


BRO NEVEZ

INTERNATIONAL COMMITTEE FOR THE DEFENSE OF THE BRETON LANGUAGE
NEWSLETTER OF THE U.S. BRANCH





A LINK BETWEEN THE CELTIC NATIONS

Carn 180 - 181 Summer / Winter 2021 €6.00/Seg\$5.00

**60th Anniversary
Double Issue**


CELTIC NATIONS REVIEWS
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CELTIC LEAGUE
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ÉIRE: AN CONRADH CELTEACH
KERNOW: AN KESUNYANS Keltiek
MANNIN: YN COMMEEYS CELTIAGH



CELTIC LEAGUE

60th anniversary for the Celtic League

KUZUL ETREVROADEL EVIT KENDALC'H AR BREZHONEG

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The U.S. Branch of the International Committee for the Defense of the Breton Language (U.S. ICDBL) was incorporated as a not-for-profit corporation on October 20, 1981. Bro Nevez ("new country" in the Breton language) is the newsletter produced by the U.S. ICDBL. It is published quarterly. Contributions, letters to the editor, corrections, and ideas are welcome from all readers and will be printed at the discretion of the Editor.

The U.S. ICDBL provides Bro Nevez on a complimentary basis to a number of language and cultural organizations in Brittany to show our support for their work. Your Membership/Subscription allows us to mail print copies. Membership (which includes subscription) for one year is \$20. Checks should be in U.S. dollars, made payable to "U.S. ICDBL" and mailed to Lois Kuter at the address above.

This newsletter can be sent as a PDF file attached to an e-mail instead of the print version. Just let the Editor know how you would like to receive it. The e-mail version is much more colorful than the photocopied print copy!

Back issues of Bro Nevez can be found on the U.S. ICDBL website

Ideas expressed within this newsletter are those of the individual authors, and do not necessarily represent ICDBL philosophy or policy.



Editor's Note

2022 brings cause to celebrate with the return of festivals, festoù-noz and concerts in Brittany where musicians, dancers, and music-lovers can celebrate together.

But as you will read in this issue of *Bro Nevez*, the challenges continue for the Breton language and for Brittany as a unified nation of five departments.

And there have been some losses among those who have supported Breton language and culture – Natalie Novik, a "founding member" of the U.S. ICDBL, and American David Surette, a guitarist who mastered the rhythms and melodies of Breton music, and Erwan Vallerie, a Breton linguist, historian and militant.

State-Region Convention for Languages of Brittany

At the end of February the Regional Council of Brittany (representing the four departments of Ile-et-Vilaine, Morbihan, Côtes d'Armor and Finistère) voted in favor of a new State-Region Convention for the languages of Brittany (Breton and Gallo) which would cover 2022 to 2027.

This includes some ambitious advances in goals compared to the last convention of 2015, most notably in the aim to have 30,000 students enrolled in bilingual programs. And by the end of 2026 the aim is to have 50% of teaching posts open to Breton speakers for bilingual programs. The convention calls for a general progression of Breton language classes during the school day and not just during the time slot for language classes.

The convention is less positive in ensuring the continuity of Breton teaching into middle and high school levels. Enrollments have dropped in high school programs with a devaluation of Breton studies for baccalaureate success, although this has been addressed to some extent for high school students more recently.

The State-Region Convention has been seen as an advance but lacks provisions to guarantee that teacher training will be successful – for example, public school teacher training seems to be restricted to just one site, Saint Brieuc, with the option for training in Brest, Vannes and Rennes disappearing.

Provisions for Diwan schools have been put off for a future State-Region-Diwan convention. It is hoped that the current need for schools to cover teachers' salaries

for five years before state support can be requested will be changed, but there seems to be hesitancy on the part of the State to make this transition easier. Bretons are fearful that the National Education system would like to see immersion style teaching disappear.

While the new State-Region Convention for languages of Brittany sounds good, it is noted that the State has not addressed financing or specific steps necessary to meet the goals put forward.

Regional Council of Brittany Budget and Languages

At the end of February the Regional Council of Brittany also approved its 2022 budget. Here too, there is good will and recognition of the need to support school and community initiatives. And Bretons are cheered by the fact that there is a 16% increase in the budget this year for language support. But this is still below the need for real change.

Numbers I have been able to find for the budget break it down roughly as follows:

Territory and digital development	75 million euros
Education and Training	715
Environment	29
Innovation, economy, agriculture and maritime development	185
Transport	388
Outward growth and attractivity (sports, tourism, patrimony, culture and language)	96
European funds and other needs	238

Total 1,784,000 euros

The budget for languages (Breton and Gallo) is 9.4 million euros.

Could the Region of Brittany do better? Many Bretons certainly think so. Could France do better? Even more Bretons think so, and remain vigilant in defending and advancing the growth of Breton and Gallo.



20 >> 28 MAI 2022 / VITRÉ >>> VANNES

The Redadeg is Back for 2022

We have presented this relay run and fundraiser in past issues of *Bro Nevez*, but it is worth reintroducing as an important and festive event for the Breton language. The following is my translation and summary

(from the French) of information found on the Ar Redadeg website which is in both Breton and French. Ar-redadeg.bzh

What is the Redadeg? – the spirit of the event

The Redadeg is a relay run of solidarity; festive and public, without competition, open to all. Families, young and less young, children, parents and grandparents run together. The idea is to carry a message in Breton across Brittany without stop, and the big winner is the Breton language.

The event mobilizes thousands of people across the five Breton departments and generates a shared enthusiasm.

The kilometers are sold to individuals, collectivities, businesses, associations – that is, to all people who wish to contribute to the event and bring their support to the Breton language. The profits are distributed to projects which favor the use of the language in everyday social and family life. (see below)

The immediate success of the event has been confirmed with each edition, generating an ongoing and significant growth in the distance covered as well as the contributions collected.

For each kilometer a person carries the baton with the message inside and wears a shirt numbered with that kilometer. They are the carrier of the container which has the message in Breton inside. The message and its author are kept secret until the end of the run to be read before the public, launching the celebration.

Other than the purchase of a kilometer which gives the right to carry the baton for that kilometer, participation is totally open and free. Everyone can follow the baton carrier, to accompany them and support them, just for the mere pleasure and especially to support the Breton language.



Who benefits from the purchased kilometers? - Why Diwan?

- Because the Diwan federation which celebrated its 30th anniversary in 2008

initiated the first Redadeg.

- Because the transmission of the Breton language takes place principally through schools. Diwan's immersion system of teaching involves over 3,600 students from preschool through the baccalaureate, and new schools are opened each year – elementary or middle schools.

- Because the dynamism of this network and its associated schools – laic and free of tuition – relies on the support and financial commitment of collectivities, “sympathizers” and the public society more widely.

- Because for the first five years of their creation new establishments must fully fund teacher salaries, the Diwan federation will always need financial support to sustain its development. Thus it has been ruled to give the half of the profits of each Redadeg to this network of schools. The other half will help to finance innovative projects which favor the practice of the Breton language in public life, to develop new media, or fuel development in the practice of Breton.

2022 projects

Numerous projects have been proposed for this year. Twelve have been selected with support amounts on the advice of a “Council of Sages” – projects to promote the richness and diversity of the Breton language around the year’s theme: *Breizh a-bep reizh*.

Thus for the 2022 edition of the Redadeg we will be distributing some 155,000 euros, half of which, 77,500 euros, will be for the following projects.

Arvorig FM for a mobile radio studio to reach local populations and create innovative content in Breton.

Difen – Aerlin, the creation of a bilingual vocabulary of a feminist and LGBTQIA theme to be online and published as a book.

Dispak – to promote professionalism in Breton language journalism.

Guisseny Paddle – to organize sports in Breton for young people.

Heklev – Heklev Podcast, to create podcasts and audio fiction online accessible to all.

Lors Jereg Produiñ – to create new content in Breton on the Lors Jereg Youtube channel.

