

Witch 068A, Mengeon Clement Thiriat 1

Witch 068A; B 3813, Mengeon Clement Thiriat, de Grandvillers

27 October 1625; informations preparatoires

Taken by prévôt of Bruyères at request of PG des Vosges

(1) Mongeon Laurent, 50

Reputation 9 years (own residence). Previous haymaking time Jean Michel's wife told witness that Mengeon had threatened 'de luy faire mouiller ses yeux'. Thought he might have caused death of a horse 6 years earlier - had come to watch when they were carrying it out of stable. Had recently lost several cows and oxen, which he thought was doing of 'quelque personne infectée de sortilege'.

(2) Georgeote femme du precedent, 45

Same threat as reported by husband; had also said when their animals went through his meadow 'qu'il feroit une soupe qui ne seroit pas au gré de tout le monde' (reported by Nicolas Mareschal). After this they lost 5 horses, also an ox which died around St Jean. She and husband went to make offering to St Hubert at Autrey for the ox, and passed him on the way; told him where they were going, and he said it would be cured on their return. At this point thought he might be cause of all their ills - reputation 18 years.

(3) Marguerite femme Curien Ganiche, 50

Had quarrel with him 3 or 4 years earlier, when animals were pasturing together in shared meadow, which caused her to say they would enclose their own part in future. Soon after lost a horse, and man who cut it up judged it to be bewitched, so suspected him in view of common repute.

(4) Fleurette veuve Florentin Coitoux, 40

Had many losses over last six years; oxen and other valuable beasts, husband who died after illness of a year, and daughter who had been ill. Like many others thought this was result of witchcraft, but had not suspected Mengeon, and had only heard of reputation very recently.

(5) Georgeote fille de la precedente, 20

Told how during illness Mengeon, who was nearest neighbour, often brought her food. Once brought her tart and told her to eat it or he would not come again, another time some pears which she ate unwillingly, but did not suspect him, even though she had heard of reputation.

(6) Nicole veuve Toussaint le Roy, 65

Husband had been ill for 10 years, and she had lost a horse and a pig, but did not know whom to suspect. When husband was on way to Mass with accused he was unable to cross 'un petit passage', to which latter said 'qu'il voioit bien que le Roy estoit pris ce coup la'. When husband told her of this she said he was indeed 'bien pris', since he was unable to work.

(7) Marion femme Georgeon le Roy, 50

Had no suspicion against him. Her daughter Jennon had died after 4-year illness, but did not know cause.

(8) Alison veuve Nicolas Mareschal, 60

Had lost several animals without suspecting anyone. 6 years earlier Mengeon had told off her daughter Bastienne for allowing animals to cross his meadow, and she had been ill for 6 years after (fell ill 6 months later) - but did not suspect him, despite long reputation.

(9) Helenne femme Claudon Thomas, 45

Said that 7 years earlier Georgeon Raimbault had come to their house and told her husband to beware of Mongeon (his son-in-law), saying he was a bad man. Some years later their son Jean, aged 18 fell ill and eventually died; thought of Mengeon's reputation, and felt some suspicions that he might have been bewitched, but not against him personally. Once when carting hay he said to her 'qu'elle ne scavoit encor ce que c'estoit de vivre au monde, et qu'il failloit faire les plus beaux et meilleurs semblants a ceux que l'on haissoit le plus.'

(10) Claudate femme Claudon Jobert, 40

Some 12 years earlier their neighbour Georgeon Raimbault had warned them against Mengeon; among other things said he sometimes pretended to be going to church and went off hunting. Had lost animals, but did not suspect him.

(11) Jacote femme Anthoine Rataire, 40

3 years earlier had dispute with him when he was keeping village animals, and 8 weeks later a horse died. In view of reputation suspected him, and when they asked his son to help dig pit for body he said 'est il mort la fois cy'.

(12) Jannon femme Nicolas Mengin, 40

Had only heard him suspected that year, about which she was 'bien esmerveillée'.

(13) Nicolas Mengin, 50

Like others had lost animals, but did not suspect anyone; had only heard of Mengeon's reputation recently.

(14) Curien Ganiche, 60

Had known accused since childhood, and never suspected him of witchcraft. Had heard him claim 'qu'il pourroit avoir des filles telles que bon luy sembleroit', but did not explain how, so he conjectured it might be 'par la voie de quelque magie'.

(15) Florentin Tadierat, 35

His wife Jennon had been ill for 3 years, then died; did not suspect him, and had not previously heard of reputation. Was true that 4 years earlier he had told her off for taking his pears.

