

Witch 191, Jean Arnoulx 1

B 8684 no 4; Witch 191, Jean fils Demenge Arnoulx de Sauceray

15 December 1599; informations preparatoires

(1) Colas Mariatte, 47

Quarrel 2 years earlier, when witness had been trying to take possession of some 'chevirons' he had bought on behalf of maire Bastien de la Neufville, and Jean refused to hand them over. Threatened witness he would repent, and same week his wife and son fell violently ill, dying within 4 or 5 days . . . (damaged)

(2) Jean Willaume, 34

Reputation 3 or 4 years; commonly said that he and his mother reciprocally called one another witch.

(3) Colas Girard, 36

Quarrel 2 years earlier when Jean chased his animals off meadow belonging to Jean Pierre, in which he had no interest. Same evening one of his young bullocks howled strangely, then died. If he was witch as reputed believed him responsible; had heard him say that if mother was witch she would accuse Jean Gelyat.

(4) Jean Didier Arnoulx, 80

(Damage) - After quarrel over some 'chevirons' 4 years earlier believed he had caused loss of horses, and accused him of this and of being witch without any reaction.

(5) Marguitte femme Colas Demenge Anthoine, 30

Reputation 3 or 4 years.

(6) Jennon femme Michiel Galdrimey, 35

Reputation 4 years. Believed he had caused death of a pig of theirs which he had found in his garden - after this it refused to eat and died in a week.

(7) Demenge Thieriat

Believed he had caused loss of calves by witchcraft.

(8) Jean filz Jean Gelyat, 22

5 years earlier he had heard Jean and his mother calling one another witch; she said 'qu'il avoit bien a se taire, qu'il cache ses hontes et qu'il scavoit bien qu'il luy avoit racompté et reconnue comme il estoit genax, il y avoit plus de trois ans passez'. Had quarrelled with him 3 or 4 years before, and then been afflicted by a sickness from which he still suffered, and which he attributed to his witchcraft - reputation 5 years.

(9) Michiel Ratonge

Said that 4 years before Jean and his brothers had been obliged to meet debt of 20 francs to confrérie, for which he was responsible, by handing over a field. This was done at St Dié, and after drinking on it Jean put hand on his shoulder as they returned. Immediately became ill, and remained so for long time with great pains. After he handed over accounts went to Saulceray, where he met him and was invited to taste some perry. Liked it so much he asked for more, which Jean gave him, and he recovered in a few days. Believed he had given him illness, then cured him.

(10) Colas Jean Mengenot

Told of quarrel at mill of La Vacherie, when Jean wanted to go before him, ending in a fight. Jean threatened him, saying 'qu'il estoit plus fort que luy, mais qu'il l'auroit bien par autres moyens, et qu'il ne s'en donneroit de garde'. Soon after a pig sickened and died in 3 days - believed this had been his witchcraft. Also blamed him for death of his daughter Marguitte, 18 months old, whose illness lasted only a week, in hatred over their quarrels.

17 December 1599; interrogation

Said he was over 20, son of late Demenge Arnoulx. Said mother's accusations were false, and that if he had known she was a witch he would have had her arrested more than 4 years back. Asked if he had not told her 'qu'il n'en scavoit rien que ce qu'elle luy en avoit appris', he denied this. Agreed to quarrel with Nicolas Mariatte, but not to doing him any harm. Admitted he had said that his mother would accuse Jean Gelyat, 'mais il n'en scait autres choses sinon que comme il y a sy fort longtemps que sadite mere et ledit Gelyat sont tenus pour sorciers, sy l'ung d'iceulx venoit a estre convaincu il ne faudroit d'accuser l'autre'. Agreed to dispute with Jean Didier Arnoulx, but as to killing animals 'il n'en eut jamais l'envye ny la pensée'. Agreed that he had fought with Jean Mengenot and said 'que le diable ayt l'ame de luy'.

? Confrontations

Brought before mother again, and she insisted she had told truth, begging him to confess and not be forced to do so under torture. He was 'fort estonné', saying he could remember none of this, and would never confess even if his tongue were cut in two. No reproaches to witnesses, but no admissions either.

23 December 1599; Change de Nancy approves torture

10 January 1600; Interrogation under torture

When racked said he had something in throat which prevented him speaking; judges said it was the devil, and urged him to return to God. Then cried that Persin had just left him, begging to be set down so that he could make confession.

Said mother had taken him to sabbat 6 or 7 years earlier, where Mre Persin pinched his shoulder and gave him black powder. Standard description of sabbat. Had seen Jean Gelyat, Demenge Thieriat, Colas Demenge Anthoine, Jenne Michiel femme Michiel Galdrimey, Mariatte veuve Curine Villaume, and Barbeline veuve

Demenge Mareshcal, all of Saulceray, Mengeon Claude Perrin and Jean Thierion le vieux of Brehimont, and Margo femme Colas Jean Mengenot de la Vacherie. Had seen them all more than 7 times.

Confessed to series of malefices as alleged by witnesses. Said that Jean Gelyat le jeune would be ill for 6 years in all, until he would recover by himself, when poison would finally leave stomach - no means of cure until then. Had he applied to him for healing before arrest he would have given him some black powder to eat with intention of curing him, but now he was in hands of justice had no power. Said it was his mother, not he, who had made Michiel Rattonge ill, and denied causing any harm to Colas Jean Mengenot.

11 January 1600; interrogation

Confirmed previous confessions and accusations. Said there had been a hundred persons at sabbat, both men and women, and small children. Asked for names of witches who had most power at sabbat, said they were Jean Gelyat (who always sat next to Persin, wearing 'une gippe noire . . fourrée de pellisson', and Demenge Thieriat. Said they had gone to sabbat on foot; when he needed more powder his mother furnished it

At second interrogation confirmed earlier confessions, but now discharged some he said he had accused from hatred. These were Colas Demenge Anthoine, Demenge Thieriat, Mariatte veuve Curienm Willaume, and Jennon femme Michiel Galdrimy.

15 January 1600; Change de Nancy confirms death sentence