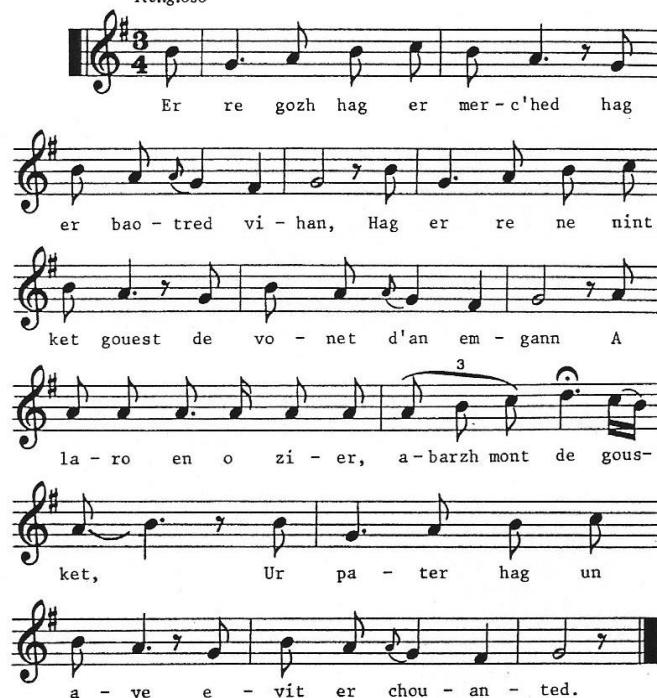


BRO NEVEZ

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

AR CHOUANTED

Religioso



Er re gozh hag er mer-c'hed hag
er bao-tred vi-han, Hag er re ne nint
ket gouest de vo-net d'an em-gann A
la-ro en o zi-er, a-barzh mont de gous-
ket, Ur pa-ter hag un
a-ve e-vit er chou-an-ted.

From: Kervarker, *Barzhaz Breizh* (Mouladurioù Hor Yezh, 1988)

KUZUL ETREVROADEL EVIT KENDALC'H AR BREZHONEG

No. 103

August 2007

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Now available via: www.icdbl.com

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: February, May, August and November. Contributions, letters to the Editor, 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 do this. 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. Dues and contributions can also be sent electronically via the U.S. ICDBL web site.

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

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Lois goes to Brittany this September

It has been nine years since I have traveled to Brittany, so this trip is long overdue. Unfortunately, I will have just two weeks (minus travel time) – September 18 to October 2. This is much too short of a time to see all the old friends I want to visit and to make new acquaintances. Included in this trip will be a visit to the Diwan School in Landerneau (see news about the school in this issue of Bro Nevez) and to the September 27th Congress of the Cultural Institute of Brittany which will feature Breton and Celtic art and sculpture. And I look forward to attending the evening ceremony following the Congress to welcome new members of Brittany's Order of the Ermine. That's just a start. I am certain to put many miles on my rental car and I hope to have interesting news to bring to future pages of Bro Nevez. And hopefully, I can indulge in a little tourism to visit some of the many places in Brittany I have yet to discover.

Lois Kuter
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Letters to the Editor

Dear Lois

My first copy of Bro Nevez arrived in this morning's mail and I thought I must write to thank you and say how impressed I am with it. I shall look forward to receiving it each quarter as a useful and informative supplement to my study of the Breton language.

I work as a freelance translator, earning my living translating often uninspiring legal documents from several of the main European languages, but my heart lies in the Celtic languages. I recently completed a personal 10-year challenge creating a 620 page two-way dictionary between Cornish and Italian, but have now returned to Breton which I had neglected for some years. However it comes back quickly with a little daily study ... rather like riding a bicycle, I suppose.

I am grateful there are people like you who work hard to protect beautiful 'minority' languages from being squeezed out by the world's linguistic heavy-weights!

Best regards
David Kennard
Somerset, England



Dear Lois

I found the article, "American and Celtic Language Nicknames (mostly Breton ones)" by Mikael Madeg (Bro Nevez 102, May 2007), very interesting.

My mother was from Finisterre (Leuhan) and spoke better Breton than French. I was born and raised in New York City where there was a large Breton community from the same area of Brittany. Naturally, I knew many of them.

The article stated, "At St. Goazec, or from there, around 1930, quite a few young men went to New York to live at a place called "Ioti" (or so it sounds)." I believe the town mentioned is Lodi, New Jersey, located about an hour's drive west of the George Washington Bridge from New York. Many Breton families continued to live there in the 1940s and 1950s.

Many thanks for the interesting articles.

Best Regards,
Robert Merle
Stafford, Virginia

Editor's response: From time to time, the subject of Breton emigration to the U.S. demands that I reprint the song text "Potred Breiz-Izel en Americ." It has been over ten years since this has been included in the pages of Bro Nevez, so it's time to present this text again to "newer" readers. Please see an article and the song text reproduced later in this issue.



News From Skol Diwan Landerne

Longer-term readers of Bro Nevez will know that the U.S. ICDBL has a special link to the Diwan School in Landerneau. This dates to 1992 when I was invited to become a "godmother" for the

school. I decided this was a role all the members of the U.S. ICDBL could share, and several U.S. ICDBL members have had the opportunity to visit the Diwan school. We also send a small contribution to the school from time to time for special projects.

The following is a letter I received from the upper classes of the school (the 9 to 11 year old children) reporting on their past school year. I share it with you. I have translated it from French and added a few notes in [brackets].

6 July 2007

Hello Lois,

We are the students in the CE2, CM1 and CM2 classes of the Diwan School of Landerneau [last year of the Cours Élémentaire and first and second year of the Cours Moyen]. This year we learned sailing at Moulin Mer in October. It was fun.

We created a CD with the Plabennec Diwan School and Jean-Luc Roudaut; we started by writing the words for two songs, then we sent them to Jean-Luc who created the music. We had to learn them before he came to record us. On July 1st we had a concert for the release of our CD which is called "Eskell evit warc'hoazh" [Wings for tomorrow]. We invented and learned "An Olifant hag ul logodenn" [the elephant and a mouse] and "Gwirioù are vugale" [Truths/realities of children]. We are very happy to offer it to you.

We also participated in Diwan Sport – a day of sports with other Diwan schools. And of course, we have worked hard, and this evening we will be on summer vacation until September 3.

We wish you a good vacation.

Until soon, Kenavo,

| | | | | |
|--------------|---------------|-----------------|--------------|--------------|
| <i>Elena</i> | <i>Jean</i> | <i>Pierrick</i> | <i>Mari</i> | <i>Anaïs</i> |
| <i>Alan</i> | <i>Aldwin</i> | <i>Tristan</i> | <i>Erell</i> | <i>Ewan</i> |
| <i>MK</i> | | <i>Kieran</i> | | |

Look for a review of the CD "Eskell evit warc'hoazh" later in this issue of Bro Nevez.

WHAT'S HAPPENING – SOME SHORT NOTES ON THE BRETON LANGUAGE AND CULTURE

Compiled by Lois Kuter

Information for the following notes was gleaned from: *Keleier Ofis ar Brezhoneg* 72, gouere 2007, *Ar Soner* 383 Juillet-Août 2007, and *Armor Magazine* 449, juin 2007, and from the website www.agencebretagnepresse.com.

Statistics on the Breton Language

It is often difficult to give an accurate answer to the question “How many people speak Breton?” Certainly the U.S. ICDBL has proposed some very optimistic numbers in the past. The following numbers are drawn from an interview with Fañch Broudig, a scholar of the Breton language and its history, and director of Breton language programming for France 3 Ouest, published in a special “dossier” on Brittany in the magazine *L'Express*, No. 2916, May 24-30, 2007.

Approximately 240,000 people in Brittany are capable of speaking Breton, and 70,000 have the opportunity to use it everyday. These 70,000 are found mostly in Lower Brittany (roughly the western half of Brittany) and represent 20% of the population over the age of 15 of that area. Breton is most present on an everyday level of use in the Trégor and Upper Cornouaille areas.

Breton speakers represent 16% of the total population of Lower Brittany and 6% of the population of all five departments of Brittany. Two-thirds of Breton speakers are over 60 years old and an estimated 15,000 are under 40 years old. That's the challenge for the future of the Breton language. In 1950 there were some 1.1 million Breton speakers and the precipitous drop in numbers is due in large part to the fact that parents did not pass Breton down to children in the home – a decision made in the interest of helping children get ahead in the world by learning just French. In those days bilingualism was not presented as a viable option.

Challenges in Transmitting Breton to the Very Youngest

It is well known that language acquisition happens most successfully at a very young age. So it is not surprising that parents who want their children to have the opportunity to use Breton as a living language – whether they themselves speak Breton or not – look for more and more opportunities for their children to be

exposed to the Breton language at a young age. Thus it is with dismay that one learns that a project to open a Breton language day care in Vannes called Babigou Breizh has hit a funding roadblock. Funding by the Caisse d'Allocations Familiales (Caf) has been denied to this day care project – which has the support of the Municipal Council of Vannes - because it has been deemed that the use of Breton would be an obstacle to social diversity in the day care center and that it might discriminate against families where the parents who do not speak Breton.

Despite the fact that Babigou Breizh has affirmed that all will be welcome to enroll their children, and that French will be the language of communication with families who do not speak Breton, the Caf finds the immersion of little children (2 and under) in a Breton-speaking program a frightening prospect. For some reason the Cafs in other parts of France have not had a problem with day care centers that immerse children in German, English, or Basque (for centers in the Basque area of France). Why is giving one's child the opportunity to get a strong foothold in learning Breton such a terrible idea in Brittany, when offering that same opportunity for other languages is considered to be progressive education?

In the meantime the organization Divskouarn, created in 2005, continues to work on the development of day care centers which use Breton – from a limited introduction to total immersion. Working with the Region of Brittany, the Department of Finistère and Ofis ar Brezhoneg, this organization has found a real demand on the part of parents for pre-preschools which provide Breton language activities for children.