(16) Clement Voiemin, 34

Previous year he had been doyen, and after collecting oats due to seigneur he had supper with other officers, including Mongeon. Latter suggested that he should go off and enjoy himself with other young men; he did so, and got so drunk that he fell through the window to the cellar, and had to be pulled out, but did not suspect him.

(17) Jean Mengin, 38

Had gone out after hares with him one evening, and was told to stand in a certain place; hare appeared almost immediately, but his gun burst when he fired at it. If he was witch as suspected, though he might have caused this with intention of bringing about his death. Had quarrelled over some land 2 years earlier, then had an ox dead a year later, and another 3 weeks before; suspected him over this. Before marriage had heard him boast he could easily have any women he wanted. Did not explain how, but also said he had spent night with a girl who was to be married, until minstrels arrived, adding 'qu'il scavoit si bien les cajoller qu'il en venoit au bout'.

(18) Florent Goery, 36

Some 10 years before, after marriage, had bought a pair of oxen, and asked Mengeon if he had done well - he replied that he had 'bien fait un bot'. and it was his affair if he paid so much. One of them then sickened, so that he had to sell it at a loss, and in view of reputation suspected he had been cause. Had heard some allege he had caused death of his brother Nicolas and his son, who died at same time 14 years earlier, in order to get their property. Some 7 years earlier, at communal assembly, there had been talk of keeping pigs in some woodland, to which he said this would not happen for 3 years, and indeed there were no acorns for 3 or 4 years. During illness of Georgeote fille Florentin Coitoux had told her mother it would not last. Had dispute with witness about some carting, and when wife told witness to pay up rather than quarrel Mengeon said he need not, but 'qu'il paieroit une autre fois qu'il ne s'en souviendrait pas'. A horse then sickened, and during his absence his wife got Mengeon to visit it, after which it recovered.

(19) Claudon Thomas, 50

18 years earlier Toussaint le Roy had warned him against Mengeon, saying he was 'un malheureux homme qui ne portoit point de bon temps'. Had heard him say, after being told that Claudon Marchal had damaged his 'terrasse', 'que le diable luy en sceut gré, et qu'il le paieroit en un autre lieu sans qu'il s'en preigne de garde'. After quarrel over payment for keeping herd three of his cows lost an eye - in each case the left one - and those who treated them thought it was witchcraft. Also warned against him by Georgeon Raimbault. Had been to see Florentin Coitoux during fatal illness 7 or 8 months earlier, and he said that illness might well have been caused because he had refused Mengeon a half share in a wood he bought from

the community. Raimbault had told him that Mengeon had once tried to strangle him among his grain (an earlier witness had also mentioned this). Had given witness warning after dispute over a water supply.

(20) Jean Grand Didier, 32

2 years earlier had heard him say that his father-in-law Florentin Coitoux 'en avoit pour le reste de ses jours'; he duly died later. Same remark about Curienne fille Jean Thomas, who also died of a 'rume'. Also thought he had cured Georgeote, daughter of Coitoux, and general reputation. A monk from Aultrey had taken relics of St Hubert to Grandviller as remedy for Georgeote, and against the will of some Mengeon had come forward to hold the reliquary, but his arm began to tremble so much they would have fallen if witness had not taken hold of him.

(21) Nicolas Marteau, 72

17 years earlier he had sworn falsely, as banyard, that witness had cut an unmarked tree, so that he had to pay fine. A year earlier had been cutting wood together when he gave Mengeon some bread, and received some dried pears in return. After eating these he became so ill that everyone thought he was dying, but next day Mengeon sent him some 'picquate ou compote', after eating which he recovered, so he suspected he had bewitched him. On another occasion he had taken a hare which had escaped Mengeon's snares, but when he told him about this saw he was very angry. Having previously been a good huntsman who never missed target, after this he could hit nothing. Suspicion over death of his brother, with his wife and child, 12 years earlier, that he had caused this to get inheritance. Had told witness he had abused several girls, 'estant au surplus de telle humeur qu'il ne frequente pas plus souvent que la nuit'.

