

B 8726 no 2; witch 307, Gaspard Didier, marchal, du grand faubourg de Raon

20 December 1619; was confronted with Jean Colin, porchier of Raon, who maintained his accusation that he had seen him at sabat.

9 January 1620; informations preparatoires

(1) Arnould Chaudron, tonnelier, 50

Knew nothing.

(2) Marie femme Nicolas Laclaire, 37

Reputation 4 years; had heard Mengeotte femme Gerard Demenge claim that he had caused death of her child.

(3) Jean Piernille, marchal, 40

2 years before had asked witness, as they attended fair, what was being said of him. He would say nothing, but his brother told him he was being rumoured a witch; he replied that Nicolas Bernard's wife 'luy avoit ja donné des esguillons, et que s'il la pouvoit reprendre qu'il ne s'y espargneroit'. Brother then became strangely ill, talking of 'la mauvaise parole que j'ay dit' until death, so he suspected he had caused this if he was witch. Once when with Gaspard said he did not know how he managed to enrich himself all the time, while witness worked hard for no gain. Gaspard replied 'qu'il falloit aller a Strasbourg la ou on y vendit des diables familiaires et qu'ilz luy donneroient de l'argent', to which he suggested that one would be damned. Gaspard said 'que non, que quand il avoit de l'argent assez qu'il s'en faut defaire, et que s'il avoit un enffans masle luy mettre entre les mains, et qu'il n'y avoit point de damnation a cela'.

(4) Mongeotte femme Gerard Demenge, previously veuve Nicolas Bernard, 30

3 years before had great quarrel with him and his wife, after which her child burned hand outside his house, then developed great contusion on neck. Within three days lost use of senses, and died after 3 weeks. Suspected him, and tried to get him to visit on various pretexts in hope he would have pity on child, but he would not come until a day or two before death. He merely said that 'les enffans estoient sy ennuyeux qu'on ne les pouvoit deschasser'. She obtained bread, salt, and ashes from his house, and made soup which child finished, although he had been eating nothing - this did not prevent his death.

(5) Jean Villaume, 37

2 years earlier had been drinking to purchase of house by brother in law; Gaspard was also there, and when he went out to pee fell down. Witness found him lying in doorway and had to help him to feet; also nearly fell on child and injured it, only to go back to table and drink with others.

(6) Nicolas Guerard, 22

Reputation 3 years.

(7) Lucas Guerard, marchal, 57

7 years earlier Gaspard had accused his son of stealing apples and being great thief; after this the boy became very rebellious with them, as he had never been before, and they thought that if he was witch this might have been his doing.

(13 January 1620)

(8) Didier Ferry, 30

Reputation 5 years, and previous week had heard Anthoine Bergier of Colroy say that if he was witch he had done him harm.

(9) Demenge Maxant, marchal, 36

12 years earlier he had been servant of widow of Humbert Claude Marchal, with whom Gaspard had half share. She told him Gaspard had said 'que s'il luy devoit couster la vie qu'il auroit des livres d'igromencien et qu'il scauroit ce que c'estoit d'igromancie'. Had also heard him reputed witch from 5 years past.

(10) Nicolas Monginet, rouyer, 35

Reputation 3 years. 2 years earlier had heard Nicolas Grand Michel say he had become ill immediately after telling Gaspard of suspicions, and that he must die. Had heard Nicolas Malingre, marchand saulnier, claim that accused had given a drink to his horse, which was found dead next morning; wanted to go and accuse him of being witch, but was dissuaded by witness and others. Later told witness he had made the accusation.

(11) Marie femme Jean Marande, 33

3 years earlier had heard Demenge Pottier and late Chrestofle Remy, drinking in her tavern, say that Gaspard must be burned, and that he was a witch; he was in another room, and did not know if he heard this. Had heard him speak about accusation by late Nicolas Girard Michel, saying he would remember it all his life.

(12) Pierron Hermemant, 34

Reputation 7 years.

(13) Babelon femme Nicolas Parisot, 40

12 years before, in house of Humbert Girard, he had been reading large book, and told her that he found in the book 'qu'elle auroit beaucoup de peine, mais quelle venoit en bonne nature, et que luy auroit beaucoup de commoditez, et qu'on auroit envie sur elle, mais elle n'y eut aucun soubçon.'

(14) Demenge Henriot, 34

Reputation 4 years.

(15) Babillon femme Demenge Maxant, 40

Reputation 3 years, and had heard of suspicions by widow of Nicolas Bernard that he had caused death of her son.

(16) Demenge Thiery, 32

Previous August had been called to see horse of Nicolas Malingre, carter from Val, which had died overnight in stable of inn. Found him accusing Gaspard of being witch. When he was cutting it up Gaspard asked him if there was any sign of witchcraft, and he showed him ball of hair mixed with something like ink he had found - at this he left without saying anything. Suspected that if he was witch as reputed he had caused its death.

(17) David Durand, cannonier, 40

Reputation 5 or 6 years.