Ti ar Vro Gwengamp – to create sports events, radio, and other programs in Breton for young people from Guingamp to Paimpol.

Ti ar Vro Leon – activities and programs in Breton for preschoolers in the Leon Pays.

Ti Douar Alre – a series of workshops and activities for children four and up.

Toumpi – the edition of games for learning Breton for children.

Bemdez – the edition of new games in Breton for all ages to encourage the practice of Breton on the Youtube channel Seizh Kalon.

Cac Sud 22 – Le Petit théâtre/Le P’tit téyâtr – the first show in Gallo for children using the Gallo language, marionettes, and music.

Brittany as a Whole



VigiBretagne
Evezh Breizh

We have regularly brought up the issue of reunification for Brittany - the inclusion of the Department of Loire-Atlantique in the administrative Region of Brittany, along with the departments of Ile-et-Vilaine, Morbihan, Côtes d’Armor and Finistère. Loire-Atlantique is currently in the Region called Pays de la Loire which has fostered a campaign to create

an identity for this area which also includes the departments of Vendée, Maine-et-Loire, Sarthe, and Mayenne.

A petition was signed in the Fall of 2008 by over 100,000 supporters of a public referendum on reunification. Polls have shown that a majority of people in Loire-Atlantique and the Region of Brittany favor such a referendum. And polls have shown that a large majority of people of Loire-Atlantique consider themselves Bretons. This should not be surprising given the history of the area which has the ancient capital of Brittany, Nantes. The demand for reunification started as soon as the Loire-Atlantique department was lopped off from Brittany by the Vichy government in 1941.

The efforts to encourage Bretons of Loire-Atlantique to forget that they are Breton has been promoted by media and administrative reports that draw a clear border between Brittany and the Pays de la Loire. But this has been fought by Bretons of the Loire-Atlantique not only in their continued engagement in Breton cultural activities – music, song, dance and language unique to Brittany – but also in very conscious work to promote Breton identity and counter efforts to create a new Pays de la Loire identity.



VigiBretagne / Evezh Breizh specifically works to identify public representations that erase Loire

Atlantique from the map of Brittany. They literally target the use of maps that show only the four departments of administrative Brittany on Breton product labels, advertising, and in media and publications. On Facebook and Twitter postings as well as a regular e-newsletter they applaud companies and organizations that use a map showing all five departments, and confront – in a gentle way – those who “forget” that Loire Atlantique is Breton. Sometimes they are successful in convincing a company that the image of an all-five department Brittany is a good idea, and it has been shown that at “Breton” identification is good for product sales.

The “Vigi” of VigiBretagne stands for Vigilance, and the group counts on a membership (currently over 140 individuals and groups) to be vigilant in identifying good and bad examples of the promotion of Breton identity in Loire-Atlantique as well as the rest of Brittany. The praise that is given to companies that are careful to use a five-department map on the labels or in advertising is certainly not bad for business. A social media alert as to those who use the administrative map with four department is not likely to win customers.

Another initiative done in partnership in Breizh 5/5 to bolster an already strong sense of Breton identity is to provide free Breton flags to businesses and organizations which will display the outside on their site. VigiBretagne has focused this initiative in the Guerande, Briere and Saint-Nazaire area of Loire-Atlantique.

To find out more check out the Twitter and Facebook pages @VigiBretagne.

American readers of *Bro Nevez* are encouraged to report maps and other representations of Brittany that fail to include Loire-Atlantique.



Breizh 5/5

As they describe themselves, Breizh 5/5 has as its goal the promotion of a Brittany of five departments. They organize events and opportunities to teach people about the history,

culture, languages, arts and economy of the whole Brittany.

In promoting Breton identity and reunification they have recruited businesses, organizations, towns and cities to adopt a Breizh 5/5 sign to display. So throughout Brittany you will see this logo that affirms that Bretons in all five departments seek reunification and are ready to support this.



60th Anniversary for the Celtic League

Celticleague.net

The Celtic League was founded in 1961 at the Welsh National Eisteddfod in North Wales with a meeting the following year with representatives from the six Celtic language speaking nations of

Wales, Scotland, Ireland, Cornwall, the Isle of Man, and Brittany. Alan Heusaff, one of the founding members, served at its first general secretary and the aim set forth at that initial period was “to foster national rights of the Celtic Nations, Political (including governing their own affairs), Cultural and Economics.”

The Celtic League is remarkable not only in its long commitment to that aim but in its success in sustaining inter-Celtic relations and awareness with branches in all six nations and in the U.S., Nova Scotia, and Patagonia, as well as London. Its leadership and actions are all on the part of volunteers who continue to work on its aims as outlined today:

The Celtic League is an inter Celtic organization that campaigns for the political, language, cultural and social rights of the Celtic nations. It does this across a broad range of issues. It highlights human rights abuse, monitors military activity and focuses on political, socio-economic, environmental, language and cultural issues, which generally or specifically affect one or more of the Celtic countries in some way. The organization also aims to further each of the Celtic nations right to independence and to promote the benefits of inter Celtic cooperation. Additionally, the League draws attention to matters we believe bear a wider concern for the peoples of the Celtic countries.

Volunteers have also been responsible for the production and distribution of newsletters and publications over its 60 years. The current quarterly magazine, *Carn* began in 1973. While most of each issue of *Carn* is in English, a significant portion is devoted to articles in each of the six Celtic languages, with short summaries in English. Articles cover a range of areas – political developments, inter-Celtic events and conferences, language and education, the media, military encroachment on Celtic lands, economic development, arts, music and festivals, health and social issues.

In the 148 issues I have received since 1973 to the present – with some gaps – through subscription or exchange for *Bro Nevez*, I have never failed to find information of interest that I could not find anywhere else. Unfortunately, I am pretty much limited to the articles and notes in English, and often the summaries of articles in Welsh, Irish and Scottish Gaelic, Cornish, Manx and Breton make me wish I had the ability to learn these languages.

The 60th anniversary of the Celtic League has been the occasion for a double issue of *Carn* (number 180-181 – summer/winter 2021) with 48 pages instead of the usual 24. This offers a recap of highlights of the Celtic League activities as well as a “State of the Nation” review for each of the six countries. Each section starts with an article in the Celtic language where the author gives views or tells of experiences in one of the other Celtic nations. For example, the Breton author tells of his impressions of the state of the Welsh language in visiting that country. This is followed by a review of politics of recent decades, particularly in relation to a path towards independence. The third section reviews the situation of the Celtic language of the country, with details on demographic changes, education in the language, and needs to insure a future. The analyses of politics, which includes economic development, and of the situation of languages are well researched providing lots of statistics and details and an honest presentation of both advances and the many challenges which threaten Celtic society and culture. There is no attempt to make the political, economic, or linguistic situation look rosier than it really is – all the thorns are exposed.

One threat to language and culture seems to be shared by all the Celtic nations – the influx of “outsiders” (French and English) who move to a more desirable countryside and buy up housing, driving up prices that prevent a younger generation from remaining in their home areas. While there are exceptions, the incoming residents rarely take an interest in the local language and culture.

On the language front there have been advances for each of the Celtic languages. These include a more favorable view of the languages by their speakers who are no longer fleeing from what they had been led to believe was a backwards and useless culture. And non-speakers have also adopted a more positive view of the Celtic languages. While in some areas schooling has been developed, this remains stifled by bureaucratic regulations and foot-dragging on the part of administrators who fail to understand that bilingualism is a benefit for children.

The concise and well-written articles in this issue of *Carn* give excellent insight into how the political,

economic and cultural/linguistic changes all impact each other – sometimes for the good and sometimes not.

