

Witch 266; Jennon Girard 1

B 8708 no 5; witch 266; Jennon femme Claudon Girard de St Remy.

18 May 1611; informations preparatoires

(1) Phelippe Phillepin de St Remy, 30

Had heard Epnatte femme Jean Tixerand say that accused, who made two sorts of cheese, took milk from others. Epnatte had also said that she believed she had caused her heart trouble by witchcraft, out of jealousy because her husband frequented Epnatte. 3 years before he and Jean Girard had been threshing at her house, and had hidden a hat full of apples under straw - she knew about this immediately, although no-one had seen them take apples. Thought devil must have told her; long reputation.

(2) Colas Ferry de St Remy, 30

The late Valentin Girard had told him that after he had quarrelled with her husband she had appeared in his chamber when he was in bed, and tried to strangle him; he pushed her off violently, at which she vanished. Also claimed same thing had happened when he was on bench in kitchen. Reputation several years.

(3) Bastien Cuvelier de St Remy, 60

Previous Christmas had refused to sell her husband some small pieces of land which were mingled with his; 4 fine cows then became ill and died in strange fashion one after another, one with its head twisted strangely backwards. Reputation since he had married in village 8 years earlier.

(4) Jean Cesar de Bru de St Remy, 30

After last wine harvest had been to Allemaigne with late Valentin Girard, who told him that when returning in company from l'Hoste du Bois Jennon's husband had told him he would remit a debt of 20 ecus which he owed him, and give him 20 francs he was owed by a man at Raon, if he would not have his wife arrested as a witch, as he was putting word around he might. Did not know if any of this had been done. No personal suspicion, reputation more than 10 years.

(5) Jennon veuve Jean Marion de St Remy, 60

Some 7 years before animals of accused had damaged her field, leading to great dispute, and recompense of 2 or 3 sheaves of oats. Jennon was very angry, and witness then lost a fine cow whose leg became swollen. This happened within a week, and it died in 2 or 3 days. Another quarrel for similar reason between her late husband and Jennon's husband 2 years ago, after which her son George, aged 20, died suddenly - suspected this was her witchcraft. Had been yet another quarrel between her husband and the Girard couple for same reason 4 years ago, after which when he was out sowing he became paralysed down one side; always had to walk

with a stick afterwards, died 2 years later. Had always blamed her for causing this; reputation since she was accused 12 years earlier.

(6) Jennon veuve Valentin Girard de St Remy, 30

Told of how previous year her late husband had woken her to tell her he had thought he was being strangled, but remembered nothing else he had said. Reputation since accusation 12 years earlier.

(7) Jennon femme Claudon Ferry de St Remy, 40

More than 7 years earlier Jean Florentin Maron had claimed she had caused loss of many animals, and had been to her house calling her witch. Reputation 10 or 11 years.

(8) Mengeotte femme Jean Fallajeulx le jeune de St Remy, 30

Some 3 years before she had been angry because they bought a cow from someone else instead of one she wanted to sell them; when it had a calf this was found dead in stable after 3 or 4 days. Another small calf also died, and its mother was injured out with the herd; blamed all this on her. Long reputation.

(9) Catherine femme Jean Demenge Charrier le jeune de St Remy, 30

Had been servant in her house 11 or 12 years earlier, when she and Nicolas Jeandey's wife were accused, and she had absented herself for a fortnight in fear of being arrested.

(10) ? femme Jean Hanna de St Remy, 32

Around last St Remy Demenge Colas Aulbert was pasturing two calves in a field when they were attacked by wolves, and died of injuries within a few days. Just after this witness went to get fire from Jennon's house, who said he had not allowed them to put their calves in field, but . . . - then stopped. In view of long reputation this made her think she might have caused losses.

(11) Jean Fallajeulx le vieux de St Remy, 60

Reputation since accusation 12 years earlier, when she had absented herself for some days.

(12) Jean Girard de St Remy, 54

Had great quarrel with her and her husband 12 years earlier over a debt he owed them, and husband told him he would not only make him pay, but 'le mettroit sy bas veoire jusques a la besasse ou qu'il luy prendroit jusques aux cendres du feu'. Since then had lost several animals, but did not know if she was the cause or not. Valentin Girard had told him several times of offer of 20 francs not to accuse her; he

thought this had been an agreement made at la Salle, and money had been given for him to go to St Luke's day festival at Raon. Reputation 12 years, since accusation.

