

TRANSCRIPTS FROM THE CAHOKIA RECORD.

Jeudy 10^e Juin 1779.

president pierre Godin	B ^{te} Saucier
francois trottier	antoine Girardin
Charle Gratiaut.	michel Beaulieu

present.

Catherine negresse a B^{te} Saucier, après avoir Eté appelé Et examiné a dit que l'anné Derniere son mari ayant demandé a Son maitre, pour Saller promener aux Kas. que lorsque manuel et maurau negre appartenant a Messieurs LeCompte Et baulieu ont Sut quils y alloit il luy ont apporté une Chopine de tafia, disant que Setoit pour Son Voyage, Et quil nût pas plutot but de cette Eau de vie quil Se Senti malade Et quil Est encore Jusqua present Et que le Jour que les dits negre ont Eté pris ayant Eté acqué D'avoir Empoisonner plusieurs personne que ses même negres luy ont avoué quils ont Empoisonner Son mary; Elle deClare que le nomé Morau luy a dit que manuel vouloit Lorsqu'il Luy a donné de la medecine il vouloit le faire mourir subitement, mais quil luy avoit repondu quil valoit mieu le faire mourir En lengoeur Et que depuis ce tembs il est Languissant La d^{te} negresse Declare Encore que maurau luy avoit dit que manuel Vouloit apsolutement Empoisonner M^r Martin Et Sa femme Et que La negresse dud^t Sieur Etoit de ce Complot Et qu'un autre negre nomé Guanga appartenant aud^t sieur Martin ayant Eu nouvelle de cela Leur avoit dit

¹ These transcripts were made by the Cahokia clerk for the court at Kaskaskia, which exercised superior jurisdiction in this case. They are from the *Kaskaskia Records*. Transcription by the editor.

The evidence of these records is very interesting, for they explain the two warrants for execution of these two negroes to be found in *John Todd's Record-Book* in Chicago Hist. Soc.'s *Publications*, iv., 302 and 303. According to the *Record-Book*, Manuel was condemned to be burned to death, a punishment against negroes which was permitted the county courts of Virginia.—Chitwood, *Justice in Colonial Virginia*, in *J. H. U. Studies*, Series xxiii., No. 7, p. 101. Although Todd issued the warrant, he repented the next day, crossed the copy of the warrant out and issued a new one, in which the penalty was hanging.—*Kas. Rec.* Mason in his *Chapters from Illinois History*, 264, suggested without sufficient authority that the crime for which the negroes were punished was voodooism, and he is followed by Roosevelt in his *Winning of the West*, ii., 175, where he compares the prosecution of the negroes in Catholic

TRANSCRIPTS FROM THE CAHOKIA RECORD.¹

Thursday, June 10, 1779.

President, Pierre Godin.	Bte. Saucier.
François Trottier.	Antoine Girardin.
Charles Gratiot.	Michel Beaulieu.

Present.

Catherine, a negress belonging to Bte. Saucier, after having been summoned and examined, said that last year her husband had asked of his master permission to walk to Kaskaskia and when Manuel and Moreau, negroes belonging to MM. LeComte and Beaulieu, knew that he was going, they brought him a pint of tafia² saying that it was for his journey; and that he had no sooner drunk of that liquor than he felt sick and that he is still sick up to the present; and that the day on which the said negroes were arrested on the accusation of having poisoned several persons, these same negroes confessed to her that they had poisoned her husband; she declares that the named³ Moreau told her that Manuel, when he gave him the medicine, wished to make her husband die suddenly, but that he had answered that it was better to make him die slowly; and she said that since that time her husband has been pining. The said negress declares also that Moreau had said to her that Manuel positively wished to poison M. Martin and his wife and that the negress of the said gentleman was in this plot; and that another negro named Guanga belonging to the said M. Martin, having had news of this, had said to them that if they didn't take away the poison, which they had

Illinois with that of the white witches of Puritan New England. The denial of sufficient proof for this explanation of the warrants was made in Shea's *Life of Archbishop Carroll*, 190.

² Tafia was a cheap rum, which formed the staple liquor of the West. The word *caw-de-vie* is used throughout the record as the equivalent of liquor, without reference to any particular kind.

³ *Nommé* is used to designate some person named in the proceedings, but not previously mentioned in the record.

que Si il ne retirer pas le poison quil avoit Jetté ché Son maître, quil les declareroit Se qui fit quil détéraient un poison quils avoit Enteré sous Le Soeul de la porte.

paul negre appartenant a M^{de} Lapencée ayant Eté appellé Et examiner a dit quil avoit Entendu dire par tout les negres qui ont deja donné Leur Deposition que les nomé manuel et maurau avoit Empoisonner toute Les personne mentioné Dans La DeClara-tion qui a Deja Eté faite par Eux.