Also included in the issue is a shorter report on the state of Gàidhlig in Nova Scotia and a memorial piece on Ivor Kenna who chaired a London branch of the Celtic League for many years. And there’s a report on the Celtic League’s military monitoring work begun in the 1980s by the Manx branch. This addresses military bases and army exercises which impact the environment, munitions dumping, activities on the seas such as submarine activity which has sunk or endangered fishing vessels including the Breton trawler *Bugaled Breizh* in 2004 which lost all crew. Also addressed by the Celtic League have been military exercises in the sky with low flying airplanes and helicopters. The League has been successful in scaling back some of this activity, but Celtic lands and seas are still negatively impacted by British and French military activities.

It is clear that there are many challenges to be addressed to insure a healthy future for the Celtic nations, and it seems clear that the Celtic League is determined to continue its long work to do this.

Many back issues of *Carn* are available on the Celtic League website (celticleague.net) but for current issues you will need to subscribe (\$30 in U.S. dollars or 24 euros for Europe). Check out the website for details on how to subscribe and for much more information about the activities of the Celtic League.

Losses for the Breton Language and Culture



Natalie Novik
1951-1921

Nathalie Novik (on right) teaching Breton dance

This December Natalie Novik was lost to cancer despite her

best efforts to defeat this terrible disease.

Natalie joined the U.S. ICDBL soon after it was founded in 1981. My first contact with her was a letter I received in July 1982 after she discovered my 1981 PhD thesis (Breton Identity: Musical and Linguistic Expression in Brittany, France) in the library of Ti Kendalc'h, a cultural center for the organization Kendalc'h located in St.-Vincent-sur-Oust. She enthusiastically took on a project to translate it into

French when she returned from Brittany to Paris where she was living. The translation was never completed, and since that time Bretons have produced much more comprehensive writings on Breton identity, music and language.

In that letter of 1982 Natalie introduced herself as follows:

... my family is of Breton origins [with Russian and Corsican as well], and though it is not spoken in my family, I took over learning Breton some years ago. I became more and more involved in this and I am presently the secretary of one of the largest youth associations in Paris, Ti ar Yaouankiz. But apart from this, I have received a good training in English and some other European languages both in my family and at work (I work as an executive secretary for American companies). Furthermore, I have a keen interest in history, archaeology and ethnology ...

I would meet with Natalie in Brittany in October 1982 during a short trip there, and we spent a very joyful evening/night in search of festoù-noz in central Brittany. She recalled later in a letter to me how spooked she felt by getting lost on the back roads and circling around St. Herbot several times – a bad omen with no consequences that evening.

Natalie moved to Skaneateles, New York (Finger Lakes region) in 1983. We would exchange many letters discussing Breton music, Celtic music festivals, Breton political prisoners, and shared interest in the rights of Indigenous peoples. And Natalie would become involved in a leadership role with the U.S. ICDBL and contribute regularly to the newsletter. I would meet with Natalie again in 1984 in New York City and in Skaneateles, and she would visit me in the Philadelphia area in September 1984. But our communication was primarily through long handwritten or typewritten letters.

Natalie was involved in efforts to create truly Inter-Celtic events and festivals in the U.S. where what was described as a “Celtic Festival” was almost always exclusively Scottish and/or Irish in content. She would teach Breton language classes during several Welsh Heritage Weeks held in New York State. During the 1980s she spent many hours working with the InterKelt festival in Boston which was perhaps the most ambitious planning for a festival that incorporated the best of Celtic music from all the Celtic countries, but also language and literature. It would sadly never come to fruition but both Natalie and I worked hard to try to line up the best Brittany had to offer such a festival.

With the death of her partner, an Onondaga (Iroquois) tribal member, Natalie would move from Skaneateles

to Marcellus, New York in 1986, and then to Paris where she would once again engage with the Breton community there and work on getting a visa to return to the U.S. Natalie moved to Alaska in April 1990 to work with Native corporate contacts with the USSR. She would travel between Russia and Paris and Brittany, and back to Alaska, to settle in Anchorage where she would become active in the Celtic network, organizing mini-festivals and Breton dance workshops among other activities.

Natalie also worked on creating links between Brittany and Russia – both in business and cultural exchanges. And she would continue her interest in Native peoples with a focus on Native Siberians, Inuits, and Native peoples of the Arctic.

Our correspondence would thin out considerably in the 1990s and 2000s when we switched to e-mails (which I did not usually print and save). Both of us by then had full-time jobs which left us less time for correspondence than in the days when we were patching together part-time jobs or simply seeking employment.

Natalie continued to be active in support of the U.S. ICDBL and served on its board of consultants. The following is her self-presentation from 2007 when we elected a new slate of candidates for the U.S. ICDBL board. And this gives a more complete idea of Natalie's interests and background than I was able to draw from my collection of correspondence.

I grew up in Paris, France, where the Breton side of my family had a strong influence on me. As I became more conscious of my Breton background, one of my first goals was to learn the Breton language, which led me to a) create a Breton club in the community where I lived, and b) become actively involved in the development of Diwan. While my Master's Degree focused on Native America and Siberia, I also studied Middle Welsh and Middle Breton for two years with Dr. Fleuriot at the Sorbonne's Hautes Études post-graduate institute.

Over the years I remained very active with various Breton organizations, supported Diwan, and promoted the Breton language in festivals, schools, cultural events, both in Europe and in America where I had the opportunity to teach Breton. My interests also include Breton dancing and music, Breton costumes, lore and legends, Breton history, oil spills, economic issues, and the status of Brittany in France, in the European community and among the Celtic countries. In Alaska where I am the only ICDBL member, I represent Brittany as best I can, participating in various Celtic festivals, doing exhibits, demonstrating dances, giving concerts, etc. I go back to Brittany every year, and

continue to deepen my knowledge of the language and culture and follow the political, sociological and economic development of Brittany up close rather than on the internet.

I have served on the Boards of several non-profit Breton organizations and was elected in June 2005 President of the Celtic Community of Alaska, a non-profit dedicated to promoting the Celtic cultures and educating the public about them. In my professional life, I have been working for the past six years for an international non-profit association, a useful experience for the Board of the ICDBL. I have kept excellent contacts in Brittany and would continue to bring to this position the advantage of being able to approach people and organizations over there who know my name and reputation. Over the years I have also contributed numerous articles to Bro Nevez, and to other newsletters and magazines on Brittany, Celtic cultures and history. (from Bro Nevez 101, February 2007)

Natalie contributed regularly to *Bro Nevez* during the nearly 40 years she was a member of the U.S. ICDBL. She wrote a series of Breton language lessons – 20 “Kentel” – published from 2003 to 2013. She also contributed Breton recipes in a series called “Ar Gegin” – 13 contributions from 1984 to 2018. She used her knowledge of Breton costumes for a series of articles featuring five different regions from 2014 to 2015, with book and exhibit reviews as well. Other articles and book reviews spanned a wide range of topics from Breton history, oral traditions, Breton language media and publishing, literature (in French and Breton), the environment, and reports on her travels in Brittany and to the Isle of Man. She offered several obituary notes (Jean-Yves Veillard, Louise Ebrel, Polig Monjarret, Bernard de Parades, and Eric Tabarly) as well as an interview with Remy Penneg of Hi-hon Unan (NHU). And she would report on activities in Alaska where Brittany was celebrated along with the rest of the Celtic community.

Natalie was very much interested and knowledgeable about Breton and Celtic music and would report on concerts and festivals and musicians she met on travels to Brittany and contributed some fifteen CD reviews to *Bro Nevez*.

I will miss the knowledge she shared with me and her warm laugh and intense love of all things Breton.