Dafar Sevenadurel Brezh - Collecting Brittany's Heritage

Throughout Brittany a number of cultural organizations have libraries which include books, magazines, pamphlets and a variety of unpublished documents about the history and culture of Brittany. A new organization, Dafar Sevenadurel Breizh, is at work to set up a network of such organizations and a directory of these resources. This involves the creation of a web site so that anyone looking for a special document or information on a particular topic will be able to locate what they want and where to find it. Right now over a

dozen organizations are involved in this project, including Dastum, Ti Kendalc'h and Ti ar Vro Kemper. This is definitely an important step in making it much easier for people in Brittany – scholars or just those interested in learning more about their heritage – the chance to find information. And this will also help those individuals who have a rich personal collection of materials – especially unpublished documents – find a good place to deposit them in the future.

Breton at Summer Camps for Children

Up from 400 children last summer, some 660 children have signed up for summer camp programs where the Breton language is used for activities. This summer 22 camps are lined up, including a number of new organizations taking the step in addition to the regular core programs at An Oaled in Treglennou (Finistère) and Ti ar C'hoadoù in La Chapelle-Neuve (Côtes d'Armor). Camps are being organized in Redon, Landerneau, Plésidy, Plourin-le-Morlaix, and Douarnenez where children can discover the countryside or stay on a farm, or they might work on writing a book, creating a play, and certainly indulge in all the other summer activities kids enjoy at camp.

And a Summer Camp for Families – Kamp Etrekeltiek Ar Vrezhonegerion (KEAV – www.keav.org)

The Inter-Celtic Camp for Breton Speakers was founded in 1948 and celebrates its 60th anniversary this year. As described in English (Breton, French and Welsh as well) on the web site: “The association KEAV organizes linguistic courses in summer for people who have some knowledge of Breton, and who want to improve their linguistic skills and live for some time in this language. Breton is the only language used during this course, so it is an opportunity to learn by immersion. The idea from the start was to gather families who wanted to enjoy leisure time activities through the Breton language. This year's weekly sessions are July 8-15 and July 15-21 in Scaër. This is an inter-generational experience and the “inter-Celtic” element is often born out by the presence of Irish or Welsh-speakers. Breton learners from many parts of the world have taken advantage of this camp as well – including an American or two. The Breton-only rule for all activities of the camp means that you need to be beyond the beginner stage, but since you do absolutely everything through Breton, this plunge really works to take Breton beyond a classroom only competency.

Breton Outside of the Classroom Walls

The following is a sampling of activities that have been organized for Breton speakers and learners to have fun and use the Breton language in a variety of contexts.

Naoned / Nantes – The organization Kenteliou an Noz puts together a ping pong tournament each year played exclusively through the Breton language. Kenteliou an Noz organizes Breton classes for adults, so adding activities where learners can use Breton for conversation (and in the case of ping pong, mastery of numbers as they count points) is a natural step.

Kemper / Quimper – Mervent is an association to organize classes for adult Breton learners in southwestern Brittany. It has also worked to mix the business of learning Breton with pleasure in three activity days. One focuses on gardening, another on cooking, and the newest is a museum visit – all conducted entirely through Breton. Mervent has also been active in eight retirement homes organizing classes to build better communication between elderly Breton speaking residents and non-Breton speaking staff.

Lesneven – Series of talks in Breton on a variety of topics, open to the public, are not unique to Lesneven, but certainly a great success in this city of northwestern Brittany. Organized by Ti ar Vro Leon, these attract 15 to 20 “regulars” and another 15 to 20 attendees depending on the topic. Topics have included local history, accounts of travel to other countries, Breton family names, agriculture and natural products, and climate change presented by a scientist from Ifremer. Coming up is a talk by Essy Buhendwa, an African who has moved to Brittany and learned the Breton language. He is a teacher of Economics with a PhD in Political Sciences who will discuss the Swahili-Breton dictionary he has authored.

Douarnenez – The Port-Musée of Douarnenez is open seven months of the year and receives 47,000 visitors each year. This spring it reopened with a new audio-guide in Breton to add to those already available in French and English (with German to be added). What better way to discover the rich maritime heritage of this city than through the Breton language.

Naoned / Nantes – For the fourth time, a treasure hunt in Breton has been organized in Nantes. Teams mixing different levels of Breton learners and speakers are given clues in the form of riddles to guide them through the center of Nantes in search of treasures.

Redon eus Karaez / From Redon to Carhaix – “Ar Redadeg” is a 500 kilometer walk being organized to show support for Breton language schools in Brittany. This is modeled on the Korrika of the Basque country which covers some 2,600 kilometers over 12 days with walkers relaying from one Basque language school (Iskatola) to another. The Breton version will be a shorter walk in May 2008 starting in Redon and passing through Vannes, Brest, Morlaix and Guingamp before ending in Carhaix. Travel points will include both Diwan schools and bilingual schools, and participants will include both adults and children. Kilometers completed can be sponsored by organizations or individuals to raise money for Breton language school programs.

The Coop Breizh Celebrates its 50th Anniversary

In 1957 when the federation of Celtic Circles called Kendalc’h launched the Cooperative Breizh it was not easy to locate books or recordings in stores in Brittany. Nor was there a computer internet where you could order things from anywhere in the world. The work of the Coop Breizh to insure that Breton materials were available for sale has been important for those seeking hard-to-find Breton language books and French language books about Brittany, and lps or CD of Breton music of all styles. But, perhaps the impact is even more important for writers and musicians who had no means to market their creations.

In 1960 the first Coop Breizh store opened in La Baule, and its director Robert Le Grand set up stands at festivals and book fairs at every opportunity. The Coop Breizh store in Paris opened in 1972 and was sold to become Librairie Breizh (10 rue du Maine) which is still a great shop for Breton goods. The store in Rennes opened in 1967 and operated for 25 years. The La Baule store has been closed for many years, but a Coop Breizh store is still going strong in Lorient.

Yann Goasdoue joined Coop Breizh in 1977 and the enterprise Diffusion Breizh he created in 1972 merged with Coop Breizh to stock and distribute materials to stores throughout Brittany and also to publish books and CDs under the Coop Breizh label. The presence of Diffusion Breizh in the small rural community of Spezet has offered a little boost to the local economy.

Some years have been better than others financially, and some books and CDs have sold better than others, but

the Coop Breizh thrives today and continues to insure that Breton culture finds a market. The Coop Breizh is in the process of upgrading its website (www.coop-breizh.com), but check it out in the future and use it to order books and CDs or to get a catalog.

The Inter Celtic Festival of Lorient Embraces the Breton Language

Founded in 1971, this festival is the largest of dozens of major festivals that take place in Brittany each year. This August 2007 the Inter Celtic Festival of Lorient attracted some 650,000 visitors during its ten-day span. This is truly an inter-Celtic event including artists and musicians from not only Wales, Ireland, the Isle of Man, Cornwall, and Scotland (the featured country this year), but also Galicia and Asturias. Years before most American readers of Bro Nevez (myself included) were even vaguely aware of the Celtic heritage of these regions of Spain, they had a central role in the Loreint festival.

This festival has been an important event to showcase Breton music and has been the site for the ultimate championship of the level 1 bagads of Brittany. But, the festival has not done much to feature the Breton language. The Bodadeg ar Sonerien has worked to insure that presentations at the bagad championships are bilingual, but the presence of Breton at other events has been haphazard – and minimal. In the 1990s some attempts were made to increase signage, but it was not until 2005 and 2006 that some real efforts were made to systematically include Breton in signage.

In 2007 a new director for the festival, Lisardo Lombardia (an Asturian associated with the festival for many years) took up the job and vowed a proper place for the Breton language. Breton will find a new presence on the Inter-Celtic Festival website and two organizations will be given an expanded role at the festival. For the first time this summer 2007, the federation of Breton language organizations of the Lorient area (Emgleo Bro an Oriant) and Ofis ar Brezhoeng were present at the festival and will surely have a larger role in 2008. There is hope that in 2008 when Wales is the featured country for the festival the Breton language will have a strong presence with a tent of its own and much expanded activities.

A Resolution from European Nationalities on France and the Breton Langue

The following text (in French and German, as well as English was sent to me with the request it be printed in Bro Nevez.

Resolution 2007-06

The Assembly of Delegates of the Federal Union of European Nationalities passes the following resolution in Tallinn on 17 May 2007:

Considering the obvious policy of the French state to further continue to totally suppress the Breton language, the Assembly of Delegates of FUEN urges its fellow European citizens to exercise as much pressure on the French state through its representatives as needed, so that the French government will finally adopt prevailing international ethnic standards regarding the rights of autochthonous minorities to their historic home and will put an end to the fatal policy of language standardisation, which – in contradiction to this – outwardly preaches cultural diversity.

At this point, we would like to recall Kant's motto: "Act only according to that maxim whereby you can at the same time will that it becomes a universal law." We are of the opinion that this principle, in this context we are concerned with, should be applied as an absolute law in 21st century Europe, which itself rests on Kant's spiritual and moral idea of rights and thus follows on from Kant's ideas.

In view of the fact that the majority of the Breton people voted for the project of the European Constitution – in contrast to the French people who rejected this – we call for the formation of an independent international commission of experts to investigate the actual legal status of Brittany with regard to international law and for the development of suitable forms of lingual, cultural, administrative and political self-administration. In this case, it is a matter of the survival of the Breton people.

For more information about the Federal Union of European Nationalities, visit their website:

www.fuen.org

A Website in Esperanto devoted to the Celtic Languages:

<http://keltalingvoj.blogspot.com>

Via the U.S. ICDBL website I received a short e-mail from Daithé Mac Lochlainn that contained only the above e-mail address. Upon exploration, I found the Keltalingvaj Novajoj website (my computer would not ad it, but there should be a ^ over the first j in Novajoj).