(22) Le maire Noel Girardin, 48

Said that 9 years earlier Mengeon's son Jean (then 16 or 18) had shown him a sheet of paper with 'un carractere ainsy l'appelloit il qu'il disoit estre propre pour charmer les coups d'espée, harquebuses, at autres, desquelles une personne qui en seroit saisy ne pourroit estre blessé ny interressé, moins noier quand bien il tomberoit en l'eaue'. Said it came from his father, and offered him a copy, which he refused - it seemed to be 'un mot grecq composé de sept brevets entrelassés d'un a. et un g. qu'il disoit opperer toute la substance et efficace de ce brevet.' 5 or 6 years before Mengeon had extracted fine of an écu after quarrel between his wife and wife of Mengeon le Roy at poisle, and when witness told him he should not have pursued his neighbour over such a small thing he replied 'que ce n'estoit encor rien, et que sa langue seroit cause de luy faire mouiller ses yeux'. 2 months later le Roy lost a horse worth 66 francs, and because of lack of an 'escorcheur' they could not bury it for a day. When they were doing so he came by and said 'qu'ils ne faisoient pas grande chose', at which blood came so abundantly from its mouth that his trousers and shoes were soaked. Incident after lawsuit when Mengeon gave him dried pear, and he became violently ill until he vomited it up, so believed there had been something wrong with the pear. Previous year had been dissatisfied with a exchange he had made with Jean Mengin, who would not reverse it, and told witness Jean would gain nothing, 'et qu'on gardoit bien un mauvais chien pour attendre une bonne neige'. Soon after Jean lost 2 oxen, 'se remarquant avoir cela en pratique de ne point menacer en personne celuy a qui il veult du mal, ains s'adressa et en parla tousjours

a quelque tiers.' Then told story of his niece Georgeon, fille Florentin Coitoux, who had been thought possessed, and had been exorcised by monk from Autrey; she had vomited up pieces of sheets, leaves, feathers, and other items. He had felt sure this was doing of accused, and said in his hearing 'que c'estoit tout fait de sorcier, qui se voioit assez clairement et qu'il failloit qu'il en fit brusler pour n'en pouvoir plus endurer, lequel repartit qu'il y auroit bien a faire qu'il en vienne au bout, et que le diable estoit si subtile qu'un sorcier ou une sorciere estant pres d'une autre personne, auroit tousjours moien par son aleine et simple souffle de luy faire entrer cinq diables dans son corps, surquoy il luy repartit encor que s'il devoit manger jusques a sa chemise qu'il en veroit une fin'. Next day he took dried pears to girl, after eating which she recovered. Reputation 17 years.

(23) Georgeon le Roy, 40

Had nothing to depose against him, having seen no harm in him; had only heard recently of suspicions.

(24) Michel Mareschal, 25

Some 4 years earlier Mengeon's son Jean had shown him paper with various characters and prayers on it, making same claims as to previous witness and offering him a copy, which he refused. Long reputation of Mengeon as witch, but did not know who had told him of this.

(25) Claudon Jobert, 40

He too had been warned against him by Georgeon Raimbault, who said he was 'un traistre qui menoit un mauvais train', and said he had tried to strangle him.

(26) Jean fils feu Toussaint le Roy, 25

Told how 14 years earlier, after attending wedding of sister of witness at Mortagne with Mongeon Noel, accused had told him he had taken a snipe. He denied this at first, but when Mengeon gave him further details admitted it was true - he had found it dead. Was only a boy at time, so had not taken much notice. Father had been ill for 10 years before death, and had suspected he was responsible.

(31 October 1625)

(27) Colatte femme Mengeon Dieudonné, 74

14 months before became ill after eating dried pears she got from Mengeon, so that she could not keep any food down. Since accusation had thought he might have been cause - had found her taking fallen plums from his garden (but not from his trees). He had 'ceste retenue de ne jamais demonstrer a un instant son ressentiment et fascherie'.

(28) Margueritte veuve Romary Laurent, 26

Her husband had died after languishing for a year, and had been to consult a curé 6 leagues away, who told them to look in their bed, where they found 'plusieurs brouilleries'. Sick man was then taken to see him on a cart, and he said

'infailliblement il avoit esté ensorcelé, et qu'il ne luy pouvoit rien faire', but she did not suspect anyone.