It seems fitting to include here one of the recipes Natalie contributed to *Bro Nevez*. While she adapted recipes to American ingredients and measurements, she tried to present some of the more characteristic dishes of Brittany, including the *crepes* recipe below from *Bro Nevez* 14, February 1985:

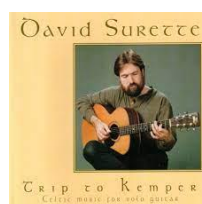
Breton “Crepes”

1 lb. flour
6 eggs (room temperature)
1 tablespoons of oil
1 glass of rum
Milk and water
Butter
Sugar

For a richer mix, use more milk than water. Dilute the flour with milk and water, adding them carefully to avoid lumps, until the mixture is fluid. Add one teaspoon of butter, the oil, the rum and one tablespoon of sugar. Mix thoroughly. The batter should be thinner than for American pancakes, but still have a little body. To be on the safe side, though, it is better to have it perhaps a little heavy, and add water later on if it does not spread evenly on the pan.

Heat a medium frying pan (non-stick bottom or metal pans are preferable), and grease it very lightly with butter. Scoop the batter in a ladle and pour it on the pan, turning the pan at the same time to spread it evenly. The pancake has to be very thin, so the further it spreads, the better. When it turns slightly golden, turn it over with a spatula, or flip it over if you are brave. Cook the other side until golden.

If you are not serving them immediately, you can stack them in a mild oven under a moist cloth. Serve with strawberry preserves or honey, or flambé with rum.



David Surette
1963-2021

Following a six-year battle with cancer David Surette passed away this past December 20 at the all-too-young age of 58. A master of acoustic guitar, mandolin and bouzouki David had a keen interest in and knowledge of Breton music.

I first heard from him in February 1992 when he was planning a trip to Brittany that spring. He was looking for suggestions for musical events and festivals and wanted a copy of the U.S. ICDBL’s “Guide to Music in Brittany” which was full of good suggestions.

David had discovered Brittany on a bicycle trip after a year in Dijon as a junior in college. While in Brittany that April/May of 1992 he discovered the En Arwen Festival of Klergereg and had the chance to go to concerts and festoù noz to hear Barzaz, Skolvan and Sonerion Du as well as sonneurs of the bombard and biniou koz and traditional singers. He was hooked.

In 1995 David had the opportunity to return to Brittany for two weeks with some grant support, and once again immersed himself in the music at festivals like En Arwen and small and larger festoù noz. He also attended performances by and hung out with (and jammed with) some of Brittany's best guitarists – including Soïg Siberil, Dan ar Braz, Gilles Le Bigot and Jacques Pellen. And he met other stellar musicians such as flute player Jean-Michel Veillon and fiddler Christian Lemâitre.

From an article David Surette wrote for *Acoustic Guitar* (February 1996) it is clear that he was listening not only to music and song but using the opportunity to learn as much as he could about traditional music of Brittany. He clearly understood the importance of music and dance to Bretons and he very definitely took joy in meeting Breton musicians and singers and doing his best to do the gavotte.

And certainly his music-making and recordings show how much he loved and understood the subtleties of Breton traditional dances and melodies. In making arrangements of traditional Breton song and dances, as well as in creating his own compositions inspired by these, he captured the unique spirit and swing of Brittany's music.

I very much enjoyed his CDs – especially *Trip to Kemper* produced in 1996 which included arrangements and melodies from Irish and other French traditions. But, after a very scattered correspondence with David, I will especially remember the overnight stop at my house in July 2013 when I hosted a house concert for him and his daughter Isa, a fine singer, fiddler, ukulele, and banjo player.

While David has a special love for Brittany and its music, his repertoire was a wider one. Living in New Hampshire he frequently performed New England based dance music (traditional contra dances), as well as music with roots in Irish, Scottish, French-Canadian traditions. From Old-Time American music and blue grass to Celtic melodies and dances, he was well known for his exceptional technique on guitar and mandolin. While he toured more widely for concerts and festivals much of his music-making and teaching was based in New England where he often performed with his wife Susie Burke (singer and guitarist) as well as daughter Isa and other musicians of the area such as fiddler Rodney Miller and Jeremiah McLane (who shared David's love for Breton music).

Discography:

Back Roads, 1993
Trip to Kemper, 1996
New Leaf, 2000

Northern Roots, 2005
The Green Mandolin, 2008
Sun Dog, 2010
Return to Kemper, 2012
Waiting for the Sun, 2015

Erwan Vallerie

1944-2022

Erwan Vallerie (Yvon-Gildas Vallerie) was a Breton linguist, historian and writer who died this February at the age of 82. As reported on Agence Bretagne Presse (February 2, 2022) he was the son to resistance fighter Pierre Vallerie and learned Breton as a child thanks to his Breton speaking mother. He completed university studies in economy and participated in CELIB (the Comité d'Études et de Liaisons d'Intérêts Bretons). Aware of his own Breton identity and threats to Breton identity, he launched the monthly journal *Sav-Breizh* with Yann Chouq, Alain Prigent and Y. Jézéquel in 1969. This journal would be transformed in 1971 into a bimonthly revue for studies related to the politics of Breton autonomy. Vallerie would direct it until its disappearance in 1975.

In 1969 he was also part of the creation of Skoazell Vreizh with Yann Chouq, Xavier Grall, Gwenc'hlan Le Scouezec and Alain Guel. This organization continues today to offer legal support to Breton militants arrested for their actions for Brittany or publications viewed as seditious to France.

Erwan Vallerie was a scholar of the Breton language publishing important books and articles on Breton linguistics and placenames (see below). For his lifelong work for Brittany he was inducted into the Order of the Ermine in 2014.

- *Théorie de la Nation*, published in 1971 at the time of the transformation of Sav Breizh to a study review. Reedited as *Nous barbares locaux* with three other essays written between 1971 and 1976, ("Place de la langue dans le combat de libération nationale", "L'Europe contre la Bretagne" and "Nous barbares locaux"), by An Here in 1997.

- *Communes bretonnes et paroisses d'Armorique*, Brasparts, éd. Beltan, 1986 (ISBN 2905939044).

- *Diazezoù studi istorel an anvioù-parrez / Traité de toponymie historique de la Bretagne*, 3 vol., Le Relecq-Kerhuon, éd. An Here, 1995 (ISBN 2868431534). — Breton text and French translation.

- *L'art et la manière de prononcer ces sacrés noms de lieu de Bretagne*, Douarnenez, le Chasse-Marée / Ar Men, 1996 (ISBN 2903708630).

- *Ils sont fous ces Bretons !! : trousse de survie pour découvrir des Armoriques*, with the illustrator Nono, Spezed, Coop Breizh, 2003. This would become a best-seller with 100,000 copies sold.

Brittany : A Superorganism? *Deep inside a Breton skull N° 70*

Jean Pierre Le Mat

(What I wrote here is not a truth, as with religious, scientific, political or media truths. It is only an intuition, or perhaps a delirium, born deep in my Breton skull)



Brittany is an anthill, and I am only an ant.

The “superorganism” concept was popularized by James Lovelock and his “Gaia hypothesis”. Published in 1970,

Lovelock's thesis provoked controversies and also various developments, some scientific, others philosophical, others mystical. Is our planet Earth, called Gaia, a superorganism? Gaia is made up of billions of living beings, brought together in the concept of the *biosphere*. These living beings share a *biotope*, that is to say a framework of life that includes the atmosphere, the water of rivers and oceans, the ground. Our biosphere and our biotope regulate and maintain themselves as a living organism does.

According to Lovelock, the Earth is surprisingly hospitable to life. The internal mechanisms which allow the maintenance of the planet look like biological mechanisms. Humans are particularly lucky, because their vital needs are complex. They depend on their ecosystem, i.e. the resources of the soil, water, animals, microbes, plants...

Lovelock is not the first to see Earth as a superorganism. Let us just quote Leonardo da Vinci (1452-1519): “*We can say that the Earth has a vegetative soul, that the ground constitutes its flesh, the rock its bones (...) and the comings and goings of the oceans, its breathing and his pulse*”. A long time before, Saint Paul told that the communion of Christians constitutes the mystical body: “*For just as each of us has one body with many members, and these members do not all have the same function, so in Christ we, though many, form one body, and each member belongs to all the others*” (Rom, 12).

