

Witch 123, Isabillon Parmentier 1

B 7326; witch 123, Isabillon femme Jean Parmentier, de la Neufville-devant-Nancy

22 April 1599; informations preparatoires

Had been accused by Bastien Cousturier of la Neufville, who had applied to PG.

(1) Nicolas Braconnier, paistre, 46

General reputation only.

(2) Catherine femme Jean Braconnier, laboureur, 37

Had often heard her called witch, notably by her husband (father of witness), who once found a spider in his plate and said 'je croy que cest sorciere me veult faire mourir'. Always had black scratches on her face, which she thought must be work of her master, since husband never beat her. She herself had frequented her for 7 years without seeing any other ill in her.

(3) Anne femme Mre George Bertrand, tailleur d'habitz, 60

2 years earlier her husband suddenly lost use of limbs and needed crutches. Suspected Ysabillon because of reputation and fact that she frequented their house, so asked her about the illness; she said he would recover, and he did so in a few days. Remembered that she had hidden her goods when information was taken against la Grosse Janotte from house of George Masson, who was not convicted.

(4) Claudin Richard, femme Girard Epurard, manouvrier, 39

Was neighbour, but did not share suspicions, except over a cow which died suddenly in their stable. After this she and her husband passed their house without giving normal salutations; in view of reputation this made her think she might have caused their loss.

(5) Jannotte veuve Demenge Bagard, 60

Long reputation, and suspected of causing recent death of Jeanne femme Bastien Parmentier; witness had been present at quarrels, and advised Jeanne to avoid them because of her reputation. Said that 'ladite Ysabilon se mesle ordinairement de penser, visiter, et guerir les malades et quand elle en scait quelqu'un elle y va pour estre appellée.'

(6) Claudin Eulmont, manouvrier, 34

General reputation, and suspected her over death of his cow; she passed before his house saying nothing, although they had not quarrelled.

(7) Jean Braconnier, laboureur, 50

Had seen no harm in her, but first husband sometimes called her witch; she always had money, whose source was not clear.

(8) Jean Parisat, laboureur, 30

He had not wanted to hire her stepdaughter as servant again, after which she came to his house and offered piece of bread to his daughter aged 4. His wife told her not to take it because she suspected Ysabillon, but she ate it, immediately fell ill, and died a week later. During this time she visited the child at his request, but when she was in house the victim felt great pain in her limbs, which decreased once she left. Also suspected her of causing death of ox after he had forbidden her his house.

(9) Georgin Masson, 40

General reputation, and did not allow her to frequent his house.

(10) Demenge le Clerc, manouvrier, 27

Told of occasion 3 years earlier when he had met her going towards Jarville, and mysteriously met her a second time going in same direction. 4 days later had thigh broken in accident when digging a cellar, but did not want to accuse her for this.

(11) Didier Languille, manouvrier, 49

After forbidding her to pass through his garden he found his limbs paralysed the next day; this lasted 6 weeks, during which time he smelled strangely of sulphur, and felt as if he was burning. After refusing to renew lease of garden to her he had 2 horses dead, and another 2 after he beat her husband. When his son aged 20 was ill and in danger of death she asked after him, then said he would recover - he was better in 2 days.

(12) Mre George Bertrand, tailleur d'habitz, 65

Same story as wife about illness; had been in bed for 17 days, and started to recover 4 days after she said he would get better, but did not want to claim that she was cause.

(13) Magdellaine femme Didier Languille, 40

Same story as husband about death of horses after he beat husband of accused. After refusal to renew lease of garden she was very angry 'de telle sorte qu'elle a procuré leur ruine totale'; 7 of them became ill, and husband had to go on pilgrimage to seek healing. Took a year to recover, and with loss of 5 horses in year were unable to continue ploughing. Believed all this had been her witchcraft.

(14) Bastien des Preys, cousturier, plaidant, 33

4 years earlier had married his first wife Catherine, who fell ill with 'ung point'. Ysabillon treated her during illness, saying a prayer he could not hear; during this the pain ceased, only to resume once she had left. In view of this, and reputation, suspected she had caused her death. A year earlier she had said that small brother-in-law would recover from illness, which he did. Suspected her of causing death of his second wife Jeanne, after various quarrels known to many. 2

weeks later taken with such a severe illness that she was thought possessed; said that devil was preventing her saying paternoster, and died in 2 weeks. Did recover her senses before death, but said nothing to him about accused being cause; she had however told neighbours this. During illness Ysabillon asked him how she did, and said she would recover, added that he should not suspect anyone.

(15) Mengeatte femme Jean Parisat, laboureur, 26

Briefer version of story told by husband about death of daughter. Also suspected her over deaths of 9 horses and cattle, although they had not quarrelled with her.

(16) Martin le Duc, tisserand, 40

Had been neighbour for 2 years; had seen no harm in her, and found her a good neighbour.

