and another were sent by community of Leintrey to talk to Commandeur of Gelaucourt (to whom he was supposed to have talked on his way to exile). He told them Jean had said there were many witches at Leintrey, including two particularly bad ones who deserved burning more than him. He couldn't remember their names, but agreed to suggestion of other emissary (the maire Mre Germain) that they were Mathieu Margeron and la Jobarde. Latter then approached him asking for confirmation of reports, and went off next day to see Commandeur. Rumour was that he had arrested her and she had to pay 80 francs for her release.

(2) Bastien Bacourt, laboureur d'Amenoncourt, 50

Long reputation. Some 6 or 7 years earlier came to his house asking to buy grain - thought she had used powder to kill 2 of his horses. Was always around his house despite his hostility to her.

(3) Michiel Hellenix, laboureur, 49

Long reputation. Had tried to help Jean Bon Claude, which increased impression that she was a witch. Previous year witness had made agreement with curé to cart the tithes into town (curé shared them with abbé of Dompierre). When she questioned him he admitted he had made agreement, to which she said 'qu'il ne le deust faire que ledit Sr Curé estoit trop mauvais et avoit par trop cousté aux habitants a faire bastir la maison de la cure, que personne ne devoit marchander a luy de charroyer ses dismes plustost qu'on les devroit laisser perdre et pourrir aux champs. Enfin apres plusieurs propos plus entre eulx ladite Jobarde dict a luy qui depose qu'il estoit bien sot d'entreprendre et de charroyer de lesdit dismes qu'elle avoit ouy dire a son maitre que tous ceulx qui le charroyent y perdroyent de leurs chevaux avant qu'ils soient totalement engrainés'. 2 weeks later 2 of his horses went lame with trivial injuries he would have expected to heal quickly, but one died and other ceased to work properly.

(4) Nicolas Mongeron, marechal, 60

Reputation 30 years. 4 or 5 years earlier had found Nicolas Jobard, son of accused, beating his own son, and called him 'fils de genoxe'. He was taken before justice of Blamont, and eventually they accepted an informal judgement by Procureur Fiscal, under which he paid 10 francs for legal costs and she paid 14 for supper. Suggestion that he warned Jobarde that formal legal action might have more serious consequences.

(5) Nicolas Demenge Mongin, tailleur d'habitz, 66

Long reputation. 6 years before was working outside house of her neighbour Mengin Claude when she asked if he could go and work for her next day. He

replied that he was already engaged elsewhere; right eye then became very painful and watered profusely. On her return offered to work for her after all, but she said she had found another, while denying knowing any remedy for his eye, whose sight he effectively lost after that.

(6) Marguerite veuve Demenge Jacquemin, 64

From soon after marriage and residence she had been reputed a witch. 16 years earlier had about 50 sheep, which looked very well - then ewes lost milk after 3 weeks, so that lambs all died. Blamed accused, who had been in her house most evenings, without any good cause, to ask how she did.

(7) Le maire Estienne Cougnat, laboureur, 56

Reputation 12 or 13 years. At about this time he was maire when there was a lawsuit between the community and her late husband Demenge Waultrin, over a path through his field he had tried to close. The couple later approached him and blamed him for the case, after which he was ill and bedridden for 3 months, while 3 pigs died. During illness Estienne Marchal's wife told la Jobarde he was in danger of death, to which she replied that he would not die, but was not yet cured and would languish for some time. On another occasion he assisted Jean Mongeat of Leintrey when he went to ask for hand of daughter of Nicolas Florentin of Amenoncourt, but this was refused because, as Florentin later told them, accused had advised him against Mongeat. Angered by this, they spoke of it before Mongeat's chambermaid, who reported their remarks to la Jobarde. Latter appeared one morning when he was still in bed, and when he agreed to having made comments said 'qu'il s'en donneroit de garde'. Soon after this his son Nicolas became ill, with legs swollen and painful, so that he could not work; believed that she had caused this in view of threats.

(8) Nicolas Hardier, tixerand de Gardenat, 34

When he was servant to Mre Jean Dommerey, curé of Reillon, during his final illness, latter did not tell him if he suspected her, but had sent him with some herbs wrapped up in a cloth to find la Jobarde before dawn one morning. Was to ask her if she recognized them and get her to touch them; she agreed she did know them, and he took them back to his master. Also said he had heard the curé say that when out for a walk he had found la Jobarde and another woman dancing in the fields.

(9) Allison femme Mre Estienne Cougnat, 40

Reputation 14 or 15 years. Mentioned death of pigs but not illness of husband. Story of preventing marriage from ill-will, followed by threats and illness of son Nicolas, which lasted 3 months - in great pain, constantly crying, and nothing seemed to help. Previous year had been in house of Jean Gadel when she came in wanting to try some perry with intention of buying it; forced witness to drink some, although she did not want it, then she was ill for a fortnight, with headache, then pains in shoulder and leg.