This site collects news articles about the Celtic languages and gives a short part of an article – usually in English and French (for those related to Breton or Quebec). You do not need to know Esperanto to thoroughly enjoy this site. You will have to navigate Esperanto title to get to archived articles, but this is not at all difficult.

On July 23rd when I first accessed the website I found an article called "Regino de Kornvalo" from the Breton newspaper Le Télégramme. This was about Nolwenn Vigouroux who had just been crowned the Reine the Cornouaille at the Festival de Cornouaille in Quimper. The interesting part about this beauty queen which merited a link to this article is that she is studying Breton at a university and hopes to become a Breton language teacher. For 13 years of her young life she has participated in the Celtic Circle Eostiged Ar Stangala.

On the August 20th I visited the site to find the following short note (in English) about René Théophile Laennec:

...René Théophile Laennec... invented the stethoscope about 1819 and his regarded as the father of chest medicine. He died himself from tuberculosis at the age of 45. He died in Brittany since he decided to come back to Brittany as soon as he realized that he only had a few weeks left to live. He died in the Kerlouarnec Manor, in Ploaré, near Douarnenez. Laennec spoke Breton and was very attached to his mother language and always glad to speak Breton with his patients in Paris, many of them being soldiers injured during the Napoleonic wars..."

If you click on the underlined title this takes you to the source (and more complete information) about Laennec found (in Breton) on the Breton language Wikipedia.

Whether drawn from history or the latest current events – cultural, economic, or political - this site seems to include nearly everything related to Celtic languages.

An Emigrant's Song - Breton Emigration to the U.S.

Lois Kuter

Not so long ago, U.S. ICDBL Member Raymond Jean Jacq sent me a book he had written and published in 2005 about the life of his parents Jean-Louis Jacq (1910-1971) and Marie-Jeanne Conan (1911-1998): *It's better to Laugh Than to Cry – An immigrant journey through the twentieth century*. Based in large part on a diary his mother kept, as well as extensive research among family members, this book paints a very personal portrait of the lives of a newly married couple who move to the U.S. in 1933. Jean Jacq had already spent three years (1929-1933) living in Paterson, New Jersey, working in the fabric dying mills there. He was among many Bretons who had come to New York and northern New Jersey to find work and earn enough money to go back to Brittany and buy a farm or start a business. Jean Jacq was from Langolen and Maire-Jeanne Conan was from Landudal – both to the northeast of Quimper, and not far from towns and small villages further to the east like Spézet, Châteauneuf-du-Faou, Briec, or Gourin from which many Bretons emigrated to the U.S. in the early 1900s.

The beginning of a large emigration to the U.S. from this part of Brittany can be dated to the recruitment of workers in 1901 by the Michelin company for work first in the factories of Clermont-Ferrand with later transfer to Milltown, New Jersey. In a period of ten years, some 3,000 Bretons had emigrated for work in the Michelin factories where they could earn salaries often six times those at home in Brittany. With the closing of Michelin factories in 1928, Bretons in New Jersey found work at other factories – artificial silk and nylon mills in Lodi and Paterson, chemical plants in Passaic, or steel mills in Trenton. The work was extremely hard and Breton workers did not become rich overnight, and most never got close to their dreams of wealth.

Jean Jacq's work in a dye mill was of this grueling nature. It is no wonder that when he bought a notebook in 1931 the first nine pages would include the neatly written text of a song called "Potred Breiz Izel en Americ." It was Ray Jacq's belief that his father, who loved to sing, might have composed this song which very eloquently describes the experience of workers in New Jersey mills. But this song seems to belong to Brittany's oral tradition and was probably composed by someone else.

The text Ray Jacq reproduces from his father's copybook is virtually identical to the reproduction of a feuille volant (broadsheet) I found in 1982 at the 10th Anniversary of Dastum in Pontivy. I brought the text

home with me and Reun ar C'halan kindly translated it from Breton. It was featured in the May/August 1983 issue (No. 7/8) of the U.S. ICDBL Newsletter (not yet, called Bro Nevez) and then again in Bro Nevez 53, February 1995.

In the final three verses the singer (composer?) of "Potred Breiz-Izel en Americ" is identified by hometown:

*So as not to declare myself, I will not say my name,
I will say only that I am from Briec-de-l'Odét*

*Born in the parish of Sant Toz, in a town on the hill
Destined to travel since I was small in my cradle.*

*From one corner to the other I have seen Lower
Brittany
And I have come to America, pushed by the wind.*

I found a very similar text ("Son an Amerik") again on a 1994 CD where 34 of the 53 verses were sung for a gavotte by Jean-Claude Talec and Alain Le Clere (Manuel Kerjean, Bastien Guern, Alain Le Clere, Jean-Claude Talec, *Chants à répondre en Centre Bretagne – Fest noz e Bro Rostren*. Arfolk CD 428, 1994).

The jacket notes state that the text was collected from Soaz Citerin of Spézet in 1981. And the final three verses identify yet another singer (composer?):

*So as not to declare myself, I will not say my name.
I will say only that I am from the parish of Speied
[Spézet]*

*Born in Rubiou, in a town on the hill
Destined to travel since I was small in my cradle*

*Destined to travel since I was small in my cradle
I will say my name to you, it is Yann Chiterenn.*

Clearly this is a song that remains meaningful in its depiction of the lives of Breton emigrants to the United States who worked in the factories of northern New Jersey. We know from the fact that Jean Jacq carefully entered the text in his notebook in 1931 that it struck a chord with that Breton from Langolen. And we know from the two slightly different texts that it was sung by men of Spézet and Breic-de-l'Odét who probably also knew first-hand the experiences described in the song.

Below is the full text from the broad sheet I found in 1982 with the translation by Reun ar C'halan.

Potred Breiz-Izel en Americ

Chanson brezonek var eun ton anavezet

1.
Breman pa z'eo deut ar goan dister ar labourio
Evil temen va amzer, a gompozan sonio.
2.
N'oun ket na barz na belec, na ker neubend scrivagnour
Mar teuan da fazia, me o ped d'am zikour
3.
Da zibuna dirazoc'k, ar pezh zo n'em speret
Euz ar sklera ma hellin, evit beza comprened
4.
Monet rin digant va hent, o sellet an daou du
Skei a rin gant va daou zorn, elec'h ma kavin an tu
5.
Peb lec'h ma vellin an droug, dimeuz an daou gostez
Me en lavaro dizamant, pa vo ar wirionez
6.
Dimeuz potred Breiz-Izel, a gomzin d'eoc'h hirio
Pere zo deut d'an Americ, da hounid dollario
7.
Kuittet a n'eump Breiz-Izel, kaëra bro zo er bed
Bevi reomp en esperanç, da vont h'oaz d'e guellet
8.
Mez kalet eo ar vuez, en amzer m'omp breman
Ar bevanz a zo ken ker, dister ar baëmant
9.
Ar bevanz a zo ken ker, ag an dillad ive
Ma n'hell mui or labourer, sevel mad e vugale
10.
Kuittet a n'eump anezi, evit eur pennad Amzer
Evit beva evrusoc'h, pa zistrofomp d'ar ger
11.
Trezet a n'eump ar mor braz, evel guir vortoloded
Diskenned e pouz New-York, brasa ker zo er bed
12.
Setu-ta ni digouezed, ebarz ar vro neve
Ebarz bro an uzinou, hanved an New-Jersey.
13.
Da genta lavarin d'eoc'h, on doare da veva
Or faeson n'em gomer dimeuz an digousta
14.
Bevi a reomp assemblez, evel d'ar zoudarded
O ren buez ar Riffian, evel m'a zomp hanved.

The Boys of Lower Brittany in America

A Breton song on a Well-Known Melody

1.
Now that winter has come, jobs are scarce
To pass the time, I write songs
2.
I am neither poet nor cleric, nor am I a writer
If I happen to make mistakes, please come to my help
3.
To place before you what is on my mind
As clearly as I can in order to be understood
4.
I'll go on my way, looking at each side
I'll strike with both hands, whenever I'll find the way
5.
Wherever I will see evil, on both sides,
I'll speak without fear, if it is the truth
6.
About the boys of Lower Brittany, I will talk to you today
Those who came to America to earn dollars
7.
We left Lower Brittany, the most beautiful country in the
world
We live in the hope of returning to see her
8.
But life is hard in the times we are in now
Living is so expensive, the pay is low.
9.
The living is so expensive, and so is clothing
So that a working man cannot raise his children decently
10.
It has been quite a while since we left our county,
So as to live more happily when we return home
11.
We have crossed the wide sea like real sailors
And landed in the port of New York, the largest city in the
world
12.
And we have arrived in the new land
In the country of factories, named New Jersey
13.
First of all I will tell you about our way of life
About our way of doing things in the cheapest manner
14.
We all live together like soldiers
Living like the Riffians,* the name we are called.