Le nomé Sasa negre appartenant a mad^{lle} Buet ayant Eté appellé Et examiner a dit que ayant Eté dans la Cabane du Sieur Martin demender une pipe de tabac a Sa negresse nomé Janette Et quelle luy avoit dit daller au chevet de son lit quil En trouveroit, Et qu'ayant regarder, il auroit trouver une Corne Dans laquelle il y avoit du Sang qui Bouillet, Et qu'ayant Ete Surpris il fut demender a la negresse ce que Setoit, que la negresse luy dit de ne point toucher a cela, et que cetoit manuel qui luy avoit Donné pour faire mourir Son maître Et Sa maitresse, et que maurau ayant Sut cela lui fut dire; Comment tu garde une chose comme cela ché toi Est ce que tu ne Sait pas que cette avec Cette Corne que manuel Sest Servie pour faire Empoisonner monsieur et madame nicol. il declare de plus qu'un negre nomé Samba appartenant a M^r quenel prit Cette Corne Et la fut montrer a maurau que MauRau Luy dit que Cetoit la même Corne que manuel luy avoit donné pour faire mourir mons^r Et madame Nicol.

signé pierre Godin. president.

Pour Copie Conforme a Loriginal reste Sur Le Registre de la Court aux Kaos le 10^{ie} Juin 1779.

fr saucier Greff^{er}

Premiere interogation faite au negre de M^r Jaquet nomé francois, apres avoir Etté apelé Et Examiné a dit que Le negre nomé maurau luy avoit dit a luy parlant quil avoit fait mal au negre de M^r Laurant, de St Louis par raport a la negresse de mon^r martin nomé Janette Comme ayant quelque Commerce tous deux avec elle que cetoit le Sujet pourquoy il luy avoit donné Du poison; Declare encore ledit negre que des lorsque le

thrown into his master's house, he would denounce them, which caused them to dig up a poison which they had buried under the threshold of the door.

Paul, a negro belonging to Madame Lapancé, after being summoned and examined, said that he had heard all the negroes, who have already given their testimony, say that the named Manuel and Moreau had poisoned all the persons mentioned in the declaration which has already been made by them.

The named Sasa, a negro belonging to Mademoiselle Buyat, after being summoned and examined, said that he was in the cottage of M. Martin to ask for a pipefull of tobacco from his negress, named Janette, and that she had told him to go to the head of her bed and he would find some, and that when he looked he had found a horn in which there was boiling blood; and as he was surprised, he had asked the negress what it was; that the negress told him not to touch that, and that it was Manuel who had given it to her to put her master and mistress to death; and that Moreau, when he knew that, had said to her: "What! Can you keep a thing like that in your house? Do you not know that it was this horn that Manuel used to poison Monsieur and Madame Nicolle?" He declares furthermore that a negro, named Samba belonging to M. Quenel, took this horn and had shown it to Moreau and that he said that it was the same horn that Manuel had given him to put to death Monsieur and Madame Nicolle.

Signed, Pierre Godin, President.

Copy conforms to the original spread on the record-book of the Court at Cahokia, June 10, 1779.

Fr. Saucier, Clerk.

First cross-examination of the negro called François belonging to M. Jaquet. After having been summoned and examined, he said that the negro, named Moreau, had told him in conversation that he had made the negro of M. Laurant of St. Louis, sick on account of the negress of M. Martin, named Janette, since both had some intercourse with her, and that this was the reason he had given him poison. The said negro declares, also,

negre de M^r Laurant a Santi malade Et quil sut bien Etre Em-
poissoné, il vint trouvé ledit maurau et luy dit, mon paÿs, ote
moi donc le mal que tu ma fait, a quoy ledit maurau a repondu
quil n'etoit plus tems, Ce nest pas a mon pouvoir de te l'oter,
Celuy de Mon^r laurant luy repeta encore que si il vouloit le guerir
quil le payeroit Bien a quoy ledit maurace repondit quil ne le
pouvoit pas. et que neanmoins celuy de m^r Laurent en partant
luy lessa un quatine Et un mouchoire et luy promettant que Si
il ne mouroit pas quil le Satisferey plus Emplement.

a une autre interogation Le dit negre du Sieur Jaquet declare
quapres que le negre du Sieur Laurant Eut Eté traversé quil
mourut peu de tems appres Et quil fut reprocher au deux negre
Soupsoné Empoisoner En leurs disant; Comment Voila Encore
un negre mort que lon dit que vous aviés Empoisonné a quoy
ledit maurau luy repondit que Si il lavoit fait il netoit pas Seul
que Cetoit manuel qui Etoit le chef de la medecine et quil luy
en fournissoit Lorsqui'il en avoit Besoin.