James Lovelock is a climatologist. He finds that the oxygen content of the atmosphere has been stable for millions of years. The maintenance of this percentage seems to be a mysterious compromise between all living beings on the planet. If the percentage would be lower, humans and animals would suffocate. If it would be higher, they would burn spontaneously. Chemists tell us that oxygen should have reacted with other substances to form carbon dioxide, nitrates or other stable compounds. Fortunately, the ozone layer in the stratosphere prevents these reactions by blocking ultraviolet rays.



Deep in my Breton skull, I imagine that there exist superorganisms which would be the missing links between us, human individuals, and our mother-Earth, Gaia. And I imagine also that the Breton ecosystem, including myself, live in one of these local missing links.

Flocks of birds, anthills or symbiotic associations of living beings can be seen as superorganisms. Actually, all organisms, even cells, are born of associations. Nevertheless, the association of living beings has their own qualities and their own potential, without any common measure compared with its components. The brain has a level of consciousness that the neurons do not have. Neurons have a vital level that the atoms that compose them do not have. If, rather than going down, we go up the ladder, the anthill transcends the ants, as the brain transcends the neurons. The behavior of the anthill is of another nature than the behavior of each ant. The anthill acts in a way the ant cannot understand.

Breton community has lived for several centuries. This continuance cannot be reduced to a coincidence of individual wills. Scientists study collective memory, cultures, archetypes, crowd movements. All of these phenomena could be related to a group cohesion. The memory of each of us is located in our brain. But where is the collective memory located?

Superorganisms are alive, they therefore have what typifies living beings: an identity, a memory, and a lifetime. A memory to return to their identity, after illness or injury. A lifetime to give place for new living beings. Can the superorganisms feel emotions? Collective emotions exist in a couple, in a family, or for a crowd during a football match, for political supporters during elections, for an entire people during a war. The collective vibration is an experience that everyone has had. We are part of a family, a company, a political party, a national community; but also, more briefly, we

are part of the round of a gavotte during a fest-noz, or a team of supporters during a football match.

In our modern societies, the individual has precedence over the group. Intelligence, knowledge, memory, feelings and sensations are individualized and it is difficult to get out of this trap. The superorganism concept allows us to integrate collective experiences.

Some people, who are called mystics, shamans or prophets, manage to come into contact with higher levels, with superorganisms. Our old prophet Merlin was one of them. He prophesized the destiny of our people and of Celtic nations.

"The mountains of Armorica will erupt and Armorica itself will be crowned with the diadem of Brutus. Cambria will rejoice and the Cornish oaks will bloom. The island will take the name of Brutus and the title given to it by foreigners will be discarded. From Conan will descend a fierce boar who will test the sharpness of his canines on the forests of Gaul; for he will cut down the largest oaks, while taking care to spare the small ones."

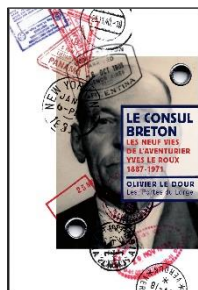
If superorganisms have a memory, maybe they have intentions. Our hope, called "Arthur's return" in ancient times, "Armoric freedom" in 1675, "self-government" now, maybe it is the expression of a superorganism I am part of.

Deep in my Breton skull, I feel that Brittany is a willing anthill and I am only an ant.



Two New Books from Brittany

Reviewed by Lois Kuter



Olivier Le Dour. Le Consul Breton – Les neuf vies de l'aventurier Yves Le Roux, 1887-1971. Rennes : Les Portes du Large, Collection Bretons à travers le monde. 2022. 544 pages. ISBN 978-2-914612-35-7.

Most biographies document the lives of great men and women – famous as world leaders, activists who changed history in some way, movie stars, renowned artists or

musicians, sports heroes, or other movers and shakers who had an impact on the world. Most were outstanding for the positive impact they had, and others were notorious for their role as an outlaw ... say an Al Capone or Jesse James.

This book is about a Breton who was not famous, although he claimed to have been a pal of Al Capone. He was not a particularly nice guy and one could even call him a scoundrel. But, he led an exceptional life of adventure and this book offers a fascinating look at Yves Le Roux (1887-1971) and the world in which he traveled.

Through in-dept research of archives as well as numerous articles and books, Olivier Le Dour brings to life the places, events and people which shaped the life of Yves Le Roux. Since research started long after the death of Le Roux in 1971, the author had no opportunity to interview the subject of this book, and limited opportunities to interview acquaintances and family members who had recollections and stories to share. Yves Le Roux did not leave a journal and he was a bit of a braggart so information about his adventures he passed on to others were not always reliable. Nevertheless, Le Dour is able to recreate events to give a very vivid picture of Yves Le Roux – his adventurous life and his not very endearing personality as well.

The book is divided into nine chapters – the "nine lives" of the title. We start with his childhood in Languennet and Gourin where you meet the family and get a good idea of life in that part of rural Brittany. Maps and old photos throughout the book greatly enhance the view. Yves Le Roux was not a model child, hanging out with other bad boys, and by the age of 13 he was caught stealing apples and sent to a "reform school" in Belle-Île. More like a penitentiary, this institution was ruled harshly in a military style and much of this chapter describes life there. He would remain for five years, until he was 18 years old – an experience that would toughen him up and give him practical training that allowed him to join the Navy in Lorient upon his release.

The second life of Yves Le Roux is that of service in the Navy, another life of military regimentation and routine, described vividly by Olivier Le Dour. Yves Le Roux would work on ships as a "chauffeur" to keep the steam engines operating. One learns not only of his role on board ships headed to Indochina as part of France's colonial campaign, but also of the history of this period. In Saigon, one gets a view of this city of the early 1900s as Yves Le Roux would have discovered it. His ship would travel on to China and Japan with stops in cities where Yves would get into trouble

onshore and be punished. His career in the Navy would end in a military prison outside of Saigon.

That's the third life of Yves Le Roux where he survived an oppressive and unhealthy tropical climate and the hard life of forced labor. After 17 months of detention he would be released due to bronchitis and pulmonary issues.

In his early 20s he would begin his fourth life on return to Paris as a day laborer. Unsuccessful in finding work he would soon be in trouble again, arrested for theft and jailed. In this chapter Olivier Le Dour describes the life of the many Bretons in Paris at this period as well as the life in the prisons of la Santé and Fresnes-les-Rungis. Drawing on documentation of these prisons, Le Dour gives a detailed view of this sad but short period of Le Roux's life.

In his fifth life, Yves Le Roux would be back at sea in the merchant marine, traveling to Senegal and Argentina. In this chapter you learn of this trade route for goods and passengers and get a glimpse of port cities. Le Roux would jump ship – as many did – and live for several years in South America before traveling to Central America.

Then begins his sixth life as a laborer to dig the Panama Canal. He would join some 45,000 to 50,000 workers – in large majority black workers from the Caribbean. As throughout the book Le Dour provides a strong visual image and historical context with photos and detailed descriptions of people and places. Yves Le Roux would be present for the celebration of the opening of the canal in 1914. With the entry of France into World War I, he would return to France to begin his next life as an infantry soldier in the war.

An adventurous life continues in this seventh phase and like the previous ones, this is a challenging period as we follow Yves Le Roux to the front lines of action in the war. Here too, Olivier Le Dour excels in his explicit descriptions of life for a soldier, and one feels the full horror of trench warfare. Le Roux would move from the trenches to transporting military equipment by land and by ship – made particularly dangerous by German submarines. Le Roux would survive a near-drowning with the sinking of his ship by torpedoes. These new adventures take him to yet another part of the world – Albania and Macedonia. While his previous lives ended not too gloriously in prisons, this time he would return to France in 1919 as a soldier who had survived being wounded, ill, and nearly drowned.