7 November 1625; PG des Vosges asks for arrest

At some time before 4 November Mengeon had sent a request to the Duchess Nicole. Said he had previously been échevin in justice of ban de Grandviller, and was now lieutenant to maire. Was now approaching 70, and had always behaved himself as 'homme de bien', 'et qu'il soit descendu de personnes ayant déjà eu charges d'affaires des Sergens de la Justice gens de bien aussi et sans qu'entre le nombre de plus de deux centz de sa Race, Il y ait eu une seule personne soubsonnée de Crime ny reprise en Justice, mesme qu'il se soit allié encor sur ceste probité, aux plus honorables maisons du Lieu, Sy est ce que quelque particulier de peu (comme il a entendu) se rendant denonciateur ou accusateur secret contre luy par pure envie, hayne et vindication, auroit a ce moyen fait que Monseieur le Procureur General des Vosges, faisant informer contre quelques personnes du lieu soubçonnées, fait aussi informer contre luy'. Requested that PG be asked to give him name or names of 'ses instigateurs secrets et couverts', so that he could seek reparation and damages. Added that 'comme la Justification doit estre plus recommandable signamment a un homme de sa sorte, que nonpas la Charge' he should also be given names of witnesses, 'pour reconnoistre et veoir les Causes des Suspensions, malveillances et haynes qu'ils pourroyent avoir eu contre luy, et s'ils sont gens croyables en Justice ou non, mesme faire recevoir ses justifications et verifications d'icelles, tant contre eulx qu'aultrement, afin que le tout joint au procès, son bon droict luy soit tant mieulx conservé'.

4 November 1625; order signed by Duchess Nicole, asking PG des Vosges to investigate his claims, and granting 'surseance' for 15 days.

11 November 1625; PG des Vosges orders prévôt of Bruyères to send him the trial documents to date, while surseance is to be announced.

23 December 1625; letter to duke from Reverend Dame Catherine Damas, sonriere of église St Pierre of Remiremont. Had received copy of his request, after denunciation by Noel Gerardin. Now reports that he had been selling his property and contracting debts in order to 'frauder le fisque'; points out that half of any confiscation would come to the church, but says major consideration is that justice should be 'administré sans soubçon'. Points out that PG has still not reported, although 15 days are long past, and asks for trial to proceed, also that his acts since then should be declared null and void.

23 December; order to prévôt of Bruyères, signed by duke Charles, that trial should proceed, unless accused produces valid objections to witnesses.

29 December 1625; prévôt orders arrest.

30 December 1625; ducal decision, in light of report from PG, that trial should proceed in normal manner. Secret denouncer not to be heard in evidence, but PG is only to give his name to the accused if he is renvoyé, when he will be able to seek damages in normal manner.

2 January 1626; interrogation

Said he was about 70, laboureur and tailor, native of Grandviller. Had been maire du ban, and was now lieutenant to his son Jean Clement, who held that office. Married to Florente fille Georgeon Thomas, by whom he had 2 sons, the elder being dead.

Asked of he knew cause of imprisonment, said he did not, and that 'nagueres il estoit l'ung de principaux et plus prisés du lieu, et que maintenant il est deshonoré'. When told he was suspected of witchcraft, claimed he had never heard this, and that since everyone had to die he would have confessed it freely if it were true.

Denied various charges. If his arm had trembled when he held reliquary over Georgeotte fille Florentin Coiteux, this was because he was kneeling awkwardly by the bed - he had loved her like his own child. As for his father-in-law, he had been out of his mind, and taken to Aultrey and St Idoult, so there was no reason to give any weight to what he said. Denied trying to strangle him, and said he had not regularly avoided Mass; when he did so he had confessed it later.

Denied he had ever said he could have any women he wanted. Said he had been out hunting with Jean Mengin, but had nothing to do with bursting of his gun - 'que toutes choses preignent fin, comme auroit fait alors ladite harquebuse'. When Mengin's oxen died the man who cut one of them up said he had spoiled it by working it too hard. As for story about spending night with girl before her wedding, admitted he had said this, but explained that it was when he was a young man. He and Curien Garneuche had been to collect the payments due in such a case - 4 sols and a dozen 'esguillettes' - then went to bed with her and another girl present. Spent rest of night talking, but did nothing dishonourable.

Denied killing his brother, saying that at the time his son would have inherited. Had placed child with Jean Rattaire at Cugniecourt, where he died from 'flux de sang' which also killed several other children. Agreed he had tried to heal a horse belonging to Florent Goery, but it was later healed by Jean Voirin, and he had not quarrelled with them or harmed the horse.

Asked about the paper with characters on it, said that the Sr N. Paris of Mirecourt had given it to his cousin Nicolas Hellet, who told witness (then unmarried) that it would be good to take to feasts, to preserve them from swords. However when they used unsheathed swords themselves he was cut on finger, although he had paper against his breast, so he said it was no good. Had thrown it in a box with old papers, and did not see it for 30 years, but his son found it and showed it to others, without making any use of it.

Had seen Georgeote vomit strange things, but had not been cause. Did not remember remarks allegedly made to him by Noel Gerardin; he had repeated what Claudon Bertiquet said to him, that a witch could put 2 or 3 demons in someone's body.