15.
N'hellomp ket mont d'an hôtel, da zrebi or prejo
Pe aotramant on arhant, etre on daouarn a deuzo.

16.
Pa z'omp deut keit-man euz ar ger, da hounid dollario
N'eo ket evit o dispign, ebarz an ostaleurio

17.
Na zeuit ket d'an Americ, da glask o plujadur
Aman 'vit gounid arhant, a renker beza fur.

18.
Beza fur a labourat, koulz an dez ag an noz
Eb gelloud kaout avecho, eur momant da repoz

19.
Ober beb seurt labouriou, re louz a re gallet
Labouriou skuizuz d'ar horf, pe noazuz d'ar ie'hed

20.
Tremen gant eun tam bara, euz ar mintin tre d'an noz
Na peuz evit e lonka, nemed guin ar baradoz

21.
Dimeuz ar haëra lapoused, a glevomp hanoio
Salesmanbitch a crazy, a re all diganto

22.
Mez n'omp ket deut d'an Americ, var zigarez pourmen
Deut e z'omp da labourat, a gounid gueneien.

23.
Darn ahanomp zo dimezed, neuz greg a bugale
Sonjit barz ar galonad, tont da guitted an'e.

24.
Seblantout a ra d'eomp, h'oaz guellet anezo
An dour en'o daoulagad, lavaret d'eomp kenavo

25.
Klevet ran lod lavaret, e z'omp tud dirollet
Tud n'a garont ket o famill, a memez tud kollet.

26.
Mez me a lavar ar h'ontrol, eo an dud kaloneka
Eo a zo deut d'an Americ, da hounid peadra

27.
Da zevel mad o bugale, rei d'ezo deskadurez
A n'em zevel o'hunaan, dimeuz an dienez

28.
Rei d'ezo deskadurez vad, ag eun tamig danvez
A rai d'ezo kalez sikour, pa iefont er vuez

15.
We cannot go to the hotel to eat our meals
Otherwise our money would melt between our fingers

16.
If we have come so far away to earn dollars
It is not to spend them in hostelrys

17.
Don't come to America to look for fun
Here in order to earn money, one has to be sober

18.
To be sober and to work, by day and by night as well,
Without sometimes being able to get a moment of rest

19.
Doing all sorts of work, dirty and hard,
Work tiring for the body, or damaging to one's health

20.
Manage with a piece of bread from morning till night
And you will have but the wine from the sky to swallow

21.
From the most beautiful birds, we hear names
"salesman bitch a crazy," and others from them

22.
But we did not come to America in order to visit
We have come to work, and to make money

23.
Some of us are married, have a wife and children
Think of the heartbreak, leaving them behind

24.
We seem to see them still
With tears in their eyes, saying good bye to us

25.
I hear some people say we are debauchers
We don't love our family, we are lost people

26.
But I say the contrary, it is the most courageous people
Who have come to America to earn something

27.
To raise their children, to give them an education
To raise themselves from poverty

28.
To give them a good education, and a little property
Which will be of help to them when they enter life

29.
Labourat 'vit o pugale, kaëra tra zo er bed
Ag a ra d'eoc'h nerz kalon, pa vezoc'h ankeniet.

30.
Dever eun tad a famill, m'a n'eo ket kemense
Me a bed an hini a oar, d'en lavaret din'me

31.
Ag me a heuillo e avis, ar fidela m'a hellin
Rag bepred eun avis mad, neuz gret plujadur din

32.
Be a z'euz eun neubendig, 'ma diganto o famill
Berroc'h kavont o Amzer, o tremen o exil

33.
Potred yaouanc a z'euz ive, a vije dimezed
Mag en dijen bed danvez, arog ma oant partiet

34.
Darn e'ma o mestrezed, bepred euz o gortoz
A pa zistrofont d'ar ger, en 'ofont o mennoz

35.
Abalamour d'eun tam arhant, gounezet en Americ
Ar ré goz a vo kontant, vezo gret eun neizic

36.
Etre an daou zen yaouanc, a neuz bepred n'em garet
Ne oa nemed an arhant, en d'oa o separet

37.
Kalz ré all a zo deut h'oaz, da hounid dollario
Evit kaout eur vec'h tiegez, pa zistrofont an dro

38.
Ag n'em gonsoli a reont, o kavet hir a amzer
O soujal er blujadur, pa n'emgafont er ger

39.
Me o ped potred yaouanc, pere zo h'oaz 'n'o pro
Da zilaou gant interest, dan dimeuz va homzo.

40.
A goude pezo lenned, pe kanned va janson
Houï a raio deuz o kiz, goude reflexion

41.
Houï pere so attaked, gant klenved an dansou
Med o ped da zont aman, ag a kavoc'h louzou

42.
Me o ped da zont aman, eun neubeud bloaveziou
Da ziskuiza o tiwisker, dimeuz an ebatou

29.
To work for your children, the most beautiful thing in
the world,
It gives you strength in your heart when you are
distressed.

30.
The duty of the father of the family, if that's not it,
I pray the one who knows better to let me know

31.
And I will follow this advice as best I can
For good counsel has always pleased me

32.
There are a few who have their family with them
They find the time shorter they spend in exile

33.
There are also bachelors who would have married
Had they had the property before they went abroad

34.
Some of them have girlfriends still awaiting them
And when they return home they will carry out their plans

35.
Thanks to a little money earned in America
The old ones will be happy, they will have their nest

36.
Between two young people who always loved each other
There was only the money that came between them

37.
Many others will have come to earn dollars
In order to get a household** when they return home

38.
And it is a comfort to them, when they find the time long,
To think of the pleasure when they find themselves at
home

39.
I pray the young men who are still in their country
To listen with interest to some of my words

40.
And when you have read or sung my song
You will do as you wish, after thinking it over

41.
You who are victims of the sickness of dancing
I pray you to come here, and you will find the cure

42.
I pray you to come here for a few years
To rest your legs of the pleasures [of the dances]

43.
N'anavezan ket eur breizad, a neufe gret eun danç
Digant eur miss pe eur Lady, Abaoue neuz kuittet Franç

44.
Pa grog en ó ar fantaisi, da vont d'eur bal er ker
Pa n'ouzont ket speak english, neuz netra da ober.

45.
Neuze zistroont d'ar ger, evel chass dilosted
A n'em glozont en ó hamp, da zonjal n'o mestrezed

46.
Pere zo chomed e Breiz, an tu all d'ar mor braz
Martreze n'ont ar bonheur, da vont d'o guellet h'oarz

47.
Sete az mignoned, a zo fin d'am janson
Euz o klevet e h'ana, m'o konzolasion

48.
Kredi ran m'euz lavaret, ar wirionez pen-dre-ben
Var an droug a var ar vad, hervez va reolen

49.
A bremen lezan peb hini, da dema konkluzion
Dimeuz an oll prepoziou, scribed en 'em janson

50.
Komposed gant eur Breizad, o chôme e Paterson
O kavet hir e Amzer, kontristed a galon

51.
Evit nompaz n'em ziskleria, va haono n'a larin ket
Lavaret rin seulamaent, oun euz Breic-de-l'odet

52.
Ganed e parroiz Santoz, en 'eur ger var an huel
Destined da voyaji, a vihanic n'em havel

53.
Euz an eill korn d'egile, meuz guellet Breizh-lzel
A digouezed en Americ, pouezet gant an avel.

Fin

Eur Breizad en Americ

43.
I don't know a single Breton who might have danced a
dance
With a Miss or a Lady since he left France

44.
When they get the fancy to go to a ball in the city
If they don't "speak English," there is nothing to do

45.
Then they return home like dogs with their tails cut off
And they shut themselves in their room thinking of their
girls

46.
Who have stayed in Brittany, on the other side of the
ocean
Perhaps they will have the good fortune to return to see
them

47.
There, my friends, is the end of my song
Those who have heard it sung will be comforted.

48.
I think I have told the truth, the whole truth
About the good and the bad, according to my rule

49.
And now I leave everyone to draw their conclusion
From all the words written in my song

50.
Written by a Breton living in Paterson
And finding the time long, sad in his heart

51.
So as not to declare myself, I will not say my name
I will say only that I am from Briec-de-l'Odet

52.
Born in the parish of Sant Toz, in a town on the hill,
Destined to travel since I was small in my cradle

53.
From one corner to the other I have seen Lower Brittany
And I have come to America, pushed by the wind

A Breton in America

* Riffian: Riff, a mountainous province of Morocco. It's inhabitants were fierce warriors who long resisted all French attempts to occupy their land. The word "Riffian" refers to a hard life.

** tiegezh: means "farm" as well as "family."

New Recordings from Brittany

Reviewed by Lois Kuter

Eskell evit Warc'hoazh. Children of Skolioù Diwan Landerne Ha Plabenneg, with Jean Luc Roudaut. 2007

This is a CD produced the children in the Diwan schools in Landerneau and Plabennec working with singer and composer Jean Luc Roudaut, who has collaborated often with Diwan schools. As you read in the letter from children in the CE2 and CM levels of the Skol Diwan Landerne, they wrote two songs for the CD and sung these, but you also hear from the younger children of the school for a few selections, and from the pre schoolers. While children from the Plabennec school performed on just 4 of the 11 songs on the CDs these too included all ages of the school.

The CD jacket notes do not identify the authors for the texts but it seems that many of them were composed by the children of these schools who sing them on the CD - a remarkable accomplishment even with the help of teachers. Since the Diwan schools are immersion s school for the Breton language, it goes without saying that the songs are in Breton.

The songs cover a range of topics. Several more serious texts come from the older kids like "Gwirioù ar vugale" composed by the upper grades of the Landreanau School. I found the title of this song difficult to translate into English. The song compares the relative good life of kids in Brittany to the realities of life for children in other countries where there is hunger, sickness and war. "Truth of the children" or "Realities of the children"? In the song "Pase on skuizh" the children from the Plabennec school tell of how they are sick of war, violence, hunger, pollution and intolerance that take the joy out of life. The Plabennec children also perform the song "Ur paotr a galan," "the boy with a big heart," about a

young man in Africa who lives in peace with lions –much to the dismay of his tribe who see him as a coward. But the herds of the tribe are safe from lion attacks when the boy is their shepherd.

Other songs are more fanciful. Animals act up at school in "Skol al loened" and a snail leaves the relative safety of the school room to take a walk with children in the song "Maligorn." In "pa vin bras" (when I get big) children talk about all the occupations they may have when they grow up. In "Sorserez" we learn about a sorcerer's pets – a bat named Gwendal, a spider named Gwenlaouenn, and the cat Gweltaz. And in "An olifant hag al logodenn" we hear about the adventures of an elephant and mouse who travel together.

Other songs are "instructional" in nature. In "Ar mizioù" you can learn the Breton names of the months of the year. In "Diouzhtu diouzhtu" you are asked to "show me" your head, hair, eyes, etc. and in "Al lizherenneg" we learn the letters of the Breton alphabet which replaces "c" with a "ch" and "c'h" and which drops "q" and "x."