(13) Jean Hanna de St Remy, 32

Some 5 or 6 years before had dispute with her husband, because he did not want to lease two small sows from him; took a fine sow with 6 piglets from another, but sow became blind, then died, and 3 of piglets disappeared when out in field. Attributed these losses to her. Around previous Christmas her husband agreed to sell witness a horse for 6 ecus, then wanted to back out of deal. Was so difficult about it that he finally agreed, but was paid 3 ecus in compensation; she was furious when her son Jean told her of this, and within a week one of his oxen fell ill, dying 5 weeks later - suspected her of causing this. Reputation 12 years.

(14) Marguitte veuve Florentin Maron de St Remy, 70

Shortly after first accusation 12 years earlier a sow with 5 piglets was lost, and finally found behind Jennon's house; shortly after one of the piglets died. In view of reputation believed she might have been cause.

(15) Jennon femme Demenge Colas Aulbert de St Remy, 30

Story of how their calves were attacked by a wolf and died after refusal to share field.

(16) Jennon veuve Jean Henry de St Remy, 53

5 years ago on next St Idoult's day had been returning from festival at Moyenmoustier with Jennon and her husband when they quarrelled and fought. Soon after her husband sickened and died after languishing for six months with strange illness. During this time he always maintained she had bewitched him. Reputation since accusation by Mengin Colas Mengin 12 years before.

(17) Jennon femme Bastien Cuvelier de St Remy, 36

Repeated husband's story of refusal to sell land, after which Jennon's husband said 'qu'ilz n'avoient donc encore bien faim'; then lost 4 cows. 5 years earlier had been sharing house, and was dispute over some pears taken by Jennon's daughter Pieratte, who was told off by mother of witness; she was soon afterwards taken ill and died in 6 days, which witness thought might have been Jennon's doing.

(18) Colas Henry de St Remy, 28

Told story of the sow they had leased to Jean Hanna, and its death. When he was a youth she had been angry when he allowed animals to escape into her field; later he was associated with his late father in business deals with her husband, about which she was so hostile that he thought she hated him. Believed she had bewitched a pig which died in 24 hours with its neck all swollen. Then told story of

quarrel on way back from Moyenmoustier, illness and death of his father with strange malady. Long reputation.

(19) Jean de la Ruelle de Saint Remy, 40

When he was still a youth had fought with her husband on way back from market at St Dié, in her presence, and had said that if he came to any harm he knew whom he had been fighting. Did not know if she bore him hatred for this, but 3 years earlier had tried to buy cow from him, only to be unable to agree price. Bought another animal elsewhere for 25 ecus, but after 6 months its leg became swollen, so that he had to have it killed and his only profit was the leather. Believed this had been her witchcraft. Previous Easter had difficulty getting payment of some money her husband owed him, and within a few days an ox worth 14 ecus died in 24 hours. Again thought she was responsible; reputation 12 years.

(20) Jean Florentin Maron de St Remy, 40

She had been accused some 9 years earlier, and soon afterwards he lost a pig. Since another was ill he went to her house, where he found her making cheese, and told her that 'sy elle estoit telle qu'on l'estimoit qu'il avoit oppinion qu'elle avoit fait mourrir son dit porcq, et que celui qui estoit malade s'il mourroit qu'il en yroit parler a des autres gens'. She replied 'Belle vierge Marie qu'est ce que tu dis', and within a week his pig recovered, which he attributed to her witchcraft. Previous Christmas he had arranged to buy some land from his relative Jean Choppat, but could not agree price, so her husband bought it in name of his son Jean. Since then had lost 3 cows with strange illnesses, which he thought was her witchcraft to prevent him having the means to operate a retreat on the land.

(21) Mengeon Moullot de St Remy, 50

5 years earlier had been churchwarden, and curé George de Taintrux told him that when he visited Jean Henry during his sickness he told him of suspicions she had bewitched him. Henry finally died, but 'ledit messire George l'en avoit mis hors d'oppinion de ce soubcon'.

(22) Jean Fallajeulx le jeune de St Remy, 40

Told same story as wife about buying cow elsewhere, and calf found dead. Also cow which was injured in herd and had to be killed. Long reputation.

