

B 3136; witch 22A, Lutschen Maiette femme Lutschen Hans, Le Roseau

30 October 1619; informations

Statement that she had been arrested on 25th, after orders from Sr Saubremont, commanding at Bitche in absence of M. Cazelle. This followed ducal order, and denunciation by Hans Melchior, executed at Murimont.

(1) Saw Adam, bourgeois du Roseau les Bitche, 38

Brother of her husband Lutschen Hans. 10 years earlier, when still living with father-in-law, had woken during night to see her standing by bed. Cried out, calling her witch, and then seized her by waist and dragged her outside, striking her several blows. Then went to get axe from behind door, because he was so frightened and angry that he wished to kill her. Mother-in-law rushed in thinking he was beating his wife, and stopped him doing more; Mayette threatened to take action for calling her witch, but never did so.

Before this he and his wife had gone at her invitation to live in same house with brother, but after a month his wife asked him to find another house so that they could keep some animals, and he rented one. Then went to take a cartload to Saverne, and during absence his wife left Mayette's house; latter told her 'Va ten toy ny ton mary naurez ny pourez avoir chance ny bon encontre tandis que soyez ensembles. Ce que depuis il a plus que trop experimenté . . .' – had been unable to keep any animals successfully until time of beating. Believed she had been angry because she was a witch and had been counting on seducing his wife to join her, but was frustrated by their rapid departure. Called witch several times in public, notably by wife of Jacques Brenon, without taking action. since arrest his brother had several times begged him to speak and pray for her, but he had refused.

(2) Schutz Hans le Tireur, 38

Long reputation, had always avoided her. A year before three women had appeared in his room at night tormenting him, until he called out 'par la mort il fault que je vous face brusler toute trois', whereupon they disappeared. Faces were covered up, so that only one he recognized was la Porchiere. Three nights later went out in search of 'quelque venaison', and when he returned before dawn had difficulty waking his wife to let him in; she finally woke in inexplicable state of terror, then they found child dead in cot at foot of bed. Thought that witches had been unable to harm him, so had carried out designs against child. When he was on way to depose Mayete's husband had come to see him, saying that he was a good friend to witness, and thought witness was to him, but now he was on way to depose against his wife, because wife of witness said he had seen Mayete by the bed. He replied that this was not the case, but that if he knew something against her he would not withhold it.

(3) Marc Poul bangard à Bitche, 36

Some 8 years earlier had been in fields at night to guard wheat, on Whitsun eve, between 11 and 12 on road at place where white sand was found at Judenhoff. Saw woman immobile in centre of road, which was very wide, and as he approached

saw it was accused. Asked her what she was doing, but she did not speak a word, just made a sigh, then suddenly disappeared. Was so astonished that next morning told several people at gate of town; Mayete heard of this and summoned him before Receveur - did not want to go before governor. When he told story she agreed she had been there, but denied having disappeared and said her daughter had been with her as they were taking a horse to pasture. Receveur had to go to fields, so whole matter left unresolved. General reputation, but no other dispute with her.

(4) Cleman du Roseau, 75

13 or 14 years earlier had been ill for 2 months, and was recovering when around midnight on moonlit night he awoke; after about an hour was going to sleep again when he felt something fall on him and press on him. Called out and saw a women dressed in 'un rochat de toile noir bandé d'une bande de drap rouge', whom he believed was Mayete whom he had seen either previous or following day wearing such clothes. Called her witch several times after that in public, without any action following, any more than when her neighbour the wife of Jacques Brenon called her witch - reputed witch as long as he had known her.

(5) Nicolas le Tailleur du chateau, 24

Some 2 years earlier had been returning from haymaking when he saw peas in a garden - did not know it was that of accused - and he used his fork to take and eat some of them. She saw him from house, and told him she would eat some of his. Within a few days he became very ill, and was excreting rounded worms which looked a little like peas; surgeon told him it was witchcraft, so he believed this was her doing.

(6) Barbe fille Nicolas Francois, 26

Some 6 years earlier she and Barbe fille Claude Sibille had been collecting herb called queue de chatte, and Mayete found them in her field planted with hemp. Struck Barbe 3 or 4 times, after which she was ill for 3 years, feeling as if 'les pieds luy percerent' and being in great pain. Could not swear with assurance that this had been her witchcraft, but she had always feared her on account of reputation as 'une tres mauvaise femme'.