The songs are sometimes set to a gentler acoustic guitar and at other times to a driving rock beat of an electric guitar. You also hear harmonica, flute, bagpipes and bombards, and percussion in the music composed by Jean Luc Roudaut. The music sometimes takes on a Latin beat or a flavor of Africa. In all cases it is fast-paced, sophisticated and interesting.

You will not mistake these children for the Vienna Boys Choir, but they tackle some complicated texts with confidence. Surely parents will be very proud to hear their child lead a verse or two or join in the chorus, but this is a very enjoyable CD for anyone. My personal favorites are "Gwirioù ar vugale"

with its thoughtful message and beautiful melody, and "Diouzhtu" with its funny little vocal swing up in the "ou" of "diouzhtu" that can only be heard to be appreciated.

The idea of this CD is not to create a best-selling CD but to give children an enjoyable activity which strengthens their mastery of language. Clearly they have had a very interesting opportunity to work creatively with the Breton language to write songs and perform them. A "bonus" that comes with the CD is the addition of the musical accompaniments to all 11 songs so that schools might learn the songs themselves.

The CD notes are attractive with photos of the children and texts to all the songs with French translations for some of them. A child holds on to a bright "balafenn" (butterfly) on the CD cover to take flight. And surely songs on the CD take some flights of fancy as well as express children's concerns about the troubles of the world.



Poor Man's Fortune. In Good Time. PMF
CD-003. 2007. 48'15
(www.poormansfortune.com)

This doesn't sound like the name for a Breton band, and it isn't. But this is one of the best interpretations of Breton music I've heard from American musicians – from deep in the heart of Texas. The press release that arrived with this CD describes it as "old tunes for new ears. New tunes in old traditions" and that is a good start to describing the music you hear.

Poor Man's Fortune is a trio based in Austin, Texas, and the musicians of this group have played around with all sorts of styles. Serge Laîné (guess his family roots) plays dulcitar, accordion, hurdy-gurdy and sings. Kristen Jenson plays fiddle and baritone fiddle and joins in on vocals. Larry Rone plays wooden flutes, tin whistle, bombardes (in G and A) and a *subois*, a rustic oboe

which uses bombarde reeds but has a milder tone than a bombarde.

Guest musicians are not just "guests" for a rare appearance, but are an integral part of the CD. These include Glenn Rios who produced and engineered the CD and added percussion, bass and guitar work. Also in the mix are Richard Kean on binioù, Rod Forkner on bodhrán, Patrick Whale with gongs, and Kerri Javorka on fiddle and vocal leads.

The CD is dominated by a variety of lively dances borrowed from a variety of performers and composers. A suite of "scottishes" is from the English band Blowzabella, and a set of jigs includes one from Irish tradition, one composed by American Grey Larsen and another composed by Breton flute player Jean-Luc Thomas. A suite of hornpipe and reels are borrowed from Irish and Scottish performers, and a suite of polkas includes another composition by Jean-Luc Thomas, one by Irish bouzouki player Donal Lunny and a less funky traditional Irish tune. Two waltzes also draw from a variety of sources and have a nice slow swing in contrast to the high energy of the other dances of the CD.

Songs include a *puirt a' bheil* – mouth music from Scotland - which is vocal music for dancing where vocal syllables replace what a piper would do. While traditionally this would be purely vocal, here you have added a very varied and lovely mix of drums and percussion instruments – everything from the sizzle of snare drums to the ding of cymbals, and mellow thud of darbuka and congas (in addition to another half-dozen instruments that sound in name to have come from around the world).

The CD closes with the haunting voice of guest singer Kerri Javorka for a Child ballad "The unquiet grave." While much of this song about a grieving lover is accompanied by acoustic guitar, you have the melody

captured by whistle and strings, and the bombarde blends in so beautifully with the strings that you almost miss it if you aren't listening for its reedy voice.

Breton music receives a full 15 minutes of the total 48 minutes of this CD with a song for dance and two instrumental dance suites. Serge Lâiné leads the song "Quand j'étais jeune à dix-huit ans" which he learned from a fellow Breton draftee when stationed in Madagascar in 1976. I knew I had heard this song before, and tracked the text to an LP of traditional music of the Pays d'Oust et de Vilaine produced by Dastum in 1984 – a song for the dance pile-menu led by Pierrig Hercelin. But the very familiar tune used by Poor Man's Fancy is different, and is for a different dance - hanter-dro. While I can't track it down I think I have heard it on a Tri Yann album. The travel of texts to different tunes and different dances is what "tradition" is all about.

Just as they do for Irish and Scottish tunes, Poor Man's Fancy draws from a variety of sources for the Breton dance "ridée six temps." Tunes in this suite are drawn from a cassette recording of an unidentified accordion-bombarde pair, from virtuoso Breton flute player Jean-Michel Veillon, and from recordings of the band Skeduz. A "suite" of gavottes shows off just how well Poor Man's Fancy understands the unique rhythm and the swing of traditional Breton dance. As pointed out clearly in the jacket notes to the CD, this is not the three-part "suite" one dances to in Brittany, but a string of gavottes from different regions of Brittany (including Dardoup, Fisel, and the "Mountains" of central western Brittany). And then there's a gavotte in there from Bro Austin composed by Larry Rone and Serge Lâiné. This is a 5-minute tour de force that will get you up and dancing.

I always notice the jacket notes for a CD and am often annoyed by how sparse they are. The notes to this CD – an inviting cardboard "tri-fold" instead of a booklet in a

plastic case – are exceptionally informative and interesting. The musicians and instruments they use are noted for each of the ten selections of the CD, and a short description identifies the source of the tune or song – where it was heard and who it was learned from. The historical origins of dances are noted, and for the gavotte there is a very nice explanation of the diversity of Breton gavottes and how the Breton version of this dance is not the same as the courtly dance of the same name. The stories about the CD selections are not only interesting to read but include a dry humor. In addition, details are given on the instruments used by the Poor Man's Fancy trio of musicians so you know what they are and who made them. You'll learn just what you need to know about "Bubba the baritone fiddle."

The notes and graphic layout are nicely done – one of the best CD jackets I've seen in a while. A little paragraph by Breton flute master Jean-Michel Veillon on the back of the CD jacket pays tribute to the good work of the group, rightly pointing out that "the musicians of Poor Man's Fancy made the effort to immerse themselves in our [Breton] repertoire of traditional melodies and came out with a beautiful selection. Their keen musical sense did the rest ..." Clearly they also understand the Celtic musical heritage of Ireland and Scotland and its presence in North America, and this is a great inter-Celtic mix interpreted by skilled musicians in a unique way.



HEARD OF, BUT NOT HEARD

New CD releases from Brittany

Information for the descriptions which follow were gleaned from reviews and notes in *Ar Men* 159 (juillet-août 2007) *Armor* 448 (mail 2007), 449 (juin 2007) and 450-451 (juillet-août 2007); *Musique bretonne* 202 (mai-juin 2007).

Anwynn. *Entre feuilles et racines*. Balagan. This group includes Roxanne Martin on harp, Françoise Heim on button accordion, Pascal Thorel on fiddle and Céline Magrini and Marie-

Anne Kergoët on vocals. They perform traditional Scottish airs, texts by Provençal poet Max-Philippe Delavouët, original compositions, and an homage to Brittany in an arrangement of the well known song "Me zo ganet"

Dan ar Braz. *Les Perches du Nil*. Columbia 88697072232.

This CD includes compositions by Dan ar Braz using texts by Clarisse Lavanant and Melaine Favennec on a range of topics. Dan ar Braz sings and other voices include Sally Nyolo and Guizmo, with flutes and uilleann pipes by Ronan Le Bars, percussion by Matthieu Rabaté and keyboard by Patrick Péron. Naturally Dan ar Braz also plays guitars and this CD is the well crafted and innovative work one can expect from ar Braz.

Arvest. *Fantazi*. L'OZ Production. L'OZ 49. This group has at its heart kan ha diskan singing by Yves Jego and Yann Raoul, with guitar by David ar Porh and piano by Aymeric Le Martelot. Songs are in Breton and French – traditional and newly composed on a range of topics.

Bagad Brieg. *La Totale*. Keltia Musique KMCD 183. CD & DVD.

This is a compilation of 16 titles which present the essence of this top level bagad with a DVD showing travels in Scotland and excerpts from several concert performances. Note that DVDs are not compatible with American DVD players, but there may be ways to reset your DVD player. News from anyone savvy about this would be welcome since there are so many great DVDs now available from Brittany.

Bagad de Nantes. *Skeud an Ankou*. Bagad de Nantes BDN 03.

This CD includes arrangements of traditional tunes and innovative compositions by a great bagad of Brittany.

L'Épille. *Chants dans la ronde recueillis en haute Bretagne*, Aux sources du patrimoine oral Hors-Série No. 1. L'Épille EPL 011. Based in Sel-de-Bretagne, the organization called l'Épille has produced a number of fine recordings focused on traditional song of small regions of eastern Brittany. This CD is the first in a series with a theme, and in this case the focus is on song for dancing. In both eastern and western Brittany unaccompanied response style singing for dancing is a strong and unique part

of Breton heritage. This CD includes recordings dating from the 1960s to the present. It is intended to show off great singers rather than serve as a complete sample of the types of dances found in eastern Brittany.

Esquisse. *Dual*. Nantes-Musique.

The group Esquisse is composed of François Badeau on accordion, Vincent Marin on bombardes and saxophones, Thomas Badeau on clarinet, and Pierre Le Normand with percussion. From innovative arrangements of Breton dances where clarinet and bombarde interlock, to a Hungarian dance composed by Brahms, this is a nice combination of instruments where "reeds" dominate.

Hamon-Martin Quintet. *Les Métamorphoses*. Coop Breizh CD 992.

This CD features traditional and newly composed dances of eastern Brittany like the ridée, laridé, rond de Saint-Vincent, hanter-dro and polka. Songs included are also from the rich tradition of Gallo Brittany or newly composed by Sylvain Girault or Mathieu Hamon. Hamon's great voice is supported by a variety of instruments – Ronan Pellen on cistre, Erwan Volant on bass, Janick Martin on accordion, and Erwan Hamon on flute and bombardes.