20 May 1611; interrogation

Said she was Jennon femme Claudon Girard, aged about 45. Was native of Nompatelize, daughter of late Colin de Belmont, and had lived at St Remy since marriage 28 years earlier. Knew several had accused her of witchcraft, but she was innocent. Accusers were Mengin Colas Mengin and Claudon Moullot of St Remy, and Didielle femme Jean Lalande of Pajaille. Had also been accused 6 weeks earlier, she believed, by Jennon la Mourratte of Nompatelize. Had not been confronted with

her because she had hidden herself, either in fields or in her house, until arrested at night in bed with husband 9 days earlier. Had been to Domfaing for a few days, then returned home secretly and hidden herself. Asked why she had done this if she was innocent, said 'que les gens de bien, comme elle est, ilz craignent tousjours la justice et la prison pour laquelle eviter elle s'estoit ainsy cachée, mais en fin elle a bien esté retrouvée'.

Said she would tell truth if they would allow her to speak to her husband and children, and that she had not long been what they thought, and feared to shame her children if she was burned, then suddenly asked that Jesus prevent her telling untruths. Added that she was not a witch, and could not say she was for fear of damning herself.

After a couple more denials, when asked name of devil who had seduced her, said it was Persin. Asked pardon of God and justice, asking to be put to death as soon as possible, and that she should not feel the fire. Said seduction was 18 years before, when her husband had lost his purse, and thought Mengin Colas Mengin had it. Sent her to ask for it back, but he denied having it, and they quarrelled. Next day man in black appeared to her behind house, and offered to obtain vengeance for her if she would renounce God and serve him; was so angry with Mengin that she agreed. Gave her black powder, but no sexual element mentioned. Made pact with him to give him a chicken every year to be let off attendance at sabbat and killing of men and animals. Tried powder out on some of her own animals; asked why she did this, said Persin wanted her to kill those of her neighbours, but she preferred to kill her own. After much persuasion had agreed to let her master kill ox belonging to Jean Fallajeulx le jeune, whose pigs had damaged her garden. He wanted to kill another ox belonging to Ysabel veuve Jean de la Ruelle, who owed her money, but she objected that this was too much for such a small thing, and they compromised on a calf.

Had been taken to sabbat on master's shoulders, going like a wind; had seen Jennon la Mourratte and Marguitte Laurent (already executed), but could not recognize anyone else. Ate unsalted meat, but did not make hail.

When angry with the late Jean Marion because he made her pay for damage to his oats, she used powder to kill one of his cows. Had not caused his death or that of his son George. Was also angry with the late Valentin Girard after various quarrels, and agreed that her master should strangle him; was unable to do this, as he told her, because Valentin had recommended himself to God and made sign of the cross. Had killed one cow belonging to Jean Girard after he quarrelled with her husband, but not the other animals he had accused her about.

Another of her husband's quarrels, with Nicolas Claudon Noel, was followed by appearance of Persin offering vengeance, and suggesting that she consent to his killing an ox. Animal duly died, but this was 16 to 18 years ago, soon after temptation, and no-one had testified about it. (How did she know this?) In a similar way had consented to killing of a calf belonging to Jean Hanna, after quarrel with her husband.

After quarrel with Jean Henry and his wife on way back from Moyemoutier Persin offered to kill him; she replied 'que quant il seroit mort, il seroit quicte de ne plus disputer contre son marit, mais que de sa part elle ne le vouloit faire mourrir'. Was finally persuaded to allow Persin to act, but after Henry's death she had 'ung merveilleux regret'.

Denied various other specific charges. In case of Jean Florentin Maron said he was one of their good friends, and she was not the cause of his losses. Said she had not had any powder for a long time, and that her pact with Persin (for annual chicken) was that she was not obliged to kill men or beasts, only to give her consent for him to act, which she had sometimes refused.

Said she had been to sabbats 3 or 4 times a year, carried in the air by her master; once between 'les gemelz', but on other occasions in strange and deserted places, so that she had no idea where she was. Added to names already mentioned two others already executed, Jean Sagaire and Asnel femme Demenge Bourrotte. Brief and conventional description of sabbat, but added that they all passed before Persin, seated on a stone or some pieces of wood, and made a great bow. 'Bref que c'est une grande pitié que tant de pauvres gens qui se sont ainsy laissés tanter et abuser du diable, qu'ilz ne s'y trouvent ausdites assemblées pour y faire du bien, mais du mal.'

21 May 1611; interrogation

Persisted in her earlier confessions.

28 May 1611; procureur d'office asks for death sentence

1 June 1611; Change de Nancy approves

22 June 1611; execution carried out