The eighth life of Yves Le Roux begins on his return to his family farm in Langonnet. He marries Henriette and we catch up on the fate of family members. And in this chapter Olivier Le Dour provides a history of Breton

emigration to Canada and the U.S., including that of some of the Le Roux family. This is a big period for emigration as Bretons hope to bring back to Brittany enough wealth to buy land. After years eking out a living on the farm, Yves and Henriette Le Roux set off for America and you get a detailed look at the experience of the ocean crossing and arrival.

They first arrive in Milltown, New Jersey, which has a large population of Bretons working in the Michelin factory as well as other mills. Besides a first-hand look at the Breton emigrant community, the author presents Prohibition, enacted in 1927, and the role of Bretons in small home industries of bootlegging. We follow Yves and Henriette to New York City where they join hundreds of others in setting up a speakeasy in Manhattan – the Consul Breton of the book's title.

Le Dour presents a fascinating look at the "Roaring 20s" of New York and the role of the Consul Breton not just as a bar but as a social gathering place for Bretons. By the late 1920s organized crime was making an impact on the speakeasy business and police were less lenient than in earlier years. It was time to throw in the towel and Yves and Henriette Le Roux returned to Brittany in 1930. This 8th chapter is by far the longest of this book and will be of most interest to American readers in its rich description of Breton emigration and life in the U.S.

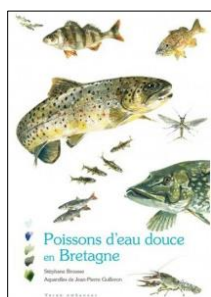
The ninth life of Yves Le Roux is his retirement back in Langonnet. He had done well in New York and built a "chateau" on the old family farm in Brittany. With a modest lifestyle, Yves Le Roux could retire comfortably. He was not a particularly social character but would brag of his friendship with Al Capone, which most acquaintances and family members doubted.

This chapter reveals more of the personality of Yves Le Roux as it describes the entry of France into World War II in 1939 and the German occupation of Brittany. Yves Le Roux was too old to be conscripted and played an ambiguous role during the war. He was friendly to Germans yet his home served as a meeting place for the Resistance. Likewise, his political leanings were ambivalent.

His relations with his family were not particularly warm, and to escape an abusive relationship, Henriette would leave for Canada with their daughter in 1952 while Yves was touring in Europe on his own. Yves Le Roux rambles about and in this chapter you catch up with news of family and acquaintances from his previous adventures. Le Roux died in an automobile accident in 1971 at the age of 85.

One comes away from this book with the feeling that Yves Le Roux was a scoundrel, braggart, brawler and

a generally unlikeable man throughout his life. But he sought adventure and fought his way through hard times, surviving prison and war and making the best of a life stacked against him since childhood. Olivier Le Dour excels in presenting the events and people that impacted the life of Yves Le Roux. And the numerous photos and documents presented (reminiscences of others as well as historical descriptions) provide an in-depth context to get a vivid picture of Brittany, Bretons, and the nine lives of Yves Le Roux.



Stéphane Brousse, with illustrations by Jean-Pierre Guilleron. *Poissons d'eau douce en Bretagne*. Fouenant: Yoran Embanner. 2021. 144 pages. ISBN 978-2-36785-040-5.

This is the ninth in a series on flora and fauna of Brittany published by Yoran Embanner.

Focused on freshwater fish this follows on books about amphibians and reptiles, birds of the hedges and coasts, coastal algae, plants of dunes and rocky coastal areas, mammals, and hawks and owls. In all cases, these books are directed to beginner-level naturalists to introduce information and images that would help one explore and identify different species encountered in Brittany. Basic information is provided on appearance, habitat and behavior, but the text is greatly enhanced by illustrations that bring each plant and animal to life. Roughly 10 ½ by 7 ½ inches in size, these hardback books are perhaps too beautiful to take on a hike, but should be used for explorations of Brittany's countryside.

This new book on freshwater fish is loaded with interesting information – even for those who have never seen a fish in the wild or thought about looking for one. But fish are everywhere with some 24,000 species world-wide, of which 8,000 are freshwater fish.

The author. Stéphane Brousse, starts with some basics – just what is a fish (basic anatomy), what is the nature of the water where fish thrive, what are the fresh water watersheds, rivers and streams of Brittany, and what is the plant life of these water systems – including threats caused by invasive species and pollution.

While the fish life of Brittany is not significantly different from other areas of France overall, the waterways of Brittany have some unique qualities – lots of smaller rivers and streams and a presence of migratory fish thanks to the estuaries and coasts connecting the sea to freshwater habitats. After a brief presentation of the more unique aspects of Brittany's freshwater fish population the author closes the introductory section with a description of the six senses of fish: vision,

taste, touch, smell, hearing, and a physical makeup that allows fish to sense pressure and temperature variations.

The bulk of the book is made up of the presentation of each fish species spanning one or two pages of which much is taken up by illustrations. Included are:

23 autochtones - indigenous species which have reproduced in the area since at least the Holocene period (10,000 years ago)

16 alloctones – non-indigenous species not present before the Holocene, often introduced in more recent centuries.

5 crustaceans and mollusks

5 estuarine species - fish of the estuaries where salt and fresh water are found

4 migratory fish which make their way from the sea into the estuaries and rivers.

It was difficult to get a reliable and exact translation of the scientific fish names but included were bream, pike, carp, bullhead, stickleback, lamprey, perch, bass, carp, salmon, catfish, trout, flounder, sturgeon, and eels

For each species of fish the descriptions included the scientific name, French version and Breton name, with a note as to the scientific fish family. Basics provided information on average and maximum size and weight, years needed for sexual maturity, life span, and level of endangerment (if any).

Descriptions also included body shapes and color, general behavior, the fish's presence in Brittany and more widely, and habitat where one would likely find a fish. Also noted is what a fish eats (and what might eat it) as well as reproduction cycles and behavior. In some cases an interesting fact on the history of human interaction with the fish species or fish behavior is added. And for each fish watercolor illustrations add an artistic touch but also allow one to get a good idea of shape and colors beyond the written description.

I liked the little section squeezed in between the fish descriptions called "Three presumed ideas." First of these is the notion that fish do not feel pain, second that they have no memory, and third that fish do not sleep. In each case the author gently lets us down from these false perceptions citing what research has shown us about the habits and senses of fish.

Of great use – especially for the non-scientists among us – is a lexicon of terms where words such as

“gynogenes,” “mandible,” piscovore,” “ripisylvie,” etc. are briefly explained. Also included is a bibliography of guides and books on fish of French and Europe as well as a list of websites leading to more information about Brittany specifically.

The author, Stéphane Brousse, is not an ichthyologist but a lover of the natural world with a curiosity about it, love of watery environments, and a passion for research and writing. He is the author of four other books in this series by Yoran Embanner (on amphibians and reptiles, mammals, and birds). The illustrator, Jean-Pierre Guilleron, is a painter inspired by Japanese art who works primarily in watercolors and pen and ink. He is the illustrator for one other book in the series on hawks and owls.

As is the case for all of this series of books on the natural world of Brittany, this book is a great guide for beginners interested in exploring the world of freshwater fish as well as an interesting and visually engaging presentation for those who have no opportunity to dip a foot into the waterways of Brittany.

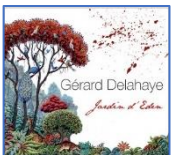
Heard of but not heard – 8 New albums from Brittany

Information for the short descriptions below were gleaned from *Ar Men* 246 (Jan.-Feb. 2022), *Musique Breton* 269 (Nov.-Dec. 2021), the Coop Breizh website and other web sources.



Jean Baron, Sophie Pagnon. *C'était par un beau clair de lune.*

This new album features the duo of Jean Baron on bombarde and veuze (a bagpipe from southeastern Brittany) and Sophie Pagnon on harp. They are joined by Sophie's sons Youenn (fiddle) and Brendan (bass) and Jean's son Florian (oud) and his daughter Maella (vocals), as well as by Patrick Lefebvre (accordion). The album includes 12 selections of songs- traditional and composed – of Gallo Brittany.