(3 January 1626)

Asked about disposing of his goods, said he had passed an act before the tabellion giving all his goods to his son. This was because for last 4 years he had been unable to work; in addition Nicolas Hellet, who had given his daughter a good dowry, was angry because he had not done the same for his son (her husband). Claimed that he had made donation at time he first heard rumour that he was to be accused - told by his wife, and he only laughed because he knew he was innocent.

Was then shown the paper with characters on it, and agreed it was the one he had from Nicolas Hellet. He had reproached Hellet that he should not have given

them the paper, which might cause them harm or bad reputation, even though the curé had said nothing evil was written on it.

Added that he had not said all he intended about Noel Gerardin and Jean Mengin, whom he suspected of being secret denouncers - had forgotten to ask for his note on the subject. As maire had fined Gerardin on behalf of his brother-in-law Florentin Coitoux, and knew he had been angry about this; thought both were 'ses ennemis et mal veuillans'. Had heard from Florentin Fabry that Gerardin had asked the PG to take evidence against him.

5 January 1626; accused requests PG that he be allowed to move from prisons to a higher room in chateau, or a house, under guard. This is on account of his age and weakness, also that he has long had an ulcer on his back, and that he might otherwise die in prison. PG agrees that facts are correct, approving transfer to higher room.

8 January 1626; confrontations

Alleged that some years earlier Georgeotte femme Mongeon Laurent had been caught stealing a sack of grain at Ramberviller, and had to run away as sergents looked for her - she denied this.

In reply to Margueritte femme Curien Ganiche, said that at time horse died she blamed a servant girl - she denied this.

Said that child of Helenne femme Claudon Thomas had died of smallpox, as many knew.

Claimed that 2 years earlier Jean Mengin had threaten to cost him 100 écus, because he would not agree to help him obtain the goods of his late father-in-law 'a vil prix'.

Said that Claudon Thomas had wished him ill since he had told him during dispute that he was son of a man who had been banished - he was one of the 3 or 4 who had conspired against him.

Said that Nicolas Marteau was a known thief, and had also altered boundaries.

Noel Gerardin added that 2 years earlier, when Curienne Thomas had a dry cough, Mengeon told her brother Claudon that she was dying - as she did a week later. Said that when Messire Adam had been exorcising Georgeotte he said on leaving the house 'qu'il y avoit eu une personne qui l'avoit bien empesché et estoit contraire a la vertu de l'exorcisme'. Made similar claim when exorcising Romary le Roy, and on both occasions Mengeon had been holding reliquary - thought he had been speaking of him. 16 years earlier had told him he had taken his pleasure with two women, one of Grandviller and the other of Nonzeville. Mengeon denied all this; on question of remark about witches being able to put devils into bodies said again it was Claudon Bertignet who told him this, having read it in a life of St Claude.

16 January 1626; PG des Vosges orders prévôt to investigate what justifications accused can offer against the charges, and for his objections to Georgeotte femme Mongeon Laurent and Nicolas Marteau.

21 January 1626; list of additional witnesses, with detailed account of points on which they are to be questioned. These are virtually identical with several of their depositions, and must have resulted from some informal prior discussion with them or others.



23 January 1626; additional depositions

(29) Claudette femme Mengeon Jacot, de Domfaing, 30

4 years earlier had been in service of accused, and was sent back by mistress from veillée to fetch some nuts. Was great noise in house, with everything shaking and pots and pans banging; tried to wake Mengeon, but was unable to do so. he normally slept by fire, and talked in his sleep - often said name of devil, never that of God. Was often ill in morning, although he had eaten well previous night. Did not know cause of this, nor of noise, unless it had been made by some cats.

(30) Collatte fille Nicolas le Roy, 23

During fatal illness of her brother Romary he had said that if a witch wished someone ill it did not matter if they had crossed themselves and washed hands in the morning - the witch could still send 7 devils into them from half a league away. Had also said that both brother and Florentin Coiteux would die, but should not be told to avoid frightening them.

(31) Nicolas Villemin, 70

Story about death of Mengeon's brother and nephew - late Didier Hellet had said 'qu'il y avoit un nid par la dedans', but did not know what he meant.

(32) Georgeon Roussel, 60

Had heard him say that if he had intercourse with all the women of Grandviller he would not have children unless he wanted.

(33) Mengeatte femme George Michel, 50

Had nothing to depose on points put to her (there was quite a long statement among those made 2 days earlier).

(34) Claudette veuve Nicolas Virion, 33

Told of seeing him holding down Georgette during her fits; he said there was no-one else stronger or more capable than him for this.

