

B 4126 no 2 Witch 079, Claudon du Puy

20 December 1624; statement by Prévôt of Charmes, that François Perin has maintained his accusation against Claudon du Puy de Brantigny up to time when he was burned. She was then 'renvoyée jusqu'à rappel', but promptly started to dispose of her goods 'donnant par ce presomption grande qu'elle est telle que ledit Perin l'a defferé, et qu'elle craint d'estre apprehendée, estant d'ailleurs fort soubconnée et crainte audit Brantigny a cause de ce crime'. Has therefore arrested her, and refers case to procureur general.

21 December 1624; PG des Vosges orders investigation

23 December 1624; informations préparatoires

(1) Lucie fille de Claudon Mihiel dit Battillot de Brantigny, c. 22

Around previous Assumption had been ill with a strange malady, and expected to die; could not speak for 3 days. Father suspected Claudon, with whom he had previously quarrelled, and called her to see witness. She told her to ask for an apple in the name of God; did so with signs, and after eating it recovered speech, and then got better. Also told of incident 2 years earlier at 'escraigne' when Claudon, angry after her quarrels with parents, threw the 'careau' on which she was making lace into her face. Feared her on account of her bad reputation, and during illness thought something like a rat was running over her bed.

(2) Catherine fille de Claudon Mihiel, sister of previous witness, c. 26

During sister's illness her brother was advised that they should sell her bed, for fear it was bewitched; found various strange things in it, and showed it to curé 'qui jugea estre faict de sortilege'. Claudon was present, and witness heard her say in a low voice 'pense il qu'il soit des sorcieres'; she then fell on her knees before bed and persuaded sister to eat apples. She had been given extreme unction and they had kept vigil for 3 nights, during which they had heard a noise as if people were dancing overhead.

(3) Claude Batillot dit Michiel, c. 70

Claudon long suspected, as her mother had been. Told story of bed and how Messire Adam the curé had advised that it be emptied. Claudon had several times come to window; when she came into room the girl pushed her away saying 'allez vous en, vous me causez moult de mal', and witness threatened to strike her. Also told of noises in loft above room, and injury to face.

(4) Francois Marchal laboureur à Brantigny, c. 33

Some 11 years before, when he was setting up his household, Claudon had quarrels with his wife Claude, and often said to her 'qu'ilz n'y auroient guère de chance'. Had subsequently suffered long and strange illness, despite several pilgrimages; had become ill after eating a 'gateau' she gave him, and finding no remedy from doctors, went to Messire Maurice curé of Epinal, who advised him to empty his bed, in which they found strange things. 'Ce que scachant ladicte du Puix en se mocquant d'eulx,

disoit qu'elle vouldroit avoir faict ses affaires naturelles dans leur lict, qu'ilz n'avoient guiere affaire d'aller prendre tel avis'. Also believed her to have caused death of animals.

(5) Nicolas Batillot, c. 45

General reputation. Had been unwell for last three years, and believed Claudon had given him sickness because she had said to several that he was 'trop ingratte et qu'il devoit avoir ce qu'il avoit.'

(6) Alix femme du maire Laurent Laurent de Brantigny, c. 35

Said that when she was young she had been crying on way to mill, because she was pregnant by a young man, son of the miller, who had promised her marriage but now deserted her. Claudon sought to console her, and told her to pray to God and the Virgin that she should not be like the miller's wife who had had two stillborn children. Shortly afterwards went into labour, which lasted 8 days, and child was born dead, unable to be baptised. Suspected Claudon of causing this misfortune, and had quarrelled and fought with her since.

(7) Mengin Sauffroy labouraur de Brantigny, c. 60

He had quarrelled with both Claudon and her mother Mongeotte, and had told them that he suspected them of causing death of his animals. Mongeotte replied 'qu'il n'estoit encore bien', and two horses died very soon afterwards. His wife had also had a 14-week illness which several had judged to proceed from witchcraft, and during which she had called Claudon 'meschante femme'.

(8) Demenge Sauffroy de Brantigny, c. 50

General reputation; she had been beaten several times. Believed her to have caused illness from which his wife had been suffering for 3 years, and had several times called her witch, but no reaction.

(9) Claudon Robert de Brantigny, c. 36

One Sunday he and his brother-in-law Claudon Gerardin were preparing to play cards, when Claudon came and sat by them; touched Gerardin several times, he became ill when he returned home, and died 8 days later. Witness believed this to have been witchcraft by her.

(10) Thomas Gerardin de Brantigny, 34

Some 7 or 8 years before had thrown a stone at her window, in anger at which she told him 'que de sa vie il n'auroit chance'. Later he had beaten her when he found her with her cows in his field, and was told 'que se seroit une chere batterie pour lui'. Soon afterwards lost a cow, after strange illness which lasted 12 weeks, having thrown out strange things. Had thought he might 'se rendre partie contre elle', and had called her witch several times without any reaction. Some 6 weeks earlier, still convinced she was a witch, had again been thinking of having her arrested; his three-and-a-half year old child, in bed next to his wife, suddenly cried out and

before they could react was carried off into corner of kitchen, saying that an animal had done this. Believed this had been work of Claudon, so angry that he thought of taking her to court - as he still wished to do.