Declare encore ledit negre que maurau ayant demandé
quelque faveur a la negresse de Mons^r Nicol quil luy promit que
Si elle le luy accordoit quil luy Donneroit de la Medecine pour
adoucir sa maitraïsse Comme Setant plain a luy quelle Etoit trop
Mechante Et en donnat pareillement au mari de laditte negresse
pour Son maitre Et qu' apres la mort de feu m^r nicol et sa dame
ledit maurau demanda ce qu'on luy avoit promis, La negresse
particulierement ne voulut point luy accorder ce quelle avoit
promis ce qui fit led^t maurau L'empoisonna et quelle en mourut.

A dit encore led^t negre que lorsque laditte negresse de feu
sieur nicol Est tombé malade que plusieurs negres du paÿs de
laditte negresse furent trouver maurau pour le Soliciter a guerir
laditte negresse a quoy ledit maurau repondit quil n'etoit plus
a Son pouvoir de luy oter ce quil luy avoit donner.

Cupidon negre a B^{te} Saucier ayant Eté appellé et interroger,
a declarer que le nomé maurau Lorsque M^r et M^{de} Nicol furent
mort quil dit a leur negresse; tu doit être presentement contante
voila ton maitre Et la maitraïsse morte tu peu te promene et aller

¹ A basin for melting metals.

that as soon as the negro of M. Laurant felt sick and he surely
knew that he was poisoned, he came to find the said Moreau
and said to him: "My countryman, take away the sickness
which you have given me," to which the said Moreau answered
that, it was too late "It is not in my power to take it from
you"; and that the negro of M. Laurant said again that if
he would cure him he would pay him well, to which the said
Moreau answered that he could not do it; but, nevertheless,
the negro of M. Laurant in going away left him a basin¹ and a
handkerchief and promised him that if he did not die he would
satisfy him more fully.

At another cross-examination, the said negro of M. Jaquet
declares that, shortly after the negro of M. Laurant had been
sent across the river, he died; and that he had reproached the two
negroes suspected of poisoning and said to them: "What!
There is another negro dead, whom they say you have poisoned";
to which Moreau replied that if he had done it, he was not
alone, for it was Manuel who was the medicine-chief and
had furnished him poison whenever he had need of it.

The said negro declares also, that Moreau had asked some
favor of M. Nicolle's negress and promised her that if she granted
it to him, he would give her medicine to make her mistress gentle,
as she complained to him that the latter was very bad, and he gave
some likewise to the husband of the said negress for his master;
and that after the death of the late M. Nicolle and his wife, Mor-
eau demanded what had been promised to him, and the negress
did not particularly wish to grant him what she had promised; and
for this reason the said Moreau poisoned her and she died there-
from.

The said negro said also that when the said negress of the
late M. Nicolle fell sick, several negroes of the country of the
said negress went to find Moreau to beseech him to cure the
said negress; to which the said Moreau answered that it was no
longer in his power to take from her that which he had given her.

Cupidon, a negro belonging to Bte. Saucier, after being sum-
moned and cross-examined, declared that, when M. and Madame

ou tu voudra, a quoy le mari de lad^{te} negresse dud^t sieur nicol luy repondit nous ne tavions pas Demander de Les faire mourir nous ne voulion seulement que tu Les adoucissent un peu, maurau Demanda a la negresse de luy accorder ce quelle luy avoit promis, la negresse luy repondit quil Etoit trop Vieux, et quelle ne Le Vouloit pas. ha [*sic*] dit led^t maurau tu me trouve trop vieux et bien tu l'en repentira Et que peu de tems apres il l'empoisonna la negresse Suivant la declaration dud^t negre.

Cette faitte par Les Susdits negres, a Etté faitte en presence de Messieurs trotier, tourangeau, Beaulieu martin Et B^{te} saucier qui on dit que Les Depositions faitte par Les dit negre ci dessus només, quils Etoit de leur opinion quapres avoir Entendu dire par divers negres que les dits manuel et maurau avoit fait ce dont its Etoient accusé: quil Doivent Etre vrayement Coupable aux Cahôs 10 Juin 1779, a huit heure du Soir En la Maison de B^{te} Saucier.

fr. saucier Greff^{re}

Signé pierre Godin.

Copie Conforme a l'orginal resté Sur Le registre de la Court.

f. Gref.

THE ARRAIGNMENT BY THE STATES ATTORNEY.

Je Soussigné Procureur P^r L'Etat de la Virginie au district des Illinois à L'honneur de Représenter a La Cour Respectable des Kas que par les deposition des diferens Negres des Kahos il Parroit que Les Negres Moreau & Manuel Sont Effectivem^t Coupable du Crime Horrible a leurs Charge. et que par toutes les declarations & temoinages il Parroit que le negre Moreau est plus Coupable que L'autre ayant Administré les Poisons que L'autre luy auroit donné.

Par les Quels Poisons plusieurs des bons sujets de cette Republique & des soldats de la garnison Sont Mort.