(35) Barthelemy le Duc, de Pierrepont, 58

More than 6 years earlier accused had asked him for payment of debt owed by his father-in-law; when he said he knew nothing of it he said he would pay more in another place if he did not settle it. Later (after meeting him on road) a horse fell and injured itself so badly that it had to be killed. Had also expressed wish to wife of witness that he might never return from journey to Allemaigne.

(36) Jean Duc, 80

When witnesses had gone to testify at Bruyères accused asked him why he had not gone with them; he replied there were enough already, to which he said 'qu'il y en pourroit bien trop'.

(37) Jean Gaspard, de Bruyères, 52

30 years earlier had been returning from fête at Vimenil with other young men, and late Anthoine Romary said that Mengeon 'se mesloit de charmer', so that if there was a fight he could not be beaten or hurt.

Confrontations followed. He accused Claudette Jacotte of stealing linen and flax, which his wife had found in her bed - they had not accused her to avoid dishonouring her. She claimed this was false, and the items had been given her by her mother. He said he had a heart condition, which made him bring up a lot of water some mornings, while everything else she was was 'pures bourdes, qu'elle devriroit rougir de honte'.

Said that when they had all been around Georgette Noel Gerardin or another had placed a chapelet, which had supposedly been blessed and had touched foot of St Claude, on place where pain seem to be. It had then gone to her stomach, to judge from her gestures.

Said that Jean Duc was poor, and regularly went begging, so was not a valid witness against him.

24 January 1626; prévôt of Bruyères declares that accused should now bring forward witnesses to justify his claims and prove his innocence.

This is followed by a list of charges he had made against witnesses. Includes claim that Jean Grand Didier was allied to Noel Gerardin, and had joined him in borrowing money to bring the case, also that he had said that Gerardin 'feroit plus avec un escu que ledit Clement ne feroit avec cent'. Also list of those he wished to have called on specific points.

30 January 1626; informations

These were taken from witnesses he had named.

(1) Claudon Chrestien, 37

Good reputation of family. Then spoke of charge Mengeon had made against Curien Ganiche, that he had stolen ironwork from cart of witness, then taken it to blacksmith. Said this was true, and when he discovered it he consulted the curé as to how he should proceed. Was advised to have friendly word with Ganiche, but he would not admit theft, and claimed to have obtained iron from forge at Brouvelieures, threatening to sue him for defamation. Nevertheless his wife then approached wife of witness begging that they should drop case, and promising 5 francs towards costs of replacement.

(2) Bastienne femme du precedent, 34

Similar story; had not received money, although it had been promised as soon as grain had been threshed.

(3) Mengeon Thoussainct, de Pierrepont, 50

7 years earlier Bartremin le Duc had killed Jacot Toussaint with a 'coup de buche', then obtained remission from duke. Accused had conducted himself well as maire.

(4) Nicolas Mengin, 50

Jean Grand Didier had married niece of Noel Gerardin.

(5) Mongeon Grand Didier, 70

Nicolas Marteau had reputation as thief. Did not suspect accused of witchcraft, although he had sometimes been harsh in discharge of his offices.

(6) Honn Nicolas Fabry, 70

Noel Gerardin was 'oncle maternel' of Jean Grand Didier. Nicolas Marteau reputed a thief, but not convicted as far as he knew. had often been with accused, and had never seen him at fault in performing duties, while father and grandfather were both good men. Rumours about witchcraft had only gone round 2 months before arrest.

(7) Georgeon le Roy, 60

Deposed about illness of Colate femme Mengeon Dieudonnée, and good reputation of accused.

(8) Jean Grand Didier, 32

First rumours of witches at Grandviller had been during illness of Georgette, his sister-in-law. Nicolas Fabry, Nicolas Hellet, and others had spoken to PG des Vosges, who had then asked Noel Gerardin for a report and the names of those suspected. He had recently lent Noel some money, but did not know whether it was for the case or not.

(9) Marion femme Georgeon le Roy, 60

Illness of Colate only dated from last year, though she had had heart trouble earlier.

(10) Georgeon Jobert, 80

Reputation of Nicolas Marchal as thief. Had seen no harm in accused, when he had been lieutenant with him.

(11) Jean Virion, 75

Good reputation of accused, and father in particular had been a good man.

(12) Mongeon Dieudonné, 75

Knew that Noel Gerardin was 'partie secrette', because at beginning of rumours he had come to their house and asked him if he and his wife suspected him over her illness or death of his oxen. He said he had no suspicion of him. Knew Gerardin had made several trips to Mirecourt and elsewhere on the matter.