(10) Mre Germain Haut Germain, 33

Reputation 7 years. Told of visit to Commander of Gelaucourt with Nicolas Chartey; latter had reported Jean Bon Claude as identifying 'une grosse qui se tenoit a l'endroit de l'eglise dudit Leintrey, d'ung autre gros homme derrier ladite eglise et une aultre femme au dessoubz d'icelle'. Witness asked if these were not la Jobarde, le gros Mathieu Margueron, and Jenatte Thoussainct, and he agreed this was the case.

(11) Nicolas Estienne, marchal, 30

Reputation 4 years (residence). On one occasion owed him 4 gros for work he did, but only gave him 2 - he called her witch, but no reparation was sought.

(12) Jennon veuve Claudon Jacquemin, 40

Long reputation. Husband told her that when he was still a boy he had a dispute with accused over straying animals, after which he was gravely ill.

(13) Demenge Grand Colas, 42

Reputation 15 or 16 years. 12 years earlier Jehenne Vannier was chambermaid to accused, but became ill and went home. When she recovered Jobarde refused to take her back, so witness employed her. Shortly afterwards, as he and his father were working as 'parmentiers' outside house she passed and said 'He bien, parmentier, tu as loué ma chambriere non pas, lequel deposant luy respondit qu'ouy, mais que c'avoit esté apres qu'elle avoit reffusé de la reprendre, luy disant encore qu'elle avoit parlé sur sa femme et l'avoit appellé ribaulde qu'elle ne l'estoit mais qu'elle aille veoir a Dompierre ce que l'on disoit d'elle et qu'il ne seroit jamais a son aise qu'il n'ait faict brusler des sorcieres, desquels propos faschée ladite Jobarde mit la main a l'aulne dudit deposant et l'en voulut frapper lequel soudain se leva et prenant sa forme en mains luy dict mort dieu sorciere sy tu bouges je te creveray les deux yeulx avec ma forme, surquoy elle mit en bas ladite aulne et s'en alla.' She sought no reparation, but they suffered the loss of 11 cattle over next 18 months.

(14) Jehenne Vannier, femme Henry de Frumesnil, 34

Long reputation. Gave fuller details of incident when she had left her service on account of illness. Jobarde would only take her back if she surrendered 5 gros for each day of absence - but this would have exceeded her wages. Then tried to keep her clothes, but her new master Grand Colas went to Prévôt at Blamont, and Jobarde was obliged to give up clothes, while paying her for service actually done. Told how her master then had trouble with animals, some of which became so disturbed they were frightened to keep them in the house (he had also said this).

(15) Michiel Breton, laboureur, 32

Reputation 6 or 7 years. After report from Gelaucourt she had rushed off there; he had gone to try and stop her, but she reached village before he did. When she tried to leave she was arrested, on grounds that she was a witch fleeing from justice, and had to pay for release - he believed about 20 écus. (Emerged at confrontations that he was brother-in-law of accused).

(16) Nicolas Barbe, laboureur, 32

Long reputation. 12 years earlier in August he and her son Nicolas Jobard had decided late one evening to go to the window of room of Clemence, now wife of Mre Germain Hautz Germain, then of marriageable age 'a ce de deviser et parler a elle comme jeunes gens font'. He quarrelled with Nicolas, and later was overtaken by a whirlwind in the fields, after which he was ill for 6 months.

(22 March 1602)

(17) Jean Marchal, natif de Leintrey, residant à Hubbleville comté de Salm (près d'Ogreviller), 32

10 years earlier money had been stolen from young brother of 'trompette de Colbay' outside Leintrey, when brother was staying in Jobarde's house. At first she accused Claudon Marie, but Jean Bon Claude and his sister la Grande Marye appeared to declare him innocent, leading to a quarrel in which all three called one another witches. Then they accused the witness, who had not been in church that day, and had a small mark under his eye, like one mentioned by the victim. He objected furiously to the 'trompette' that he had been accused by witches, and in fact was cleared by the victim. He returned to Blamont, where there was a 'pardon pour le St Michiel', and mounted one of his father's horses 'pour courir les esguillettes', losing narrowly to a horse belonging to Jobarde's late husband. A day or two later, reaping wheat in fields, he saw Jobarde and her sister (femme Michiel Didier Breton); feared they might do him harm, and horse did become ill, 'frenetique' and trying to bite him, then died completely emaciated. Further story about accident when he and his father were cutting down a tree, which was brought down by a sudden great gust of wind; he was injured in fall and bedridden for 6 weeks. Attributed all these misfortunes to 'inimitié' of la Jobarde.