(7) Barbe femme Philipe le Moictrier de Guentersperg, 50

Some 10 years earlier when she was neighbour of Mayete in faubourg, was fattening bull when it ran off and was missing for 8 days. Having previously asked Mayete for help in finding it, she now reckoned it was lost, and told Mayete she was tired of searching, but would give anyone who found it a teston. Next morning accused came to tell her that her father had found bull near Ropveiller, so she gave her the teston and said she would not let it out of the stable again - within days it became swollen so that skin was four inches apart from flesh. Mayete and her father then told her to buy 'un noeuf pot de terre et une couverte', with some roots whose name she had forgotten, so that they could make a drink for the bull, which still died the next day. Asked her for loan of a horse so that Mre Simon (local executioner) could drag it out of stable, but she refused saying 'quelle ny son cheval ne se trouveroient devant ledit Mre Simon', then shut herself in house when she saw him

coming. As soon as he saw the animal he said 'Je m'estonne que le magistrat endure vivre tant de sorcieres en ce lieu adjoustant que ladite Mayete lavoit ensorcelle et qu'il y avoit eu trois sorcieres assise sur ladite beste, ce qu'il feit paroistre ayant seulement fendue la peu [peau?] il ne fit quescover la chair hors et ne tenant la peau nullement a icelle ou plusieurs recognurent les trois endroits ou elles avoient esté assise tout noir de meurtrisseur de sortilege'.

Her then husband Bastien Charpentier made a complaint, but there was no wish to hear it, then within a few days he woke at night to see Mayete standing before him, but was unable to move or speak. In the morning he told witness that Mayete wanted to kill him; when she said that perhaps he had been dreaming he said it had been real and that he must have her burned. Two days later left arm became swollen and he was in agony, but surgeons would do nothing, so he called in Mre Simon, who said it was witchcraft. Used poultices on arm for a week, then lanced it, and drew off six pots of watery substance mixed with white matter like curdled milk. Finally recovered and paid 4 reichsthaler for cure.

She herself had difficulty with Mayete because they shared a bread oven; latter took wood she had put in it to dry, so she asked her not to do this again. Normally when she baked she made 2 'chaudez', one for Mayette's daughter and other for her own named Marie, but next time she made just the one and told daughter not to give any to the other girl because they were bad people. Mayete was angry when she saw this, and then Marie disappeared; returned with mouth black as coal, unable to speak or stand, to die 3 days later. All those who saw her said she was bewitched, so husband made complaint, but governor was ill at that moment, so he could get no response. Decided to move away before she killed him, so they bought a house at Bedtviller, but a year later he died of the contagion there; Mayete was cause of all her misfortune and poverty, since they had been in far better state when they came to live next to her. General reputation, was also 'prompte a desrober fort cauteleuse et quaurions beaucoup de peine de tirer la verite d'elle.' Added that widow of Dietry of the faubourg had paralysed arm after quarrel with her, as she could testify if she were still there.

31 October 1619; interrogation

Report that she pretended to cry without producing any tears, also that she said paternoster and ave maria, asked to take confession. Declared she was not a witch, and said that they did her wrong as surely as Our Lord had died a king, called on St Nicolas for help and said that she was appealing 'aux droits imperiaux'. When she calmed down she said she was native of place, daughter of Louys who had been shepherd, and was about 55.

Admitted she had reputation as witch, but blamed this on 'le mauvais monde' and said she had harmed nobody. Accusation by Melchior was then read out. She alleged that he had long threatened her, after episode when he had courted Nicolas Charbonnier's widow, who told Mayete; she advised her that her husband believed he still had a wife alive. They then went to curé together and Barbe told him marriage was off, asking him not to read bans. Melchior was furious when he heard of this and told her he would have his revenge if he had to wait 20 years.

Denied story by her brother-in-law, saying he was a glutton who had never done her any good.

On account given by Marc Poul, said it had not been fully dark, and that she had spoken to him first.

Said she would not have harmed Clement, because his wife was as dear to him as her mother. If she had not sought reparation for insults from anyone, that was because it was customary for those of le Roseau as soon as they were angry to call one another 'sorcier et putain', and officials were unwilling to act if they were importuned too often.

Denied stories of Nicolas Le Tailleur and Barbe Francois completely.

Asked why at one moment she was trying to cry, at another responding 'fort audacieusement', then refusing to speak and looking behind her 'en remuant et retournant hideusement les yeux et le visage avec un tres mauvais regard'. Said she had been so shocked when taken from house that she could no longer cry.

On deposition of Barbe le Moictrier said she knew that she could not have said such things about her.

6 November 1619; confrontations

Confronted with Saw Adam, she refused 3 times to take oath, but finally did so. He claimed that he could prove by the moictrier of Guetersberg that she had threatened him; she denied, and said he was very hostile to her. He had several times caused her husband to beat her because she opposed his going to Adam's house where he often shut himself up.