Gérard Delahaye. *Jardin d'Eden.*

This is the 20th solo album by Gérard Delahaye with 12 selections of songs and instrumental pieces – newly composed and rooted in Breton and Celtic melody and rhythm. Guitarist and singer Delahaye is accompanied by Dan ar Braz (guitar), Jean-Luc Thomas (flute), Gabriel Faure (fiddle), Cedrick Alexandre (bass fiddle) and others. While

Delahaye is known for his albums for young listeners, this is for all ages.



Morgane Gregory, Kevin Le Pennec. *Bisiad.*

This is a duo of harpists and vocalists who draw from traditional melodies and dances of Brittany, Scotland and Ireland, adding funk beat to the 9 selections. Guest artists Arthur Manuel adds guitar and banjo.



Erwan Hamon and Yousef Zayed. *Tamas Lier*

Erwan Hamon (flute) and Yousef Zayed (oud and percussion) first met when the Martin Hamon Quintet worked with Basel Zayed on a creation called Kaharoud. The duo performs 13 compositions and traditional pieces of a slower contemplative nature as well as rhythmic dances drawing on Breton and Palestinian roots.



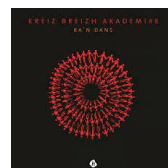
Delgado Jones. *Tales of Wanderland.* L'Église de la Petite Folie.

Delgado Jones (Jacques Creignou) composes song texts of a folk-rock influence recounting tales of wonder and wander as the title might indicate. In the 10 selections (all with English titles) Delgado Jones provides vocals, guitars, bass, keyboards and electronic effects. He is accompanied by John Trap (Thomas Lucas) on bass, drums, keyboard and electronic devices., and Mirabelle Gillis on fiddle.



Kengaï Orchestra. *Iro.*

Led by singer-saxophonist Maël Morel, this orchestra explores Afro-Caribbean rhythms and themes in 11 selections (English and French titles). A range of percussions, electric guitar, keyboards, sax, trumpet, trombone and other instruments are found in the orchestra.



Kreiz Breizh Akademi #8. *Ba'n dañs.* Hirustica HIR 021055.

This is the eighth in a series of albums produced by students of the Kreiz Breizh Akademi, a music workshop in central Brittany initiated by Erik Marchand where modal music is featured. Students explore traditional Breton and other world musics, acoustic, vocal and electric. This latest production features dance with a variety of rhythms from the Breton dance tradition (suite de Loudéac, pilé menu, suite fisel, gavotte de l'Aven, kas a-barh) as well as some bourées of Occitania. The performances are by two singers and nine instrumentalists of clarinet,

bombarde, sax, fiddle, accordion, bass and percussions.



Stone Age. *Bubry Road*

This is the fifth album by this group with a groove pop-electro-vintage sound. The album includes 14 vocal and instrumental selections with titles in English, Breton and French with all

but one composition by Kervador and Marc de Ponkallec.

An American Travel Account of Nantes from 1930

***Enchanted Brittany*, by Amy Oakley with illustrations by Thornton Oakley** (New York: The Century Company). 1930.

Thornton Oakley (1881-1953) is the better known of this duo who collaborated on a number of travel books. He was a noted artist who studied with Howard Pyle, founder of the Brandywine School in Pennsylvania. He taught at the Philadelphia Museum of Art's School of Industrial Art and during World War II was commissioned to do 48 paintings of war plants and other industries. He married Amy Ewing (1881-1963) in 1910 and she provided the texts for books he illustrated which included *Hill Towns of the Pyrenees* (1923), *Cloud Lands of France* (1927) and *The Heart of Provence* (1936).

The following is extracted from Chapter XXII of Enchanted Brittany: Nantes, Birthplace of Briand

To the Englishman or American, Nantes is first and foremost the birthplace of the famous Edict. It was here in the château, most probably, though some insist that it was in the Mansion des Tourelles, that Henry IV signed the document which accorded liberty of conscience to his Protestant subjects, the Huguenots. The ninety-five general articles were signed on April 13, 1598, the fifty-six particular ones on May 2 of the same year.

In order to appreciate this hard-won victory of the Huguenots, one should know something of the history of Protestantism in the region. Following the Massacre of Saint Bartholomew in 1572, the Duc de Montpensier, Governor of Nantes, wrote officially from Paris, where he was staying, advocating a like murder of Huguenots in the city of Nantes. Thanks to the refusal of the mayor, however, the proposed slaughter did not take place.

. . . On the whole, the citizens of Nantes did not take kindly to Protestantism but joined the League under the

leadership of Duc de Mercoeur, Governor of Brittany, who installed himself in the château and was loath to allow entrance to Henri IV even after Henri had turned Catholic.

A month after the revocation of the Edict of Nantes, in 1685, the parliament of Brittany ordered the destruction of the church at Sucé, where the Huguenots of Nantes had worshiped in comparative safety. The Protestants in great numbers now left the country, emigrating to Holland, Brandenburg, and England.

Although Nantes, as I have said, has been associated with the birth of the noted Edict, yet the city is likewise the birthplace of many distinguished figures, among them – to choose my oddly assorted favorites! – Anne de Bretagne, Jules Verne, and Aristide Briand.

Jules Verne was one of the first to appreciate the qualities of Briand, and honored this youthful admirer by making him the hero of one of his tales. As a young man Briand was, like so many who have become good Republicans, a revolutionary Socialist. His biographer remarks that in the penniless youth, the barrister quick to defend innocent though moneyless clients, the revolutionary journalist, few could have seen the future first statesman of Europe.

"Poincaré knows everything and understands nothing," Clemenceau is reported to have said. "Briand knows nothing, but he has antennae through which he understands everything."

Expelled from the Socialist party because of its dogmatic lack of vision, Briand is at heart a true Socialist in his idealism and belief in human solidarity.

"Peace," says Briand, "is an exacting mistress, still more exacting than war."

It was our good fortune to be in Nantes at the time of the signing, in Paris, of the Kellogg-Briand anti-war pact. The provincial city was ablaze with bunting. Pride was exhibited on every hand at the doings of "the deputy from Nantes," as they liked to call him at the Hôtel de France.

"Briand used to stay here when he came to Nantes," said our host, "but now he must stay at the prefecture. He lives in an apartment in the Foreign Office in Paris; he says the wind in the trees reminds him of Brittany."

The house on the Place de Bretagne where the premier of a dozen cabinets was born is no longer standing, but Aristide Briand is to-day acclaimed in his native city. Of humble origin, possessing, like Ramsey MacDonald, an innate refinement and Celtic beauty, a

mystic and yet a man of action, the hero of Locarno is assured a high place in the history of his time.

Capital of the department of Loire-Inférieure, chief city of Brittany, Nantes has won at least numerically over its long-time rival the city of Rennes. In the tenth century the dispute for sovereignty ran high between the Counts of Rennes and Nantes. Pierre de Dreux, declared duke by Philippe Auguste, made Nantes his capital. It was, indeed, the preferred residence of many of the dukes. The number of inhabitants is to-day more than double that of Rennes. Nantes, an impetus to whose shipping was received during the World War [I], has become a center of maritime commerce and industrialism.

Souvestre has compared Nantes to an Italian city, a "Venice without sun or gondolier." Situated on the right bank of the Loire – whose five branches one is always crossing – some thirty-five miles from its mouth, Nantes is a city of bridges. Here, also, the river Erdre, forming a lap of the Nantes to Brest Canal, throws itself into the Loire.

Nantes has been called a trading port second only to Marseilles, but was not the writer unmindful of Bordeaux? Indeed, it is with Bordeaux that comparisons leap to mind. Both have handsome monuments in Neo-Greek taste, both have been enriched by the fortunes of eighteenth-century ship-owners. (The merchants of Nantes grew fabulously wealthy carrying on a slave-trade with the West Indies.) At Nantes, however, the natives do not mouth their French nor roll their "r's" as at neighboring Bordeaux!