Lors Jouin. *Chansons de Bretagne*. Keltia Musique KMCD 176.

Jouin is part of the group Ours du Scorff which arranges and composes songs for children with a grown-up touch. The songs on this CD – subtitled "Eternelle d'hier et de toujours, pour maintenant par rapport à demain" are for all ages and touch many themes. And Jouin pokes a bit of fun at the sentimental ballads in the style of Theodore Botrel.

Menestra. *Yaouank for ever*. CD Dog of Pride DOP 03.

This is the third CD in ten years from this group which focuses on the Gallo dance tradition of eastern Brittany, including here scottishes, ridées, ronds, passepiés, and a suite de Loudéac. The hurdy-gurdy of Gurvan Kerboeuf gives this group its unique sound but instruments also include guitars and percussion.

Nuit de la Saint-Patrick 2006. Keltia Musique KVD 182.

This is a CD of the St. Patrick's Day celebration of 2006 and the big concert in Bercy which

included great Irish, Scottish, and Galician musicians (Téada, Carlos Nunez ...) as well as the best of Brittany including Nolwenn Korbell, Pascal Lamour and top bagads to give just an idea.

Jacques Pellen. *Lament for the children.* Naïve NV 807211

Here you have guitarist Jacques Pellen in trio with bass player Gilda Boclé and percussionist Marcello Pellitteri. This CD includes his own compositions as well as interesting arrangements of other masters – from Alan Stivell to Billie Holiday. “Lament for the Children” is a 17th century *piobaireachd* composition for Scottish Highland bagpipes and one can only imagine the innovative way this dramatic piece is interpreted here by Jacques Pellen.

Pok ha pok. *Brennig ar c’hurnig.* BREN 07. This CD features new song texts by Jakez ar Borgn (in Breton) interpreted by a variety of singers and musicians – in various styles including kan ha diskán.

Révoltes, résistances et révolution en Bretagne. Nantes-Histoire CRB 01. 2007. This CD is a compilation of 18 songs in French and Breton about revolution, peasant uprisings, workers’ strikes, protests of oil spills and nuclear power plants, and any other point of contention found in Brittany captured in song. The recordings are old and new and include singers Gweltaz ar Fur, Marthe Vassallo, Loeiz Le Bras, Ifig Troadeg, Tri Yann, Erik Marchand, Sylvain Girault, Storlok, Kirjuhél and Annie Ebrel. This is a collection of great voices but also testimony to the importance of song in expressing revolt, resistance and revolution in Brittany.

Joseph-Guy Ropartz. *Quatuors no. 4, 5 & 6 par le Quatuor Stanislas.* Timpani 1c1115 The string quartet of the philharmonic orchestra of the city of Nancy continues its work to record all of the quartets by Breton composer Ropartz. Quartet No. 4 was composed in 1933-34 and No. 5 was composed in Paris in 1941. No. 6 was composed in 1947-48 and was one of Ropartz’s last (he died in 1955). These were years which made the performance of these works scarce so it is good to have recordings which can make the work of this composer better known.

Stone Age. *Totems d’Armorique.* Keltia Musique KMCD 186

From traditional Breton styles to rock, this group has a “folk” style and original sound, with new texts and compositions. The intriguing titles such as “Menez an Indian koz,” “The crimson flow,” “Enez Sun” and “Harbour Wall” give the impression that texts sung by Janet Woollacott and Maria Popkiewicz will be in both Breton and English.

Michel Tonnerre. *Quinze marins.* Keltia Musique KMCD 185.

Tonnerre is a singer with a very distinctive gravelly voice, and he is known for his maritime repertoire. He was an original member of the group Djibout’jeb. Tonnerre is a composer of texts of a contemporary style – far different from sing-along sea shanties – and he looks at human concerns world-wide as well as maritime life of Brittany.

Le Trente ans de la Truite du Ridor; 1977 – 2007 à Ploëmet. Association de la Truite du Ridor / Coop Breizh.

This 30th anniversary CD for an important Gallo music festival is compiled by one of its founders, Alain Le Noac’h. Included are recordings from festivals spanning these years, including Gallo language storytelling and music by young and older generations.



POTOMAC CELTIC FESTIVAL 2007 in Leesburg, Virginia - The U.S. ICDBL present once again

A report from Susan Baker

We pulled off the Potomac Celtic Mini-Fest with flying colors. There were good crowds, even with the new location, poor road signage, and sorry directions. The Washington Post did give it a Weekend's Best Bet notice. While the location off the main highway did not encourage a lot of "walk-in" traffic, the site near the Morven Mansion was beautiful – much like the first Oatlands site of the Potomac Celtic Festival with lots of trees and rolling hills. And the weather was perfect - Sunny and in the 80's with low humidity, so the shade was really refreshing. This was a nice contrast to the open fields of past years' festivals with temperatures in the upper 90s and a scorching sun.

"The Breton Society" information tent was manned by ICDBL members Susan Baker, Philippe Berthier, and Roger Gossemont. Susan gave two Breton Dance workshops, one at 10am, then another at 5pm with Philippe's assistance. There was some scheduling confusion and not everything got in the program, but the turnout for the workshops was enthusiastic if not large. Philippe marched the Gwen-ha-du in the opening ceremonies, next to ICDBL member Cheryl Mitchell with the Welsh flag, and Alfonso Diaz with the Asturian flag. ICDBL members Lois Kuter and Jan Zollars will be pleased to know that they were asked after, as was Nolwenn Monjarret who had come from Brittany to perform song at a number of festivals.

There were good crowds in the stage area and the Arts/Crafts/Vendors area. While there was not a lot of traffic through the Clans' area, we had some interest from passer-bys, and some "business": We had some happy children to color at the Celtic Coloring table and many flyers were taken. We raffled off some items, including the book "History of Brittany" by Jean-Pierre le Mat.

Because the festival organizers were not certain that they could throw a festival this year, the production was pulled together in record time, and was a one-day fest rather than the traditional two-day event. For all the panic in production, it was a fabulous show. Everyone who gave their efforts to this year's festival deserve rousing thanks.

One could hear fabulous music wafting across the fields from the three stages: Morven and Barnaby stages were music, and Dance stage was . . . dance. All the bands and performers donated their performances to the festival, as did the Dance Groups, Storytellers, and Living History participants. The MC's also gave of their time, including Alan Williams, Maureen Harrigan, Rock Wheeler, Loralyn Coles, and Mary Cliff of TRADITIONS (WAMU-88.5FM), many of whom have been wonderful supporters since the festival's first days at the Oatlands Celtic Festival. They thanked all the performers and volunteers repeatedly, and by name. The vendors and artist/crafters all

donated door prizes. Hopefully everyone closed the festival feeling that they had done good PR, good deeds, and received more than they gave.

So knock wood and mark your calendars for June 14-15 2008!!!

An added note: The Festival program had a Memorial Page for two members of the Celtic Community who passed on this last year:

Beth Vaughan (Biddy O'Byrne), Storyteller from Maryland, was one of the founding members of the Potomac Celtic Festival. Beth combined her background of theater and storytelling into her passion for the value of the imagination in educating children. She founded the summer theatre program, the Upper Nodd Players (By Children - For Children), and urged us all to "Listen, then - BECOME".

Jorge Mochales Lopez (Brengra Astur) musician from Spain who is a well-known figure in Spanish Celtic music. He and Marta Elola (his wife and vocalist for Brengra Astur), were developing the Eastern Asturias Ethnographic Museum. They were a big hit at the 2000-2003 Festivals, and remained friends with many of the folks that they met here.

And at the opposite end of the continent in Alaska

Natalie Novik has for a number of years worked with Celtic organizations in Alaska to insure the presence of Brittany and the U.S. ICDBL at a number of gatherings and festivals. This fall Brittany and the ICDBL will be represented at a cultural afternoon on Celtic countries in Anchorage at the Senior Center on Sunday, September 9th, and again during the Samhain celebration on October 27th at the same place, where we will feature fairies, elves and other wee people, and naturally Breton fairies and korrigans!

From Natalie Novik

Yezhadur / Grammar

Mutations of the adjective

In Breton, when you use an adjective starting with certain letters after a feminine word, the adjective's first letter is softened.

It sounds complicated, but after a while, you will get used to the music of the language, and these mutations will be a lot easier to do, they will come to you naturally (if you first learn the gender of the nouns you are studying, of course).

The rule is this:

| Adjectives that start with the following letters | change to |
|--|-----------|
| G | H * |
| Gw | W |
| B | V |
| M | V |
| D | Z |

after all singular feminine nouns. If the word is feminine plural or masculine singular or plural, there is no mutation.

Examples:

Eun daol (*a table*) bihan (*small*)
Eun daol vihan

Eun nor (*a door*) glaz (*blue, green, gray or purple*)
Eun nor hlaz

Eun nor (*a doo*) gwenn (*white*)
Eun nor wenn

Eur galon (*a heart*) mad (*good*)
Eur galon vad

Eur huñvre (*a dream*) kaer (*beautiful*)
Eur huñvre gaer

An amzer (the weather)

For people who make their living for the most part either from the sea or from the land, weather watching is an essential part of the language. There are many nuances to name the various winds, fogs and mists, types of rain and other common weather phenomena, but here are the main ones:

| | |
|-------------|------------|
| An heol | the sun |
| Ar goulmoul | the cloud |
| Ar gliz | the dew |
| Ar glao | the rain |
| Ar barrad | the shower |
| Ar vorenn | the mist |
| Al lantar | the fog |
| An avel | the wind |
| Ar grizill | the hail |
| An erh | the snow |
| Ar skorn | the ice |

Brao eo an amzer: literally, good it is the weather (the weather is nice) is one common greeting when two farmers meet each other. Fall eo an amzer: literally, bad it is the weather (the weather is bad) is the other one.