(13) Georgeote femme Nicolas Romary, 30

Mother had been seriously ill for a year; before that had stomach trouble for 4 or 5 years, but was still able to work.

(14) Nicolas Romary, 40

Had heard stories about theft of iron by Curien Ganiche.

(15) Claudon Jobert, 41

Knew that Jean Grand Didier had married niece of Noel Gerardin, but not that he was one of 'parties secrettes'. His nephew Claudon Anthoine, cleric to PG des Vosges, had been to village and told Noel he was to do his duty and draw up mémoire giving names of those suspected of witchcraft.

(16) Mongeon Mongeot, 40

Had heard rumours of theft by Georgeatte femme Mongeon le Roy; had seen no harm in accused.

(17) Jean Mongeot, 36

Similar deposition to above.

(18) Michel Marchal, 25

Knew that Noel Gerardin had been 'partie secrette', which was now evident to everyone, and that PG had asked him for information about witches.

(19) Claudon Hellet, 33

Story of remark that Gerardin would do more with an écu than accused with 100 francs. Gerardin had 'sondé la pluspart des deposans en l'information et assenty d'eux ce qu'ils pourroient dire de luy comme aucuns ont confessé iceluy leur avoir remis en memoire une partie des choses a quoy ils ne pensoient plus'.

(20) Honn Nicolas Hellet, 60

Story of Curien Ganiche and theft of ironwork, then accord between wives. Said that Jean Mengin had been very angry with accused, and had sworn in tavern at Bruyères that he would cost him 100 écus 'ou qu'il mourroit a la peine'. Had been secret councils between Noel Gerardin, Mengin, and Jean Grand Didier. Nicolas Marthal was reputed a thief. Had met Noel Gerardin at Mirecourt, where he was pursuing case. Accused had always conducted himself well as officer.

(31 January 1626)

(21) Jean Rataire, de Cugniecourt, 60

Had heard Martal called thief.

(22) Claudon Gallimart, 80

Similar deposition about theft; had always thought accused a good man.

(23) Honn Joseph Pierre, de Bruyères, 41

Knew nothing about Jean Mengin.

(24) Honn Nicolas Valot, tabellion de Bruyères, 42

Had been involved in case when Nicolas Martault was accused of moving boundary markers. Had heard rumours that Noel Gerardin had been pursuing case against accused, Within last few days had shown witness letters from PG asking him to collect evidence against Mengeon and other suspects, 'et estoit en volonté de continuer a poursuivre, pour ce qu'on ne procedoit pas a ceste procedure, comme il se devoit faire, ou paroles semblables'.

(25) Honn Demenge Pierre, tabellion de Bruyères, 46

Reputation of Martault as thief. Previous year he had taken Gerardin a letter from Sr Gauthier, substitut for PG, in which he asked that he send the mémoires he had promised on those suspected of witchcraft. Met him on way to Dompierre and gave it to him, 'lequel n'en fit grand cas se sembloit'.

(26) Barthremin Thomas alias Basel, de Pierrepont, 48

Story about murder by Barthremin le Duc and remission.

(27) Bastien Coitoux, de Pierrepont, 61

Same story as above.

(28) Joseph Germain, sergent bailliager à Bruyères, 30

Knew Gerardin had made various trips to Mirecourt and Remiremont in pursuit of case, and met him after he had been to speak with Mme la sonriere.

(3 February 1626)

(29) Nicolas Valentin, 37

3 or 4 years earlier Georgeote femme Mongeon le Roy had called wife of accused 'meschante femme', and was taken to court; gave then 'une busche' as sign of satisfaction, and case was then abandoned. Also reported remark about 100 francs.

(30) Jean Duc, 80

Had seen Mongeon le Roy's wife beaten for stealing at Ramberviller 30 years earlier, although did not know if she had actually done it.

(31) Quirien Viry, maire de Nonzeville, 60

Story about theft of ironwork and accord between wives.

(4 February 1626)

(32) Jacot le Marquis, de Grange, 42

Remembered how Jean Mengin had believed that accused had caused him to pay more than he wanted for land (sold by witness), and said he would cost him 100 écus in tavern of Joseph Pierre at Bruyères.

(33) Noel Gerardin, 48

Nicolas Martal had reputation as thief; witness had been involved in settling affair of boundary markers, but could not be sure who had moved them.

(6 February 1626)

(34) Marie Bourgoing, veuve Dieudonné Breton, marchand de Ramberviller, 48

Had suspected Mengeon le Roy's wife over thefts, but could not be sure she was guilty.

