

Witch 157: B8677 no 3, Barbelline femme Jean Girardin de Bonipaire

1 June 1595. Jean Lamance, prévôt, and Francois Petit Demenge substitut of St. Dié go to Leusse to take informations against Barbelline wife of Vallentin Jean Girardin dit le Fevre, of Bonipaire, accused by Claudatte wife of Simon Colas Toussaint Chailley.

(1) Claude Demenge Claude Girard de Bonipaire

General reputation only.

(2) Epne femme a Demenge Lienard de Bonipaire, c. 40

Reputation 7 years. Around last Easter a calf had died mysteriously, and then a cow became sick. She said to her husband that if it died there must be witches in the village, and suspected Barbelline because 2 or 3 days before she had driven the cow out of some wheat near her house. Sent son Jean to Barbelline's house asking that a vagabond widow who was often there, named Catherine, should come and see animal, and also for some of her 'renoyin' [hay]. Came back with Catherine, who tended the animal, and some renoyin which it ate, after which it gradually recovered. Also said that around a year before, when disputing with her, had told her that she (witness) had not yet been put out of a field as a horse. This referred to story told her by late Claude Demenge la Marchande, that he had seen a horse in his wheat-field, but when he went to chase it away found Barbelline there. This had been when she started to bear an evil name.

(3) Marion femme a Jean Dallegotte de Bonipaire, c. 30

Reputation more than 7 years. Had a quarrel with her some 9 months earlier, during which she told her she was a witch and they had been too slow about burning her. Although Catherine, who normally lived with her, and her daughter were present, she sought no reparation.

(4) Jean Colas Dallegotte de Bonipaire, c. 30

Told of his wife's quarrel with Barbelline, and of incident when la Marchande had mistaken her for a horse, and called her witch.

(5) Colas Demenge Claude Girard de Bonipaire, c. 32

Had been reputed a witch as long as he could remember; he had always tried to live in peace with her for fear of suffering some misfortune. Told how her neighbour Demenge Lienard had called her witch, and she had not sought reparation. On another occasion he and one of his brothers (now dead) had seen her going into woods at twilight, and made disobliging remarks about her - but had suffered no harm (she had not heard them).

(6) Demenge Lienard, masson de Bonipaire, c. 50

Reputation as long as he had been at Bonipaire. Had heard her father-in-law Jean Gerardin and sister-in-law Marion call her witch, and wish she could be burned. His late wife had been near their house some 3 years earlier, and heard her

quarrelling with her husband - she declared 'Diable ou es tu viens moy querir'. Told of disputes previous year when they had been neighbours, notably when one of her pigs did a lot of damage in their garden - this was when his wife made remark about not being taken for a horse. Also reported illness of cow after he had dispute with her over some oats he had bought, and of Catherine coming to tend it.

24 June 1595; interrogation (she was imprisoned at St. Dié)

Said she was about 48, daughter of Jean Claude Martin of Combrimont and of Barbelline his wife, who had been from Bertrimoustier, both long dead.

Had first been married to Jean Clause of Bonipaire, but he and their one child had died. After being a widow for 5 years she had remarried with her present husband, by whom she had three small sons, the youngest three years old. Admitted to having a quarrel some months before with one named Marion, during which they had called one another witch, but they had afterwards made it up. Then told of incident some 20 years before when Claude Demenge le Mareschalde told her he had thought, seeing her from far, that she was a horse. Previous year Epron wife of Demenge Lienard had reproached her with this during a quarrel, at end of which Demenge had pushed her and threatened to break her nose. Denied wishing Epron any harm, but agreed that 'depuis elle ne luy a gueres monstré beau semblant et qu'il est vray que des loingtemps elle ne l'aymera'. Bad relations with Lienards seem to have begun 3 or 4 years earlier, when there was plague in the village; according to Barbelline, the Lienard household had been infected, but they had refused to leave village, and disputes had followed. Lienards had said 'le Diable puisse tomber sur leur maison, appellant noir genauche' - this last might have been reference to 'la noir Catherine' who was living with them.

Agreed that her father-in-law had called her 'genauche', but claimed that 'il estoit d'une sorte telle qu'il appelloit ung chacun Genaux et Genauche'. Was then asked why she slept apart from her husband for 3 or 6 months at a time; said it was on account of having 'des mauvais enfans qui incessamment crioient et pissoient au lict'. Asked if she could not have put them in a separate bed, said no, they were always crying.

Asked why she had been arrested, said it was on accusation by Claudatte, but this was false and did her great wrong.

2 July 1595; Remy asks for confrontations, and that she should be presented to 'question' and interrogated.

3 July 1595; Change de Nancy agrees

5 July 1595; confrontations and interrogation

Confronted to witnesses, she made no objection to them, but denied essential points. Was then briefly interrogated, and placed on rack for final part of questioning. She said that if they were to tear off a piece of her flesh every day she would still not confess to being what she was not. After a few more questions was released and sent back to prison.

8 July 1595: Remy proposes that she be renvoyée jusqu'au rappel, with warning to give no occasion for 'scandal et mescontentement' in future.

8 July 1595; Change de Nancy agrees.

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11 July 1595; released with suitable exhortation; promised to comply, and said she thanked 'la bonne justice'.