(11) Francoise femme de Demenge Sauffroy, c. 60

Told of her illness, and of her belief that it had been caused by Claudon; in discussion with other women who were ill, found they all suspected her. Her husband had beaten her and called her witch.

(12) Demenge Laurent laboureur de Brantigny, c. 44

Had a blind son, and some had said it might be Claudon's doing. She had been in houee, and said child was very ill, but he had no reason to suspect her other than these comments by third parties. General reputation.

(24 December 1624)

(13) Francois Sauffroy laboureur de Brantigny, c. 50

General repute, had had disputes with her, and his sister had lost animals, but knew nothing for sure.

(14) Claudon Batillot de Brantigny, c. 40

Reputation only.

(15) Idatte femme à Laurent Thiebault de Brantigny, c. 35

5 years earlier her husband Claude Gerardin died suddenly after being touched by Claudon - as in deposition (9). General suspicion and fear.

(16) Bastienne femme à Jean Sauffroy de Brantigny, c. 40

Was Claudon's neighbour; had often been given pears, apples and other gifts which she would rather not have had, on account of her reputation. Had never received any harm from them, however.

(17) Poirson Batillot de Brantigny, c. 32

Told of sister's illness; had made pilgrimage to Bozemont and other places on advice of Claudon, but to no profit. Was advised by Jeannon wife of Grand Colas (previously bewitched herself) to empty the bed. Then described visit of curé, giving of apples etc. Said he had often quarrelled with Claudon and beaten her.

(18) George Marchal maitre d'escholle à Brantigny, c. 28

Told how she was 'fort deplaisant', often called witch. Margueritte Sellier, wife of the maire Gaillat, currently residing at Hadoville, had told him that her husband had

been exorcised by the late curé of Epinal when she believed he had been bewitched by Claudon.

(i9) Vincent Marchal de Brantigny, c. 60

Said 'que plusieurs fois il a tancé ladicte Claudon de ce qu'elle s'acqueroit des ennemis et se faisoit hayr d'un chacun par son babille, et querelle qu'elle prenoit avec tout le monde, et envers ceux qu'elle n'avoit affaire a desmeller, ce qui la faisoit craindre et soubconner audit Brantigny.'

Thomas Gerardin recorded as being 'partie civile' in the case.

30 December 1624; interrogation

Said she was 52, unmarried, daughter of Bastien Batillot of Brantigny. Had lived with her mother Margueritte du Puix until her death a year earlier, then with her sister Margueritte, who was married to Demenge Pasquin Daviller.

Admitted that she had been afraid of arrest after denunciation by Francois Perin, and had sold a few possessions. Then agreed - as she apparently had already done in prison - that she was a witch. Had been seduced 9 months earlier, when angry with her brother-in-law because he was spending her sister's property and her own 'mal a propos'. Devil had given promise to end her 'fascheries' and make her rich; had given her powder, but she had only used it to kill two of her own hens before throwing it in the fire. Had been to sabbat. Resisted pressure to say she had been a witch earlier, and had harmed neighbours.

Had recognised no-one at sabbat. Agreed she had given two apples to Lubie, the daughter of her cousin Claude Batillat, but had not made her ill.

31 December 1624; interrogation

Repeated earlier confessions, now saying she had been to sabbat 3 times; would add nothing of substance.

1 January 1625; PG des Vosges asks for question ordinaire et extraordinaire.

3 January 1625; Change de Nancy agrees

Interrogation under torture added little; refused to name any accomplices. Final death sentence 11 February 1625.

Goods worth 133 F, property 470 F.

Procedure followed by complaints from Thomas Gerardin that he had not been allowed sufficient expenses out of the product of the sale of her goods. He had received 210 F, but own estimate of costs was about 320 F. This had been carefully reduced item by item by the prévôt, and a rather dubious 50 F for his personal expenses had been cut to 10.

'Remontre ledit Thomas que comme ladite Claudon, odieuse au monde, notamment aux habitants dudit Branthegey, ayans volonté, pour les soupcons et presomptions violentz qu'il y avoit contre elle à raison des inconvenients des maladies et de morts advenuz tant envers sa femme que sur ses enfans et betailz, la volonté luy dictant que c'estoit des oeuvres diaboliques de ladite en print ja grandement soupconnée de benefices et sortileges, il fut sur le point de se porter delateur contre elle, en faire informer et se rendre partie formelle, Mais la crainte, entre deux, de la pouvoir convaincre, le retient jusques à tant que la voyant deferée et soutenue pour sorciere par Francois Perin de Rugney, executé pour meme crime un peu auparavant, il se hazarda en fin de se rendre partie formelle et de fait voyant que sur l'accusation elle transportoit et detournoit ses meubles, il en donna à vous mondit sieur Prévost, avertissement et se rendit alors partie formelle contre icelle.' Was afraid she would dispose of more of her goods, 'ou bien qu'elle ne s'absentasse par apprehension de la prison', so had arranged for three guards to guard her in her house until the order came for her arrest.