C'est pourquoy au Nom de L'Etat Je pense Messieurs que sy vous Trouvé les dits Negres Coupable vos prononcerés leurs Sentence de Mort et en Nommerés le Jour et la maniere d'Exetion qui ne peut etre trop Cruelle pour des Criminels,

¹ This document does not belong to the records of Cahokia, but since it is one of the acts in the prosecution of the negroes, it seemed best to include it. It belongs to the *Kas. Rec.*

Nicolle were dead, the named Moreau said to their negress: "You ought to be content now. There are your master and mistress dead and you can take a walk and go where you wish;" to which the husband of the said negress of the said M. Nicolle, answered: "We did not ask you to make them die. We wished only that you make them a little gentler;" and that Moreau asked the negress to grant him what she had promised and the negress replied to him that he was too old and that she did not wish to; that the said Moreau said: "You find me too old, and well shall you repent of it"; and that shortly after he poisoned the negress according to the declaration of the said negro.

These depositions made by the negroes aforesaid were made in the presence of MM. Trottier, Touranjeau, Beaulieu, Martin, and Bte. Saucier, who have said that the depositions were made by the said negroes aforesaid, and that it was their opinion, after having heard it said by divers negroes, that this said Manuel and Moreau had done that of which they were accused, and that they should be found truly guilty. At Cahokia June 10, 1779, at eight P. M., in the house of Bte. Saucier.

Fr. Saucier, Clerk.

Signed, Piere Godin.

Copy conforms to the original spread on the record-book of the Court.

F. Clk.

THE ARRAIGNMENT BY THE STATES ATTORNEY.¹

I, State's Attorney of Virginia, for the District of Kaskaskia, hereunder signed, have the honor to set forth to the honorable Court of Kaskaskia that from the testimony of different negroes of Cahokia it appears that the negroes, Moreau and Manuel, are really guilty of the horrible crime of which they are accused; and that from all the declarations and testimonies it appears that the negro Morcau is more guilty than the other, since he has administered the poison which the other had given him.

From which poisons several of the good subjects of this Republic and soldiers of the garrison have died.

This is the reason why in the name of the State I think, gentlemen, that if you find the said negroes guilty, you should

qui ont Comis des Choses sy Extraordinairem^t Horrible & affreu.

aux Kaskaskia a 12^e Juin 1779.

J Girault.

¹ For a discussion of the sentence which was found, see *supra*, p. 12, n. 1. The warrant substituted by Todd for the one copied and erased in his record-book reads as follows: "Illinois to wit. To Richard Winston; Sberiff of Kaskaskia: You are hereby authorized & required between the Hours of Nine & Eleven in the morning of the Sixteenth of this Instant to cause to be executed Manuel a Slave in your Custody by being hung by the neck until he be dead & this shall be your Warrant. Given under my hand & Seal the 14th day of June 1779. Jno Todd jr."²—*Kas. Rec., Warrants*.

² Jean Girault was born on February 24, 1755, in London, of Huguenot parents. With his brother he sailed from Liverpool for America, and on the voyage both were sick from small-pox, from which the brother died. In New York Jean was employed as clerk and book-keeper by an importing house. It is said by a descendant that he here mastered the Latin, Greek, Hebrew, English, Spanish and Choctaw languages.—*Dr. MSS.*, 27J65. The account is doubtless exaggerated, for he probably learned the classical languages in his youth and he was perfecting himself in Spanish in 1786. The descendant is also responsible for the statement that Girault went to Virginia and later raised a company to join Clark in his expedition to the Illinois. As a matter of fact, he was in that country the year before Clark's expedition; for on March 17, 1777, he purchased a piece of land in Cahokia from Father

pronounce their sentence of death, and name the day thereof and the manner of execution which cannot be too cruel for criminals who have committed deeds so extraordinarily horrible and frightful.¹

At Kaskaskia, June 12, 1779.

J. Girault.²

Girault and in July of the same year he was appointed notary by Rocheblave.—*Kas. Rec., Court Record*, fols. 107 and 120. When Clark reached Kaskaskia, he found Girault very useful. On July 6, 1778, Girault was appointed interpreter, and wrote Clark's communications to the French. On the 16th of the same month he received a commission as lieutenant in Worthington's company of light horse, an appointment confirmed by the governor of Virginia on December 12th. Todd appointed him state's attorney June 5, 1779. He was commissioned captain by Governor Jefferson June 3, 1781, and on the 9th of the same month Girault appointed Labuxiere state's attorney in his stead. He was made commissary by Clark in 1781. He remained in the army till 1783, when he received his honorable discharge.—*Dr. MSS.*, 27J30. He then moved from Illinois to New Orleans, and sometime after 1786 settled at Natchez.—Girault to Wm. Clark, May 8, 1786; letter in possession of H. Roberts, Chester, Ill. At Natchez he held many important offices, both under the Spanish and U. S. governments. He died in 1813.