In response to Schutz Hans claimed that she and her daughter had been taking a horse to pasture, that she had spoken to him, and that dispute had been settled before the officers.

Said of Clement du Roseau that he was a ruffian, who had tried to debauch her 20 years earlier and then hated her because she refused him. He denied this; over charges by Brenon's wife she said this had not stopped her making use of her and sending her children to her house, where they had never come to any harm.

Denied any encounter with Nicolas le Tailleur over peas, or with Barbe Francois.

Claimed that Barbe le Mocitrier's bull had 'creve de Naveau', although agreed to making drink for it with roots called Uber Wurtzel or racine de Veate, which she bought from Colin Mercier. Also alleged that she had come to a settlement with Brbe's husband, which latter denied.

15 November 1619; Change de Nancy approves question ordinaire et extraordinaire.

23 November 1619; interrogation under torture

Exhortations and threats; question about tearing clothes - had she intended to harm herself? She claimed to be a good woman and denied any intention of harming herself. Asked about testimony from brother-in-law Saw Adam, said that 6 years earlier had been to wedding at Ormersviller with him, and when returning after midnight he had told them they must keep the bread they had with them or the devil would break their necks. A little further on he made a great noise, drew his sword and threw himself to the ground - told them to throw bread behind them or devil would kill them all, saying that he had given himself to the devil and had to give him something every year.

During this thumbscrews were being used - seem to have broken or opened of themselves a couple of times. Then put on strappado and hauled into air, crying that she was not a witch and would never confess it. Thumbscrews now applied to

feet and broke again. Given strappado again; did not want to swallow holy water when given this (did not know what it was). Then racked with triangle of wood under back, while another instrument was applied to legs. Cried out 'qu'il nous fauldroit rendre compte des tourments que luy faisions endurer quel vouldroit que fussions tous en pareil estat'. Given another turn, then swallowed some holy water; immediately begged to be released promising to say she was a witch.

Said that two years earlier when her husband was away she had no money to buy bread; devil appeared to her as man in grey, and gave her 6 gros to buy bread, then had intercourse with her, when she identified him by cloven foot. Name was Federwusch. Now slipped into saying she had been seduced nine years earlier, had killed Bastien Charpentier's child but done no other evil.

Asked about inconsistency in dating, now said she was not a witch and had done no harm. Racked again, she now placed seduction 14 years earlier. Had been at sabbat with her accuser Melchior and Marguerite la Porchiere, where they intended to make hail to spoil hemp crop; went on forks smeared with grease master gave them. Many others she did not know were there.

Master had given her drink with which to kill Saw Adam, but she took pity on him because he was her husband's brother. Marguerite la Porchiere and Haffner Ottel, wife of Emrich du Rozeau, had killed child of Schutz Hans, and she had also been present. Master had given her red liquid with which to kill Cleman du Rozeau, which she intended to do but could not, for reason she did not know.

Denied harming Nicolas le Tailleur or Barbe fille Nicolas Francois. Agreed she had used drink to kill Barbe Charpentier's bull when pretending to cure it; had not harmed husband, but had used drink to kill daughter.

Had been to sabbat four times, 'ayant toutes volontez de tout ruiner et faire touts les meschancetez quelle pouroient.'

Declare de plus quelle a entere un pot proche le cours de leau de la fontaine du Rozeau dans lequel elle a de toutes sortes de fleurs de Bled, poires et pommes que le malin luy a donne pour se servir a sengresser et faire toute meschancete et sorcellerie et que quand elle alloit en quelque lieu que le malin luy portoit sur son col.

27 November 1619; interrogation

Started by denying all previous confessions, saying they had been extorted by torture. Judges pointed out that in that case the two women already arrested were innocent; she said that they were the same as her, and would say the same things if tortured, as would Saw Adam.

Now renewed confessions; said she had been seduced one night when husband had gone to gamble in house of Saw Adam and refused to return home. Opened door when Federwusch knocked, thinking it was her husband, and only realized mistake after he had intercourse with her.

Confessed that she had been present when Margueritte and Odille killed 'la mulniere de Vaustein'. She and Margueritte had killed three horses 'du Bergier du Rozeau' by riding on them.

Asked why she had been so variable in confessions, said that her master had told her to defend herself as well as she could.

4 December 1619; formal death sentence from Change de Nancy

10 December 1619 Formal death sentence from court at Bitche, with list of steps since accusation on 6 October.

Expenses for trial and execution came to 172 francs. Included meals for curé of Bitche, Messire Michiel Waltz, who had been summoned to attend her and console her when by custom she was taken to the inn for the night before her execution. Reduced to 137 fr by Chambre des Comptes in May 1622.