

B 8535 no 4; witch 136, Mengin Lamourou paistre de Rozieres

18 and 20 December 1603; confronted with Ydatte Vaultrin, who on both occasions maintained her claim to have seen him at sabbat. He denied it, saying he was 'pauvre, mais homme de bien'.

30 December 1603; informations preparatoires

(1) Claude Thomas, maitre salineur a la saline de Rozieres, 40

Some two and a half years before he had been working under accused at salines, when he held post witness now had; would regularly say as he struck his salt 'tiens toy de part tous les mille diables', and when governor heard of this he was sacked.

(2) Nicolas Brabant, 40

Also told of dismissal from salines; he had been 'valet' to accused. Day before Claude Thomas had asked him to stop for fear saline would cave in on them, but he only swore more violently, so they informed the governor.

(3) Demenge Gouhier, laboureur de Rozieres, 40

Two years before last harvest had employed Mengin's son, but at end reduced his pay by 3 gros because he had lost a knife worth 6 gros. Mengin swore by 'la mort dieu' 'qu'il s'en repentiroit, et s'en donneroit de garde'. Soon afterwards his son was taking horses to pasture, and as he passed Mengin with his animals latter told him one of horses was 'attrapey', and he would remedy this. Son said he would do it himself, but Mengin went ahead; about a week later horse, which was his best, died, and he had always suspected him.

(4) Lucye femme du precedent, 30

Supported husband's testimony.

(5) Vincent Henry paistre des bestes rouges du faulbourg, 40

Told of various disputes with Mengin, who kept 'troupeau de la ville'. Had sold rights to use some meadows, and prévôt instructed witness to do so, but found Mengin blocking the way with his herd. Quarrel followed, and he told witness 'par la mort dieu (comme il en est coustumier) qu'il s'en repentiroit, que devant qu'il soit nuict qu'il luy arriveroit de l'ouvrage'. That afternoon a cow fell in water, and only just managed to prevent her from drowning; looked up to see Mengin among other animals, and called out angrily 'qu'es que tu fais sorcier, au milieu de mes vaches, en veux tu faire mourir, ne te contente tu pas de ceste cy que tu m'as pense faire noyer', at which he made off without any reply.

About a month later were driving animals to same meadow, and Mengin told him to go ahead while he would come behind and bring them through water;

after this saw that previously healthy cow was sick, and it had to be killed. Some 3 or 4 weeks later witness had 3 animals from other herd, and Mengin swore in usual style 'qu'il ne les garderoit gayre', and shortly afterwards he lost two in 'bois du grand ban'. When he was looking for them accused mocked him, laughing as he said 'es tu bien beste de les tant chercher, le diable les en a porté', to which he replied 'tu es un vray genot, tu me les a tant menassé que je te mescroy ou ton maitre me les avoir faict perdre.' On later occasion Mengin said to him 'Grand Vincent tu te plains quand tu en as quelque une des malades, mais sy tu vien entre la St Remy et St Martin tu veras qu'il en mourra bien et les plus belle tousjours devant, et qu'elles mourront incontinent qu'elles seront malades sans s'en donner de garde'. He replied 'Oncle Mengin sy vous estiez bien sage, vous ne parlierez de telle affaire, car il ny a personne qui le sache synon Dieu'. Did indeed have several of finest cows dead as Mengin had predicted.

(6) Yollan femme du precedent, 40

Repeated husband's story about cow which nearly drowned.

(7) Didier Malenser de Rozieres, 45

18 months before had been keeping cow for his uncle the curé, which they sent to Mengin's herd; he remarked angrily that he had not wanted to give him one, and cow later died after 4 month illness, which he attributed to him.

(8) Nicolle femme du precedent, 39

Confirmed husband's deposition, with fuller version of Mengin's remarks; had said 'he Chair Dieu, je l'en ay bien demandé une, et il ne m'en a point voulu laisser'.

(9) Honorable homme Didier Lallemand Controlleur, 58

Around last St Jean Mengin's wife had brought in a calf delivered by one of their cows, asking 6 gros for their trouble, which they refused to pay because they thought it too much. Some 6 or 7 weeks later the cow fell ill, and sent a servant to get him to come and look at it, but he refused, saying he could do nothing 'd'autant que Claude Gayrei y avoit mis la main'; cow died, and he suspected Mengin.

(10) Catherine jeune fille de Claudon Dran de Venexey, servante l'anne derniere au logis du sieur prevot de Rozieres, 25

About 2 weeks before last St George he had gone to get bull of herd which was kept in prévôt's stable, but instead of releasing it from its place at front of stable, went to back and put arm round head of 9-month-old calf. After this its head became swollen, it went blind, and died in 5 days.

(5 January 1604)

(11) Annette femme honorable homme Claude Vultrin, valet de chambre a monseigneur le duc, 40

Had two cows which had become sick and lost their milk, and she suspected the accused, who had been their herdsman.

(12) Damoiselle Anne Magnien, femme du sieur Abraham Clignon tailleur aux salines de Rozières, 28

Some two and a half years before had lost 4 cows and 2 calves, and suspected Mengin if he were witch as was claimed.

31 December 1603; interrogation

Said he was Mengin Meriatte dit Lamourou, son of Jean Meriatte coupeur des bois of Sexey near Gondreville and his wife Francoise. Knew he had been accused by Ydatte Vultrin. Admitted that he had been called witch by Jean Coutasse (ancien garde des salines) and Vincent Henry; had not pursued any action because he was too poor.

Agreed he had been put out of salines for swearing, but said everyone swore when they were angry. Admitted conversation about curé's cow, but not that he had caused its death. Agreed that he had touched head of calf in prévôt's stable, but not that he had done it any harm. Otherwise simple denials.

5 January 1604; voluntary confession

Judges were about to proceed to confrontations when he responded to their remonstrances by saying 'qu'il voyoit bien qu'il n'en scauroit eschapper', asking for irons to be removed from legs and he would confess.

Some 7 or 8 years before had been to pay maire Anthoine Villemin of Vilacourt money for some grain he had sold him and his son-in-law on credit. Was angry because he was not even offered any bread to eat, and on return met big man dressed in black near Barbonville, who promised him gold and silver to pay his debts. Gave him usual 3 kinds of powder, black, grey, and white, took him briefly to sabbat. When he opened large purse on way home it only contained pieces of card which he threw away. 3 weeks later was taken to another assembly, with a dozen people present, nearly all men; asked about powder, said he had tried it on a dog in the town, which died.

(6 January 1604)

Confessed to series of maléfices against animals, exactly as witnesses had suggested. Record sounds suspiciously as if answers were suggested to him - probably fair copy made from original transcript, with questions turned into answers. Told of making hail on orders of his master Persil, in company of Symonatte la Pauvrasse and Margueritte la Cuvrassé. At another sabbat had seen Zabel femme Olry Go. Had thrown powders away when he feared he would be arrested.

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Was confronted with Demenge Gouhier and Vincent Henry, because he had not confessed to malefices they alleged, but said he was not guilty, and had confessed everything.

19 January 1604; Rémy asks that he be tortured to obtain full confession

24 January 1604; Change de Nancy agrees

26 January; formal death sentence by court at Rozieres states that he has been tortured, and has confirmed his earlier confessions.