Then there are very colorful expressions regarding the weather:

A strong wind is an avel foll
a crazy wind

A ray of sun is eur bann heol
a piece of sun

A little rain is eur glao munud
a thin rain

A dewdrop is eur hlizenn vihan
a little dew

(Note: when gliz (masc.) becomes glizenn, a quantity of dew, not just a drop, it becomes feminine, and of course the adjective mutes).

Of course, these days you will often hear “tomm eo an amzer” (hot) or “yenn eo an amzer” (cold) as well, as snow and ice seem to become more

frequent in the winter, and summers tend to be much warmer. Talking about cold, the Bretons talk about “an ifern yenn”, a cold hell. It must be that in a humid climate (ar glebor: humidity), cold is much more threatening than hot.

And then there is a well-known song where the chorus goes simply: “ha glao a ra pemdeiz”, it’s raining every day...

* Editor’s Footnote for learners:

Many Breton learners may use learning materials which use the KLTG (“unified”) spelling. In that case, mutation charts will show G mutating to C’H and the H will not be noted in the chart.

Natalie explained to me: under the KLT spelling, the H mutation is the lenification of either G or C’H. For instance, glaz will become Hlaz, not C’Hlaz. The C’H/H mutation is usually not written. The H mutation is something you definitely hear, particularly in the western part of Brittany (but not so much in southern Cornouaille or Vannetais). - LK



A Celtic Library Project in Pennsylvania CCC CELT Celtic Collection

The following information is modified from a brochure from this non-profit organization - of which I am a part . - LK

In 1989, the Association of Celtic Societies, or Comhairle na gCumann Ceiltach (CCC) its Gaelic name, agreed that a Celtic Library would be a proper mechanism to help preserve the Celtic cultures (Brittany, Cornwall, Ireland, Isle of Mann, Scotland and Wales).

In 1990 an agreement was made with Bucks County Community College in Newtown, Pennsylvania (just north of Philadelphia) to set up an endowment fund and to house the Library within the college library. With an initial donation of 35 books, a Founders Plaque, and \$3,500 for the Endowment Fund, the project started. By July 2007 the endowment fund had grown to \$14,500 through the efforts of CCC Celt’s members.

In 1993 the original group, CCC, folded and a new non-profit association, CCC Celt, took over

responsibility for the library. During the years since, the “Celtic collection” project has been boosted by a number of grants and donations of materials. Contributions from individuals and organizations have allowed CCC Celt to place sets of books outside the Bucks County Community College collection in a number of local libraries and schools: including a set of Celtic youth books, materials about the Great Hunger of Ireland (1845-1850), and dictionary sets (Irish, Scottish, Welsh). Contributions have also supported the addition of books on specific topics placed within the Bucks County Community Library collection (Irish poetry, Celtic Archaeology, Celtic literature, Scottish culture, etc.)

With a focus on non-fiction materials, the Celtic Collection includes over 2,700 volumes as well as over 130 videos, a music collection with over 400 CDs and a newer collection of about 60 DVDs. While materials related to Ireland and Scotland dominate - reflecting the presence of people of those heritages in Pennsylvania - the collection does not neglect the other Celtic countries and an effort is made to include as much material as possible about Wales, Cornwall, Brittany and the Isle of Mann. The collection is very accessible to the public through an advanced computer hookup, an inter-county courier service, intra-library loan and Access PA.

Besides contributions and grants, income is generated through the publication of the “Mid-Atlantic Celtic Directory,” a telephone-style directory of Celtic entrepreneurs from Cape May, New Jersey to Scranton, Pennsylvania. Proceeds from the 1995 through 2006 editions have allowed the CCC Celt to purchase over \$28,000 worth of Celtic materials for the library collection. And \$3,000 of the proceeds have been given to various organizations and individuals for their Celtic-related activities. One grant in the past year was given to help support the travel of the Kevrenn Alre bagad and dance troupe to Philadelphia during their March 2007 visit to the U.S.A.

The work of the CCC Celt group is all done by volunteers with a strong knowledge of and passion for Celtic culture and history.

To learn more: www.ccccelt.org

DEEP INSIDE A BRETON SKULL

15 – OUR DARK MEMORY

Jean Pierre Le Mat

The French have a history, and the Bretons have only a memory. "History is one, the memories are multiple" said Pierre Nora, one of the most famous French historians. King Louis XIV, Robespierre and the French Revolution, the battle of Verdun, the resistance against the Nazis, that is history. Slavery belongs to the memory of the Black people, Breton independence to the memory of the Bretons. Our heart can be Breton, but our conscience must be French.

The French revolutionary Robespierre drew the line for us, but also for you, American friends:

"... We will teach them, we the French, the names and the virtues of the heroes who died for freedom; we will teach them on which ground the last satellites of the tyrants died; we will teach them at what hour rang the time for the death of the oppressors of the world".

The emperor Napoleon, two centuries ago, asked his ministry of Police to gather the correct historians. His aim was to build the official, and soon unique, version of the History of France.

"Velly is the only author who wrote about French history in a detailed way. The chronological summary of president Hénault is a good classical book; it is very useful to continue them one and the other. It is of the greatest importance to ensure the spirit in which the continuators will write. I charged the minister of the Police to find continuators for Millot's work, and I wish that the two ministers act in concert to find continuators for Velly and president Hénault.

It is necessary to be fair with Henri IV, Louis XIII, Louis XIV and Louis XV, but without being flattering. (...). It is necessary to take care to avoid any reaction while speaking about the Revolution; no man could prevent it (..).

It is necessary to point out the perpetual disorder of the finances, the chaos of the provincial assemblies, the claims of the Parliaments, the lack of rule in the administration; this variegated France, without unity of laws and administration, being rather a meeting of twenty kingdoms than one State, so that one could breathe while arriving

at the time of the unity of the laws, administration and territory. "

The history of the Chouans is an example of the gap between the history we learnt and the memory we inherited. The first has been printed in our brains by teachers, the second has been carved in it by ghosts of the dead, murmurs of the survivors, and old documents despised by official historians.

In the primary and secondary schools, we learnt that our ancestors were violent opponents to the French Revolution. In that way they expressed their backwardness and their disloyalty for democracy. Oh, they are not considered as evil guys, but a primitive population manipulated by aristocrats and the most conservative part of clergy.

Most of them could not even speak French, which proves that there were backward people. They lead a guerrilla war for 15 years against the French troops, which proves that they were disloyal people. The war ended when their leader, Georges Cadoudal, was beheaded in 1804.



In 1800, the Chouans tried to kill Napoleon with a bomb. They failed. A success in that occurrence could have avoided the bloody and useless Napoleonic wars in Europe. This would have also given to the Breton activists a precedence over the

Irish for the political use of bombs. But I am not sure that it is a title for international glory. Cadoudal and the Chouans are part of our dark memory, opposed to the bright French history. But it is a stubborn memory. I remember that, a few years ago, a film about the Chouans was made in Brittany. The film-makers looked for local actors. But the problem was that all these natives wanted to be in the skin of a Chouan, and were very reluctant to be seen in the uniform of the glorious soldiers of the Revolution. Strange reaction. These people had been at school. They had been told who was on the good side and who was staying on the dark side of the Force. Nevertheless they preferred to be seen as Chouans like their ancestors.

Why? Most of them didn't know that the Breton Resistance against the French Revolution had been organized first by Colonel Armand, a Breton hero of the American Independence. This man, marquis of La Rouërie, was not an adventurer, but a man of freedom. After his return from America, he was interned by King Louis XVI in the Bastille prison, in Paris, because he asked for Breton rights.

Most of them didn't know that the groups of the Breton Chouannery boomed when the French government imposed conscription in 1793, to invade Switzerland, Germany, Holland, Italy, Egypt, etc. This move against conscription was a reaction of individual assertion, and not a sudden and collective submission to aristocracy.

Most of them were not taught about the "infernal columns". That was the name of the French troops which killed every man, woman, child, even domestic animals they found on their way through the Chouan country.

Maybe, in a Breton pub, they spoke with a Swiss, who told them about the French revolutionary troops occupying a part of his country. Maybe it was a Spaniard, or an Italian, telling them about the exactions of the Napoleonic troops. Maybe, speaking with an Algerian or an African, they had the vision of Cadoudal's hopes.

Everybody knows that foreigners are not correct teachers of national history. What was the real Breton involvement during the French Revolution? We feel that, in the school programs, the

description of our ancestors is a bit unreal. They were guilty, but we could only get the arguments of the prosecutor. Anything else is pathetic memory. How has this shadow been transmitted? Drunken people stammering out hallucinations to naïve listeners? Illiterate grandmothers muttering what they heard from old people in their youth? Insane plotters?

Deep inside our skull, we keep an even darker memory than the guerrilla war of the Chouans against the French revolution. It is the story of Breiz Atao, the Breton nationalists who collaborated with the Nazis before and during World War II. In Europe, a lot of small people did the same, and often worse than that, to get political independence: Slovaks, Croats, Ukrainians and others. A branch of Irish nationalism followed the same way. Iceland got its independence in 1944, availing itself of the invasion of Denmark by the Germans in 1942. When the Japanese troops were near the borders of India, Gandhi launched the campaign "Quit India" against the British.

Gandhi is now a universal hero and a saint. Iceland, Slovakia, Croatia, the Ukraine are independent states, with a seat in UNO. The leaders of Breiz Atao, Neven Henaff, Olier Mordrel, Fanch Debauvais are cursed ghosts, driven out of our quiet, correct and official Brittany. They are haunting the most obscure parts of our brain.

The teachers in the schools today frown about the obscure areas of the Breton memory. Fortunately, we live in a country where the weather changes and passes from a dismal fog to sunny times. After the dark winter the crops rise again. According to Caesar, our ancient druids taught that night precedes day, and winter precedes summer.

Today, Breton culture is blooming, bagadoù are playing Breton melodies everywhere in the world, Breton entrepreneurship is an example in France. That is fine, but we know that we must stay vigilant. Haughtiness is foreign to the memory of the small nations. The big ones like France teach us regularly that darkness is part of our past.