(17) Gergonne Perlet, laboureur, 40

Long reputation. Suspected her of causing deaths of various animals after he beat her daughter, who was servant in his house.

(18) Nicolle Hazart, veuve Anthoine Hardier, 44

Had been neighbour for 4 years, and seen no harm in her, though husband sometimes called her witch. Had recently brought her a packet of goods to keep for her, which she had taken back previous day.

(19) Claude Pays, maire à la Neufville, 36

She had been in service of his grandfather, and had long frequented his father's house, without any suspicion of witchcraft.

(20) Libaire femme Noel Ferry, 22

Had heard her called witch by Colin, servant of Claude Daulphin, without seeking any reparation.

9 May 1599; Rémy asks for arrest and interrogation

19 May 1599; additional witnesses

(21) Marie femme Jean Bagard, 22

General reputation, and suspected her over calf which died 3 or 4 days after going into her stable.

(22) Catherine femme Vaultrin Vaultrin, manouvrier, 26

Long reputation. Once thought she heard a voice complaining in Ysabillon's stable; went and called to what she thought was daughter of accused, but found

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there was no-one there, then saw mother and daughter at door of house - thought it might have been 'un phantosme'.

(23) Catherine servante à Mre George Bertrand, 24

One day told witness that Claudin des Pomottes had informed her mistress that she gave her some soup, and he would repent.

(24) Barbe Symon femme Laurent François, manouvrier, 25

Long reputation. 2 years before was unable to sell her peas for sowing, because she had none, and same week an ox died suddenly, which she thought was her doing.

(25) Claude Borinet, tisserand, 40

Reputation only.

(26) Laurent François, manouvrier, 40

Same story as wife.

(27) Jean Thomassin, tisserand, 60

4 years before was herdsman, and took caution against her for payment of what was due; she told one of his daughters that 'il s'en donneroit de garde', and same day a daughter who was guarding animals was killed by lightning. Believed she had caused this, general reputation.

(28) Mengin Millecy, laboureur, 40

Had heard her say that but for 'le respect qu'il porte a ses enfants' she would have killed herself.

(29) Jean Bagard, laboureur, 22

2 years earlier had dispute when she owed him money for some straw, and 6 weeks later a sow died. Did not want to accuse her over this, but she was reputed a witch.

24 May 1599; interrogations

Said she was about 50; husband was manouvrier. Had been arrested because 'quelques malveillants' had accused her of causing deaths of their animals.

Denied causing death of Jean Parisot's daughter, saying the girl was already sick, and she had given pieces of bread and tart given her by wife of Claude Henry to her own daughter, who was also ill, saying she could give some to the girl. Had never spoken to Didier Languille, who was 'un gueux et un meschant homme', about his son, who was 'l'un des plus meschant guerson' of la Neufville. As for his dead horses, he had small horses which he worked too hard.

Said that she had visited Catherine, first wife of Bastien des Preys, during her illness. She had injured her stomach in a fall on way to mill at Jarville; if she were

alive would not accuse her as others did. Repeated little prayer she had said, saying she had learned it from a poor woman who was passing. Agreed she had quarrelled with his second wife Jeanne, but it had not been serious, she did not hate her, and had neither caused nor wished her any harm.

2 June 1599; interrogation

Now said that she had been seduced by Mre Persin around previous Christmas. Was angry that her husband called her witch, so took her distaff to go to 'escaignes'; he appeared when she was on way, remarked she was very angry, then threw her against 'fumier' and wanted to have intercourse, but she was unwilling, and saw another woman coming with a lantern. At suggestion that she was ashamed to confess intercourse, she then agreed that it did take place, and he disappeared when woman with lantern approached.

Said he only told her his name and that she should not fear; was told she lied, and she had told lieutenant of prévôt and sergent about promises he made. Had also said that he gave her powder to avenge herself, with which she had killed her first husband. She still denied this, so the sergent Claude Thouvenin was brought in to confirm his statement. At this she agreed he had offered her the powder, but said she had refused to take it.

2 June 1599; Rémy asks for question ordinaire et extraordinaire

5 June 1599; interrogation under torture

Continued to claim that she had done no-one any harm, and when given thumbscrews, then rack, said she was not a witch. Had previously said that only other time Persin appeared to her it was as black dog in her garden, and he said nothing. Was then given tortillons, and strappado with weights attached to feet, but continued her denials.

15 June 1599; interrogation

Now said she had asked her master to make Languillon ill, because he had beaten her husband and called her witch. Threatened with torture, agreed she had also consented to master's suggestion that he kill 2 of his horses. Further threats produced admission that she was envious of second wife of Bastien des Preys, and used powder to cause fatal illness. Also confessed to killing Parisot's daughter in similar fashion. Asked about sabat, claimed to have been only once, and only other person there with her master was a woman she did not know.

16 June 1599; confirmed earlier confessions

18 June 1599; Rémy asks for death sentence

22 June 1599; further confirmation of confessions

23 June 1599; death sentence from Change de Nancy