(7 February 1626)

(35) Jean Mongeote, de Houx, 40

Colate femme Mongeon Dieudonné was his aunt. Had been complaining more than 3 years earlier of illness, with neck and stomach trouble. At Christmas had reproached her with evidence she had given against accused, and she replied 'qu'elle ne fust souvenue ny pensé qu'il luy eut donné le mal si les autres gens ne l'eussent ainsy opiné et luy remis en memoire, et qu'elle le pardonna de bon coeur'. Added that although she was his aunt she was 'une causeuse'.

(36) Mongeon Mengeote, de Rebalpaux, 37

Aunt had told him more than 2 years earlier that she was unwell, and would not often see him again.

(37) Gegoult Mongeote, frère des precedents, 36

Similar account to that of eldest brother; he had told her to look to her conscience.

(38) Jean Fabry, hostelain de Bruyères, 55

Gerardin had told him that he had letters from PG ordering him to secure the arrest of Mengeon.

11 February 1626; PG des Vosges argues that the testimony on behalf of Mongeon does not touch on 5 principal points in accusation. First was common reputation 'auquel en cas occulte, comme est celuy de sortilege (comme excepté et privilegié) il n'est necessaire d'observer les circonstances requises en autres crimes plus cognus et evidans, la preuve d'iceluy crime estante tres difficile, suffisant, que les tesmoings deposent d'un bruit et soubçon commun. Bodin lib. 4 cap. 4'

Second was his confession about the paper with a charm, third his claim to be able to take his pleasure with women as he wished. Fourth was 'imprecations ordinaires', which had been followed by misfortunes - Delrio and Binsfeld quoted here, followed by comment 'telle façon de proceder, sont du moins le plus souvent accompagnés d'heresie'. Fifth is testimony of several witnesses - Bodin and some legal texts cited here.

PG therefore asks for question ordinaire et extraordinaire, although under strict supervision by judges and surgeon to allow for his age and physical condition.

16 February 1626; Change de Nancy approves torture; should be given thumbscrews and such other light torture as he is judged able to support physically.

25 February 1626; interrogation under torture

In preliminary questioning was asked if he was a witch. Denied this, adding 'que s'il estoit homme variable et qu'il n'eust l'esprit que Dieu luy a presté, l'ayant employé a se mesler d'affaire, on pourroit entrer en plus grande et mauaise opinion de luy.' Urged to confess, in view of gravity of indices, said 'que Dieu luy ayant presté cest esprit, il se tient capable de juger que sy tel (que non) il seroit convenable de confesser son crime afin de saulver son ame, et la preserver des peines d'enfer'.

Before torture surgeon examined wound on his back; he said it did not hurt him, and surgeon said it was 'une dartre serpigineuse'. Was then given thumbscrews on hands for half of quarter of an hour; called out 'Jesus Maria' and said 'ne me delaissez pas, je ne vous ay pas delaissé, et qu'il n'importe qu'il endure pour l'amour de son saint nom, puis qu'il a enduré la mort pour le genre humain.'

Thumbscrews were then applied to feet, and he was asked about his boasts about women. Said he had intercourse with two before his marriage, one twice, the other once, but this was not by magic or witchcraft, but with their full consent.

'Aux douleurs il a tousjours dit Seigneur assisté moy, j'ay tousjours esté si homme de bien, et puis que nous luy faisons moult grand tort, puis s'expliquant il a dit que ce sont ceux qui sont cause qu'il est icy, et non nous qui ne faisons que la Justice.'

Was then placed on rack, but showed them his thigh and 'incommodité' which had made him lame, saying they would dislocate it; on surgeon's advice was only pulled very moderately.

Asked about use of paper with characters on it, said he had only tried it once, and this was out of curiosity.

Released after being racked for usual period (as above), then drawn again. Said 'Monsieur me fault il mourir en cest estat, je n'oublieray jamais dieu, puis qu'il m'a fait ce bien de me créer a sa semblance, qu'il est content qu'on le mette en mille pieces qu'il n'en dira davantage'. Was finally threatened with being left on rack until he confessed, and replied 'qu'on luy laisse tant qu'on voudroit, invocquant tousjours

Witch 068A, Mengeon Clement Thiriat 16

Dieu a son aide, et si sorcier pourquoy il le desnieroit.' Was then taken down and placed by fire.

28 February 1626; PG des Vosges says he consents that he should be renvoyé.

2 March 1626; statement that he has been released from prison by prévôt.

Costs of case given as 59 francs. There is also a short undated mémoire listing 7 witnesses and main points on which they should be questioned - this was presumably the original document prepared by Noel Gerardin before the case began.