

B 5312 no 1; witch 091, Catherine femme Adam Tarillon de Bassing

9 May 1594; informations préparatoires

Note that she has been arrested after accusation by Anne vieille mairesse de Bidestroff, already executed.

(1) Jenon femme Claudin Peletier, vigneron, 26

Reputation 10 or 12 years.

(2) Agnelle femme Petter Lhore, 32

Reputation 16 years.

(3) Jenon femme Jean Denys, 39

Had heard that Catherine (also called Kratzkopf) had been suspected for 19 years. Previous year she had quarrel with one named Kyne Stoffel, who said she had been called witch for than 30 years - sought reparation and accord made by maire of Cutting as maire of 5 villages.

(4) Marie femme Morise Manouvrier, 25

General reputation; had heard that she and Annon veuve Didier Vosgien (also arrested) had called one another witch.

(5) Barbe femme du maire Frantz, 20

Reputation 5 years (residence).

(6) Claudin Hamon, laboureur, 52

Had quarrelled with her 4 years earlier, and she said that although he had much property, in 3 years he would have hardly any. Since than had lost 10 horses, and suspected her; had consulted 'la teinturiere de Bernestorff', who was reckoned a devineresse, who told him she had given a drink to one of his sick horses. Had heard from his brother-in-law Stoffel, of Binstorff, that 12 years earlier, when he had been at Bassing, she and Annon Vosgien had tried to smother him in his room at night, frightening him so much that he was out of his mind for a time,

(7) Petter Boulengier, laboureur, 40

6 years earlier had been tax collector, and she complained he had overcharged her. Told her she had paid the same as other manouvriers, but she cursed him, wishing he might never return home in health.. Fell ill same day and was in bed for 18 weeks; she visited frequently to cure him, and when he said that if he died she would be the cause she told him to have patience and he would recover, as he finally did.

(8) Petter Lhore, 53

Long reputation. Had been ill, and was told she had given him this, and had threatened him.

(9) Loys Melanicq, 40

Reputation 20 years.

(10) Moritz Manouvrier, 30

Reputed a witch, and had also been called putain.

(11) Claudin Peletier, vigneron, 33

Reputation 15 years, and had heard Stoffel's story. Previous Lent had been drinking in house of la Vosgienne, where Catherine also was, and became very ill; Catherine brought him 'cerises confittes', saying they would make him better, but he did not touch them, because he suspected illness came from something they had put in his beer.

(12) Francois Melenicque, 36

Reputation 20 years.

(13) Schlosspetter Mre echevin, 50

Reputation 20 years as witch and whore. Over last 2 years he had lost 8 cattle. Had complained over taxes that year, and told him that within 3 days 'il se donneroit de garde' - same time next day horse had its leg broken, and he believed this was her doing.

(14) Noel Waultrin, mre faxemeur, 40

Reputation 24 years. Many losses of animals - 10 years before during winter had 7 horses dead in 6 weeks. Told that there was a monk at Niderhoff 'qui enseignoit beaucoup de choses cachées', he consulted him, who told him it was the work of witches. Had always suspected Annon and Catherine because of their reputation, but had never taken action for fear of worse. 3 years ago had lost a fine mare worth 50 francs after argument over payment for some grain he had bought from her to sow. She and Khyne Stoffel had fought behind the church, calling one another witch, and curé had forbidden them to enter church until they had sought reparation from one another. A year before his son Mengin became ill, with one side of his face all burned, and as neighbour at time she came to visit him. Asked if he had seen anyone by his bed when he became ill, and if it was not the work of 'mauvaises gens', but he said he had seen none. Had him 'signé' by wife of Mathis Fiacre of Cutting, who said prayer over him, and he recovered. 4 years earlier had lost a mare, and as his wife was crying for this, Catherine asked why she cried for a horse, and she should beware lest she had something worse to lament. A week later their only daughter, aged 7, died miserably, and they suspected her of causing this.

(15) Rose femme Colas Tixerand, de Benestorff, 58

Agreed that Claudin Haman had come to consult her as devineresse about his losses; told her 'qu'il y debvoit avoir bien ung cher eschellé de sorcieres en leur village'. Having performed her 'ceremonies' with a basin of holy water and a piece of silver, she found that his horse was bewitched, telling him his horse had been given a drink, and it seemed to her it was by Catherine - he paid her a bichot of wheat for this.