Unfortunately, nobody teaches the big nations like France that they are not different from us.

A Depiction of Brittany from 1918

The following is an excerpt from an article which is drawn from a lecture given by Emmanuel de Martonne of the University of Paris at Columbia University in New York, under the auspices of Columbia and the American Geographical Society, November 15, 1918. In this article the author compares three regions of France – Brittany, Champagne and Lorraine. Although we usually feature older travel accounts of Brittany, it is interesting to see how a “professor” from the University of Paris depicts Brittany for an American audience nearly 90 years ago.

“The Real France” by Emmanuel de Martonne. The Journal of Geography, Volume XVIII, Number 3, March 1919.

What is the real France? Before the war, it must be admitted, to most Americans France was Paris. If one visited Paris, one had visited France; if one thought of France, one thought of Paris: Paris was France. There is some excuse perhaps for this idea, for Paris is the center of a wonderfully unified state. From the earliest days natural roads converging on the Paris Basin have made for a unity in France. This unity is revealed in history. The modern states of Europe are young, compared with old France; at the beginning of the seventeenth century France was almost exactly what she is now. Later, the development of the system of metalled roads and more recently of railways converging on Paris has still further increased the centralization and strengthened the unity.

Contrasts of Life and Scenery in France

But unity does not mean uniformity: centralization has not meant the disappearance of contrasts. France is a country full of contrasts. There are indeed few countries in which scenery and peoples change so much in such short distances. A glance at the relief map suggests this. ... But a mere statement of the physical diversities of the regions of France, diversities of relief, geological features, and climate, would very insufficiently convey an idea of the regional contrasts that exist.

The regional contrast finds its profoundest expression in human occupation, and there are few countries where human occupation is so closely adapted to the soil as in France. ...

Brittany: the Old Peninsula of the West

Brittany is the finest example of a natural region which has been for a long time a political province. She remained independent until the sixteenth century and was still considered by the administration of Louis XIV as rather difficult to handle. During the French Revolution Brittany was the place where civil war was fiercest, and the rebels (*Chouans*) were not overcome for three years.

Differences between Brittany and the Rest of France

The people of Brittany still speak a language which is entirely different from French; it is more or less similar to Welsh and to the language of the ancient inhabitants of France before the Roman conquest. Of course, the Bretons are able to speak French also, all but some old women in certain remote parts of the country who do not know how to read.

Old habits and peculiar customs are still preserved everywhere. You can recognize the girls of Brittany in the streets of Paris and, if you are a true Breton, you can tell from what part of Brittany they came by looking at the finely embroidered caps they wear. If you go to Brittany, you do not even need to go into the country districts to see this. A walk in the streets of the little towns of Morlaix, Vannes, or Quimper, especially on a Sunday, will show you women wearing the queerest, sometimes the most beautiful, dresses and men with dark velvet ribbons on their hats, with large trousers, and small waistcoats. But it is not only by their costume that the people of Brittany differ from other people of France; the peculiar social and economic conditions of the country reveal themselves in its very scenery.

People from central and northeastern France are always astonished when they first come to Brittany. Instead of enclosed villages they see only isolated farms scattered all over the country: instead of large fields extending far without enclosure, they see small tracts of land confined within lines of trees, which give the country a forested appearance although actually there are few woods. Conditions of property are peculiar also. Contrary to the rule elsewhere in France the peasants are not landowners; for the most part they are still under the control of the landowner. As a whole, Brittany is one of the least democratic parts of France; and on every political map, drawn from the results of elections for our House of Representatives, this situation is quite apparent.

The Physiographic Basis of Breton Peculiarities

Why are the people of Brittany so strongly differentiated from the other people of France?

In a great measure we may account for this differentiation in the peculiar geographical features of the country. Brittany is a peninsula and a rather rugged one, although there are no true mountains. The dissected shore line with many small islands, abrupt promontories, and narrow bays penetrating far into the land may be likened to the coast of Maine. And one who knows Pennsylvania and central New Jersey can visualize the alteration of flat-topped ridges and plateaus, with strongly incised gorges, and of rolling lowlands with broad valleys, which is the characteristic feature of the relief of the country. Brittany is an old land, built of strongly folded, more or less hard layers. Its ancient mountain ranges were completely worn down by erosion, then slightly uplifted, so that narrow valleys have been carved in the strong rocks, and broad ones in the less resistant.

The structure and relief of the rocks, their general impermeability, and the humidity of the country contribute to a general distribution of the water supply: everywhere are springs and little streams. They afford opportunity for the location of small farms. But the soil is comparatively poor and cannot, without fertilization, remain under tillage more than two consecutive years; it is necessary to alternate cultivation and pasturage on the same field. Associated with these circumstances are the wide extent of heath and also the less progressive character of the population. The last point offers one of the most remarkable examples of physiographic control of human activity. Doctor Siegfried, a distinguished scholar, worked for several years in the Geographical Institute of the University of Paris on a "Political Geography of Western France." By mapping the conditions of property and the results of elections by counties he showed that the geological boundaries of the old *massif* of Brittany coincide exactly for some hundred miles with the limit of the region of large ownership and of the districts which elect the least democratic deputies.

This, however, is not the whole story: there are other parts of France having nearly the same geological past as Brittany that yet are more progressive. Brittany is also a peninsula. The last and most important event of her geological history is the down-warping by which the sea entered the lower valleys and formed these remarkably developed shore lines. The result was to make Inner Brittany more isolated. As a matter of fact, in economic and social development Inner and Outer Brittany exhibit the strongest contrasts. The Gaelic language has different words for these regions: Inner Brittany is *Arcoet*, in allusion to its wooded appearance (cf. Welsh *coed*, wood), and Outer Brittany is *Armor*, the country of the sea.

Contrasts in the Peninsula: Inner and Outer Brittany

Arcoet is a poor country, sparsely populated, with almost no cities, with little farms, and with heaths covering most of the flat-topped heights. This is the true country of the *Chouans*, little known to the outside world, difficult of access. Before the nineteenth century there were no roads here, only a network of tree-enclosed lanes in which carriages would have stuck in the mud.

Armor is a much more developed country. The density of population is four or five times greater than in Arcoet. Here are nearly all the towns, and almost all are harbors, though they may be as much as fifteen miles away from the open sea. The climate is milder than in Arcoet, the soil sometimes better. Marine fertilizers can be easily used everywhere. Even in the seventeenth century wheat was grown here, while it was unknown in Arcoet. Early vegetables and fruits such as strawberries are today grown in many places.

Arcoet and Armor may differ from each other; they differ even more from the other provinces of France. Mention has been made of the difficulty of communication in Arcoet, which was improved only in the nineteenth century. Armor was never so isolated, but it does not look toward France. It looks toward the sea. It was by the sea that it received, at the beginning of the Christian era, considerable accessions to its population from Wales and Ireland. And it was also by the sea that Irish monks came thither, bringing Christianity. Certain rather strange types that are found on the coast of western Brittany are believed to be of Spanish or even perhaps of eastern Mediterranean origin and to be evidence of an ancient coastwise trade from the Mediterranean to western Europe.

Both sections of Brittany, Armor and Arcoet, brought together in closer relation and bound to the rest of France by road and railway, make notable contributions to the welfare of France. Brittany still remains a country in which the population is increasing, by excess of births over deaths, although from Arcoet she sends to Paris many of her young men and women. Brittany also gives to Paris the products of her gardens and fields. From her daring fishermen come the greatest number of our sailors, and especially the crews of our warships. In the present war [World War I] the regiments recruited in Brittany proved to be among the most inspired fighters for freedom and justice. ...

French Regional Life and National Unity

Brittany, Champagne, and Lorraine are only three of the many regions of France; but I think they will serve to show that regional life is a true characteristic of the country. It results from a long adaptation of man to the soil. It means love for the fields and the orchards, for the

houses of the village and the old church, for the city and its monuments: it means patriotism. The real France – her activity, her efficiency, and her patriotism – can only be understood through a knowledge of her different regions – regions which keep their individual character and still are closely bound to France.

This regional life has so much intensity that more and more among political circles in France there is spreading a feeling of the necessity for decentralization. The movement implies that restrictions must be placed on the highly centralized economic and political life by the establishment of regional of greater extent than our small *départements*.

The head of our modern school of geography, the late Paul Vidal de la Blanche, worked out a plan for this new division of France which is more or less related to the old provinces. Of course the new division cannot exactly correspond to the old provinces: it must take into account the conditions of modern life, the development of industry and of trade. This division is shown on the accompanying map. It has been adopted as the basis of a bill introduced into the Chamber of Deputies for the establishment of such regions. After peace has been concluded, this or some similar scheme will probably be carried out.

I think France is the only country in Europe which has actually taken steps toward an organized decentralization, though in Britain devolution into provinces has been discussed by geographers. The face is significant. It means that French unity is so strong that there is absolutely no fear of breaking it; and it means that this unity is not inconsistent with a diversity of regional life based on the closest and fullest adaptation of man's work to the land he inhabits.

Editor's Note: Although this map is not terribly clear in reproduction, you will see that the Department of Loire-Atlantique is cut off from Brittany and Nantes becomes the capital of a new region. Rennes is the capital for "Brittany." It was not until World War II that the Loire-Atlantique was officially cut off from historical Brittany during the Vichy government in June 1941. There will be many in Brittany who read the last paragraph to this article and find a great deal of irony in the discussion of "decentralization."



FIG. 6—Map showing proposed regional divisions of France (Vidal de la Blanche, 1910). Boundaries of regions are shown by broken lines. Dotted lines show boundaries of *départements*. Shaded areas may be disregarded (they indicated cases where regional lines do not follow lines of *départements*). The regional capital is given in each case. The three regions described in the article should be noted: Brittany, with capital at Rennes; Lorraine, with capital at Nancy; Champagne, not a division in itself but forming the eastern section of the region of Paris.

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