The ancient quays of the Loire have sinister associations. The citizens of Nantes, ever loyal to the Revolution and offering a stalwart resistance to Vendean uprisings, were, many of them, victims of the Terror. During four long months the guillotine performed its bloody task on the Place du Bouffay. During the unspeakable régime of Carrier, sent from Paris, dark deeds were done the memory of which haunts the stranger to-day as he wanders along the river bank. The dying groans of the drowning seem to echo down the centuries as thoughts turn to notorious noyades.

Associations with Anne de Bretagne are of a happier nature. Anne was born in the Château of Nantes; the room is still shown to visitors. After her husband's death it was to the Château of Nantes, rebuilt by her father, that the youthful widowed queen retired. In 1499 it was in the castle's chapel (since destroyed by an explosion) that the marriage which was to restore to her the crown of France took place. Although she died in the Château of Blois (on January 9, 1514) and was

interred with ceremony in the burial-place of the kings at Saint-Denis, Anne bequeathed her heart to her "good town of Nantes," with the request that it should be placed in the tomb of her father, Duc François II.

Three massive towers of the fastness at Nantes date from the reign of the Duchess Anne, while the north bastion was an addition erected by the Duc de Mercoeur. The castle was once washed by the waters of the Loire. The Grand-Logis, in the style of the Renaissance, now houses a collection of Breton art.

We were particularly interested in the native pottery. One plate of the Revolutionary period represents a sturdy Breton peasant with a cross over one shoulder and a sword over the other, the motto being: *je suis las de les porter...*

That was in 1791. A Socialist friend of ours remarked that the Breton is still weary of carrying his double burden – but thinks, when entering a battle for Church or State, that he is fighting for his God and his Liberty.

The famous "Book of Hours" of Anne of Brittany – with forty-eight full-page miniatures, twenty-four illuminated calendar pages, the Latin text bordered with designs of fruits, flowers, insects, and reptiles – is to be seen to-day in the Bibliothèque Nationale. Nantes possesses, at the fascinating Musée Dobrée (where, too, is an engraving of Henri IV signing the Edict), a facsimile of the only known manuscript letter by Anne, the original of which is in the British Museum, and several letters signed by the duchess. Here, too, may be seen the golden heart-shaped casket which up to the time of the Revolution contained that "precious jewel the heart of the queen."

"The golden vessel," says the chronicler, "was carried through the streets with great pomp. The houses were hung with white-draperies and candles blazed in every window. A crier in black velvet opened the march. At every cross-road he rang the bells which he carried in each hand and demanded prayers for the dead queen. A hundred men followed, clad in black, carrying massive torches. Then came all the notables of the town. The chancellor of Brittany bore the heart of the *bonne duchesse* which was deposited in a magnificent chapel." ... Four thousand candles were lighted at Notre-Dame in Paris for the Queen of France, but Nantes offered five thousand for the beloved Duchess of Brittany.

The tomb of the chapel of the Carmelites (the chef d'oeuvre of the Breton sculptor Michel Colombe which had been erected by Anne in memory of her parents, François II and Marguerite de Foix), having been violated at the time of the Revolution, was later transferred to the cathedral. The two marble effigies

may be seen here to-day, still guarded by representations of the cardinal virtues, that of Justice, it is said, being a portrait of the Duchess Anne.

Clisson – still farther southward, on the river Sèvre – is now but a mere shell, a ruin which speaks of former grandeur. Here, in this castle erected in the thirteenth century by an ancestor of Olivier de Clisson, François II, Duke of Brittany, was married to Marguerite de Foix. Near by is the grotto sacred to the memory of Héloïse and Abélard. It was at the hamlet of le Pallet, a few kilometers away, that, in 1079, Abélard first saw the light. His ancestral château has fallen to dust, but the interior of a tiny sanctuary dedicated to Sainte Anne remains intact. It was to le Pallet that Héloïse and Abélard fled from Paris. At le Pallet their child, Astrolabe, was born, and christened in this very chapel of Sainte-Anne that is to-day overgrown with luxuriant ivy, guarded by age-old cypresses. Time has swept away all other souvenirs of Abélard.

Westward from Nantes, at the mouth of the Loire, lies the modern ship-building town of Saint-Nazaire. Here the svelte *Paris, France*, and *Ile-de-France* have glided from the ways. Near the boulevard bordering the Atlantic, on a rock in the water, an effective statue of a young American crusader borne by a gigantic eagle was erected in 1926 to commemorate the landing in France of the first American troops, on June 26, 1917. The road continues to fashionable la Baule, and the sardine-fishing port of le Croisic.

Like le Croisic, the Bourg-de-Batz was once surrounded by the sea. To-day all but stranded amid marshes, the inhabitants earn their livelihood by harvesting the ocean's salt. Six thousand tons, I am told, is amassed annually. Although the fantastic dress of the *paludier* or salt-worker is rarely worn nowadays except for festivals, the region of the Bourg-de-Batz is not without an individual charm. The marshland is divided into rectangular basins which at high tide mirror the sky. To us the scene recalled the paddy fields of Japan – the cone-shaped hillocks of salt reflecting in the still water like the distant Fujiyamas of Hokusai.

No less curious than the salt-marshes of the Bourg-de-Batz is the neighboring peat-bog of la Grand-Brière. Throughout the winter the morass is covered by the Loire save for a few granite islets, on which the inhabitants dwell; the better-drained portions are used in summer as pasturage. The Briérons of one village communicate with the natives of other settlements by means of a network of canals. Once the Brière, like the marsh at Dol, was a vast forest; ebonized oaks are occasionally disgorged. During only nine days in the year are the inhabitants allowed to cut the peat.

If the Bourg-de-Batz had reminded us of Japan, the Grand-Brière, we thought, was still more suggestive of China. There was a strange un-European desolation about the place. Rude shaggy-thatched, almost Asiatic huts bordered the canals. I remember an especial hamlet beyond Marland, overgrown with rushes; Breca is, I think, its name. Beyond it no road leads. It sits upon the very edge of the drear and untraversable bog. Trignac, its canal dotted with white ducks, transported us in memory to the populous duck-farms along the West River above Canton.

Picturesque salt-workers from the marshes of the Bourg-de-Batz, natives of the isolated villages scattered on islets in the peat-bog of la Brière, gather of a Saturday at the market of Guérande. I have left Guérande to the end of my narrative, for anything coming after would be an anti-climax. It is true that we had seen Vitré, Monsieur and I, we had known Aigues-Mortes and Avignon in Provence, to which Guérande has been compared; yet, barring Carcassonne, we had never before come upon so satisfying a medieval conglomeration. Guérande is complete. Ten towers punctuate its girdling ramparts. The town was once surrounded with water, but to-day its approaches and its moats have submitted to a peaceful invasion of grass blades, where once blades of steel flashed bright in the sun. The drawbridges of Guérande were lowered to receive du Guesclin. De Clisson was needs forced to abandon his attempted siege. The mighty gates of Guérande are four – facing, it has been said, the four winds.

To the north lies the road to Vannes, to the south that to le Croisic; the road to the west leads to Piriac, while that to the east, beginning at the portal of Saint-Michel, ends shortly at Saint-Nazaire.

Capital of Brittany for a time, Guérande, hardly known beyond the borders of the province, slumbers as peacefully as if no stirring historic events had ever been transacted within its walls. Indeed the town rarely awakens, but on occasion may be seen such animations as marked the Fête of August 26, 1928, when Duke Jean V received, as of old, the homage of his loyal *paludiers*. It was at Guérande that, in 1365, the treaty of peace was signed between Charles IV, King of France, and Jean de Montfort, the ally of England.

Thus even the seemingly never-ending War of the Breton Succession, an integral part of the Hundred Years' War, drew at last to its close, and this at Guérande.

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