Since her daughter had come to Benestorff 15 years earlier Catherine had been reputed a witch and a whore. Asked about illness of her son-in-law in her house, confirmed story, saying that her daughter declared this was the only place where he had been.

(16) Bernhard Humbert manouvrier, 40

3 years earlier had quarrel with her over payment between him and her husband, for whom he had done some work on ditches at Dieuze. She told him he would gain nothing, and soon he became ill, being bedridden for 6 months. During illness she came to house several times and asked his children, smiling, if their father had gone to the woods. Had always suspected her of causing sickness. Said she had always kept company with Annon Blomstein veuve Didier Vosgien.

10 May 1594; interrogation

Said she was about 60, native of Bassing. Knew she had been arrested as witch, but said they wronged her. Asked about charge by Anne, recently executed at Bidersdorf, that she had shown her where a stillborn child was buried in cemetery at Bassing, denied this.

Asked about threats to Claudin Hamon, said he had called her witch when he found her taking pears from a tree, and she told him 'que ses enffans ne seroient pas tous maire, ny les enffans d'un hardier tous hardiers, et qu'alors qu'il auroit payé le Sr Chastellain d'Albestroff qu'il auroit aussy peu qu'un aultre.' Said he beat his horses so much that he caused their deaths. Seemed to admit threats to Petter Bouengier, but claimed he was ill because he had been drinking with his brother; tried unsuccessfully to cure him with herbs. Claudin Peletier had made himself ill through drinking, dancing and jumping too much. Denied specific threat to Schlosspetter, and said horse broke its leg when a bridge gave way under it.

12 May 1594; confrontations

No reproaches to any witness, but denied essential charges. Did admit various quarrels, attempts to heal, and less compromising remarks, also said that she had a bastard child.

20 May 1594; Rémy asks for moderate torture

26 May 1594; interrogation under torture

Offered to confess as soon as she was prepared for torture. Said that 6 years earlier her only son Gran Hans had left for war with Mgr le Marquis, but she later heard that his company had been defeated and drowned in crossing river. Had wept for him for 3 years, then 5 years ago was approached by man in black called Fourel - seduced her with promise that she would see her son in 2 hours, and that she would not want. Returned 2 weeks later, and beat her when she refused to have

intercourse with him, until she had to submit. A few days later appeared again, and when she reproached him with breaking promises filled apron with money - but turned into dry leaves.

4 years ago summoned her to accompany him on a 'rosot' to do ill and destroy acorns - but frustrated by ringing of bells. Others she saw were Barbe, femme Schlosspetter, Annon Vosgienne, Clemence la Baste, and Evatte femme Rodtsix of Biderstorff. Taken back to lake next day, and this time succeeded, so there were no acorns that year. Said they ate two cows which they had helped Barbe kill with drinks provided by their masters. These used powder from a stillborn child which la Baste found in cemetery at Steinbach. Accompanied by others and Demel femme Welsch Anthoine of Cutting, they had burned another stillborn child at Bassing, keeping hands to use as candles.

Intended to kill a cow belonging to la moictresse at Bassing, but she had made sign of cross and they had no power - killed two calves belonging to Schlosspetter instead.. When killing a horse one of them held head, another gave it the drink, and other two held its hindquarters so that it could not pull away. Clemence opened stable door after entering through hole in form of a caterpillar.

Admitted making Stoffel ill, because he was selling grain to others, and refused it to her. Said her master had warned her of arrest, and she tried to persuade Annon to flee with her, and go begging in the villages, but she would not believe her - they were arrested same day.

27 May 1594; interrogation

Said that over last 5 years could not take sacrament properly at Easter; spat out the host, either in graveyard or into her handkerchief. Told of a meeting at night when they elected Scher Austien of Loudrefing as their king, promising to pay him a florin every year - later seems to have withdrawn this claim.

3 June 1594; Rémy asks for death sentence

8 June 1594; Change de Nancy agrees, if she confirms her confessions under threat of torture.

11 June 1594; interrogation

This was carried out as she was being prepared for execution, with confessions read out in public. Confronted with Annon, and insisted she was a witch, but withdrew her other accusations (without any explanation)