(18) Claudon Magniel, rouyer, 25

About a year before was living at village of St Blaise, where a carter arrived needing horses shod. The local smith Nicolas Arnould undertook this, then Gaspard (who was normal smith for the carter) arrived expecting to do the job - spoke rather disdainfully to rival. Next day Nicolas became ill, and remained so for 5 weeks; when witness visited him expressed suspicions that Gaspard had bewitched him.

(19) Jean Henry, bourgeois de Raon, 35

4 years earlier had cut some wood for him, and was given écu for 10 francs, but this turned out to be worthless. Sent wife back with it, and he gave her some other money, but within a few days she fell ill and money had to be spent on caring for her. If he was witch as reputed thought he might have caused this.

(20) Mongeotte femme Jean Sebille, 20

Previous summer had heard Demenge Doron's wife claim that accused had touched Nicolas Bernard's child on neck, and caused fatal illness.

(21) Nicolas Arnould, de St Blaise, 22

According to him he had shod horses because Gaspard had been too slow sending valet to do this; it was valet who found him at work and spoke sharply, saying he would tell his master. Next day fell ill suddenly and strangely - if he was witch as reputed suspected he had been cause. (St Blaise is about 4km down road from Raon.)

(22) Catherine femme Maurice Mongeon, 50

Reputation 5 years.

(23) Barbe femme Idoulx Oudinot, 40

About 5 months earlier her husband had refused to do some work for him because he was too busy, since when he had 3 separate accidents when he injured his hand with axe or knife. They suspected that he had been cause of these, in view of reputation.

(24) Halbix femme Jean Piernille, 36

Repeated husband's story about advice to buy familiars at Strasbourg; in her version it was when they were finished with that they should be given to child to avoid damnation.

(25) George Grand Colas, 27

6 months before had helped him harness horse to cart, and soon after he left it went wild, so that he ran over child and injured it - but did not think this had been his witchcraft.

(21 January 1620)

(26) Jean Marande, 44

3 years earlier Chrestofle Remy and Nicolas Piernille were drinking in his house, and said Gaspard was a witch; latter then told accused that Remy was calling him a witch, but he made no reply.

(27) Idoulx Oudinot, 44

Story of his accidents - according to him one was to leg, other 2 to hand. If he was witch as reputed suspected he had caused them.

(28) Demenge Mathieu, ex-maire de la Neuveville, 52

2 weeks before had been to house of accused, where he found him drinking with man from Neufmaisons; knowing rumours that were going round, said that if he was a worthy man nothing would happen to him, but otherwise it would be a great shame to suffer torture. He replied 'que pour la question qu'il ne s'en soucioit tout autant que de rien, et qu'il n'en parle point.'

21 January 1620; interrogation and confrontations

Said he was Gaspard Didier, aged 38, smith by trade, native of Baigemont. Knew he was suspected as witch, but denied he was one. Said that Mongeotte femme Gerard Demenge and Demenge Pottier were origin of all his misfortunes, and all they said came from father of lies, who was the devil.

Asked about prediction given to Babillon, replied 'qu'il est vray qu'il lisoit dans un livre de planette aultrement appellé calendrier et que c'estoit la verité qu'il lisoit ce qui estoit dans ledit livre, mais qu'il n'adjousta beaucoup de foid.'

In case of accident of George Grand Colas, cart was making such a noise that it frightened the horse. Denied being called witch by late Remy; had been told they were speaking of him in the poisle, but when he went there found his servant engaged in an argument over payment.

At confrontations said Jean Piernille was liar and thief, who had admitted omitting 3,000 horse nails when they divided assets; other denied this. Agreed telling his brother that he would bear him no ill will for what he said. Babillon femme Nicolas Parisot was evidently Piernille's sister, because accused suggested she had been party to fraud when division was made. Nicolas Arnould admitted saying that if Gaspard was a witch and was burned he would come to Raon.

Said that Jean Villaume was a bastard and son of a whore, and that he had fallen out of a tree and injured himself badly when stealing pears. Only response was to say that he had been apprentice at time, and was doing no-one any harm.

In reply to Demenge Maxant claimed that he had told his wife in form of a threat 'que le temps iceluy ne durera pas tousjours et qu'apres le temps cy qu'il en viendroit une autre'; witness denied this. Claimed that Jean Marande had made reparation to him, which was denied.

Said that Lucas Guerard had seduced his maid under promise of marriage - he admitted that he had seduced her when he was a widower, but claimed to have given her what he promised. Also claimed that he had broken oath as member of confrérie de St Eloy not to take business away from others - complex answer here suggesting they had reached some agreement.

Continued to deny all charges, and declared himself ready to undergo torture.

30 January 1620; Change de Nancy approves question ordinaire et extraordinaire.

31 January 1620; interrogation under torture

Given thumbscrews on hands and feet, racked, given tortillons, and finally strappado with 50 pound weight (for 15 minutes). Would confess nothing, calling on Jesus Christ to be his aid. At times said he wanted to die, and forgave them for his death.

1 February 1620; interrogation

Pressed yet again to confess, he would not do so. Asked if he had not gone to house of curé with money to secure discharge from accusation by Jean Colin, said he had been to see curé, asking him to remonstrate with Colin, but had not given him any money.

4 February 1620; Change de Nancy orders that he be renvoyé