(18) Jean Courtier, 40

9 years earlier accused had been angry because he had rented some fields, and after a quarrel his horse died, which he imputed to her on account of reputation. 'Toutesfois que depuis ledit temps elle a tousjours tasché de complaire et faire croire audit deposant qu'elle ne luy vouloit aucun mal.'

1 April 1602; interrogation

Said she was over 60, native of Colbay in comté de Salm, daughter of Demenge le Clerc, laboureur, and his wife Sebille. Left home at 12 to spend 2 years in service, then back home for 5 or 6 years before another 4 years in service, first at Abbey of Domepvre, last 3 in household of le Grand Vaultrin at Leintrey. Then married her master's son, and had lived at Leintrey since; husband had died 4 or 5 years earlier.

Asked about use of dog's head for swellings in animals, said she had heard of this 'et qu'il y a environ deux ans que Colin l'escorcheur de Blamont luy dit un jour qu'elle en devoit avoir une Mais qu'il falloit la faire benir affin que le poison n'y entre et de façon qu'elle ne fut folle ny esgarré, et en print une'. Neither curé (Messire Dieudonné) nor chaplain (Messire François) were willing to bless it, so she threw it away.

Agreed that she had made visit to Geloncourt some 6 or 7 years before; said at first it had been in connection with a pilgrimage to Dieuze, then admitted reports

of denunciation. Had been locked up, and released by Michiel Breton, who drew bolt of door from outside. Denied making any payment for release.

Asked about Nicolas Demenge Mongin, said 'que s'en estoit un bon des apostres cestuy-la'. Asked to explain, 'a dit que c'estoit un genot, et que son pere estoit le Roy, et un nommé Toussaint son frere' - knew this 'par bruict commun'. Claimed to have heard from Colas Foudré, a young man of Brouville, that Mengin's father had taken 'la pûxine de son pûix' (?) 'pour luy servir de bombarde au sabat'. (2 April 1602) Agreed that Jehenne Vannier had left her service through illness, but claimed that Grand Colas had then hired her 'en despit d'elle' - admitted trying to keep clothes, and complaint to officers at Blamont which resulted.

4 April 1602; confrontations

Accused Margueritte veuve Demenge Jacquemin of being 'une bourdiere et une ribaulde.' Said Demenge le Grand Colas was 'un meschant homme', but would not make any specific allegations when asked. Claimed to have heard that Estienne Connot had stolen some wood; he denied this. Denied all accusations.

13 April 1602; procureur fiscal asks for question extraordinaire

14 April 1602; Change de Nancy approves, with moderation for age

17 April 1602; interrogation under torture

Resisted thumbscrews, rack, and tortillons, and finally released. Brought back at 2 p.m. for more torture, and when racked agreed to confess. Had been seduced 20 years earlier when soldiers were in village, and leader had been lodged in her house; he was angry at loss of his hat, and threatened to make her pay for it.

Admitted series of maléfices, mostly not those of which she had been accused, and mostly resulting from anger over straying animals. Admitted killing Estienne Connot's pigs, because the public way had taken a lot of their meadow - but denied causing illnesses of father and son. Generally denied specific allegations based on depositions.

Asked about accomplices, said that at first sabbat, 3 months after seduction, she had seen Seville femme Jean Pierson (executed), Pierson and Jeannon, children of late Petit Pierson, Colas Demenge Mengin, la Grande Marye, Demenge fils Nicolas Marchal, and the wife of Claudon Marchal.

18 April 1602; interrogation under torture

Added one or two more maléfices, but said her denunciations had only been 'par soupçon'. In view of these variations, was racked again. Now confessed she had killed her son Vaultrin because he failed to repay loan of 100 francs; had also killed a cow and 6 lambs belonging to her son Colas, who had also borrowed money from her. Reduced list of those seen at sabat to Didier femme Colas le Vefue le viel, and Pierson and Jeannon, children of Petit Pierson.

19 April 1602; procureur fiscal asks for death sentence

20 April 1602; Change de Nancy approves

27 April 1602; formal sentence pronounced and carried out. Maintained to last that 3 she had accused were witches.

Evidently a relatively rich woman. Nicolas Vaultin dit Jobard, ex-maire of Leintrey, applied on behalf of himself and Claude, fille pupille of late Vultrin Jobard, for the remission of the confiscated goods. He was son of accused, and Claude was grand-daughter aged 7. He offered to pay costs of procedure, and was finally allowed property against payment of costs and 1,283 Fr.

Claude Sear, prévôt of Blamont, also applied for allocation of confiscated property, referring to his services and the payments due to him. Allowed 600 Fr.

Jean Thenon, jardinier de la maison de son altesse à Blamont, also made an application - was allowed 200 Fr.