

Mum killed six babies and put bodies in cellar

TRIAL: Remains found by new lover

The ex-boyfriend of a mother who admits killing six of her newborn babies and hiding their bodies in the cellar was due to give evidence today.

Frenchwoman Celine Lesage told the court yesterday the children had been born alive. She strangled two and suffocated the others.

Lesage, from Valognes in Normandy, bowed her head and avoided looking at anyone in court while the charges were read. Afterwards, she said in a soft voice: "I acknowledge the facts." She is charged with aggravated homicide.

She was arrested in 2007 after her new partner Luc Margueritte discovered the corpses in plastic bin bags in the basement of their apartment.

Her lawyer Veronique Carre said Lesage "does not contest the facts ... but isn't explaining them either". Several medical and psychological experts are expected to testify in the trial.

Her former partner, Pascal Catherine, the father of five of the children, was detained for questioning after Lesage was arrested in 2007. However, the investigation against him was dropped. He will give evidence as a witness today.

The court was told the father of the sixth was Margueritte.

At the time of her arrest, prosecutor Michel Garrandaux said she described giving birth to the first five alone in the apartment she shared at the time with Pascal Catherine.

The prosecution said that when Lesage and Catherine split up in 2006, Lesage, who also has a son of 14, moved in with her new boyfriend and brought the bags from her old basement to her new one.

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