

Central Brittany

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Journal

March 2006

1€

ISSUE 21

Brittany's Textile Industry



2 Recipe: Chocolate Vanilla Shortbread

Chocolate Vanilla shortbread

Ingredients:

- 11 oz (325 g) plain flour
- 5 oz (150 g) sugar
- 7 oz (200 g) butter or margarine
- ½ teaspoon vanilla essence
- 2 tablespoons cocoa powder
- 1 oz (25 g) hazelnuts

Method:

1. Sift the flour into a medium-sized bowl and add the sugar.
2. Rub in the margarine till it starts to form a soft dough.
3. Divide the mixture into two halves and put one half into another bowl.
4. Add the vanilla to one half of the dough and the cocoa to the other. Mix well.
5. Chop the hazelnuts roughly and dry roast them in a small frying pan, stirring once or twice.
6. Meanwhile press the chocolate mixture into an ungreased 7" x 9" tin until it is spread evenly to the edges.
7. Roughly roll out the vanilla mix and lay it on top of the chocolate dough. Mould it to the edges.
8. Smooth the surface with a palette knife and sprinkle with the hazelnuts. Press them into the dough, then mark out the pieces with a sharp knife.
9. Bake in an oven 180°C (350°F) Gas Mark 4 for 15 - 20 minutes or until the edges start to brown slightly. Cut when still warm and leave to cool in tin.



I-spy catkins

The pretty green and yellow catkins of the pussy willow are a true herald of Spring, and the first can be seen in March.



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Central Brittany Journal

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4 Growing Up in Brittany

Growing up in Brittany

I was nine years old when my family and I moved to Brittany. It was in the summer of 1994, a very hot year, and I remember how delighted I was at seeing all the lizards and insects in the hedgerows - even the hornets and adders were a source of interest to me, as I had never seen such things in England. Before our move to France we had been living in Yorkshire. I liked it there a lot, but I am very glad we came to Brittany. Here we could afford to buy a piece of land with its own stream and pond, and trees big enough to climb - my idea of heaven!

Here I could walk up and down the road quite safely all by myself, my brother and sister and I could go across the fields without being shouted at by angry farmers, and nobody minded when we climbed on the hay bales!

When I look back on my childhood spent in Brittany it seems so perfectly idyllic, it could almost be from an old-fashioned story book. When our house was being built, and we lived in a tent on the land, I remember how I would wake as the sun rose with the woodpigeons cooing in the tree-tops, commencing the dawn chorus; and I remember how glorious it was to sit on a sun-soaked straw bale in the early morning and watch all the dewdrops glisten and sparkle on the usually invisible spiders' webs which hung across the corn stubble. And then, when the garden was started, I have so many fond memories of harvesting the produce, and how we would feast on the fresh peas when they were just large enough to eat and so unbelievably juicy, and bring in bowl after bowl of raspberries in the height of summer for our mother to make into jams and jellies.

It was so much fun to explore all the countryside around us and discover old wells, overgrown paths, and large trees, and to gather blackberries, hazelnuts or sweet chestnuts to eat later on.

Until I came to Brittany I had never seen stars so clear and so bright, and I had never lived anywhere where such truly wild countryside was close enough to the house for me to spend much of my time in. I was completely mesmerized by the beauty of oak trees, and how gorgeous they looked in every season, and my appreciation has only grown as the years have gone by.

I realise now, that my brother and sister and I were particularly lucky, because, unlike most children, we didn't go to school. I did try it once, in Caillac, but although the other children were as nice as could be, and very welcoming, I couldn't see the point of spending so much of my day behind a desk, and being told what to learn, rather than asked what I would like to learn, and having no choice about the days I spent there, and so many other things it would be tedious to enumerate them all. I soon asked to leave, and I am glad that I did, because I found it difficult to go to school and really enjoy my life at the same time. When children say they find the countryside boring I would never blame them, because it is very hard to spend one's time in the hectic atmosphere of school, and remain calm enough inside to enjoy the subtle beauty of nature as well.

Once I left school I had the time to pursue the things I enjoyed doing. Drawing was one such thing, and more recently photography as well. It has been a great pleasure for me to provide the Central Brittany Journal with my work and to help create a magazine which I like to think has helped people settle in and enjoy the countryside. I hope that many more people move here, particularly with children, making the countryside the vibrant place it once was, where people really care for and protect the land. I have found Brittany an extremely nice place to grow up in, and I hope that many other children get the chance to be here, so that they too can experience all the wonders of nature which have succeeded in delighting children for so many centuries.

Wendy Lewis



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Pictures of the Month



above: the garden in winter, Kath



left: a moorhen visits the birdtable, Ann Ray



right: a brimstone butterfly (known as 'le citron' in French!) on a bluebell, Michel le Bilan

below: dewdrop on a blade of grass, Wendy Lewis

Do you have a favourite photograph that you would like to see published in the Journal? Contact Wendy at info@thebj.com.



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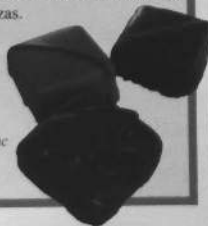
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Teashop Review:
ST-BRIEUC
 Christophe Diener,
 Aux Délices



This delightful teashop is on the large square of Champ de Mars, in the centre of St Brieuc. There is a range of delicious cakes, including the best croûte à thé (pistachio slice) we have tasted, and a large selection of chocolates. The traditional blue chocolates of St Brieuc are available, as well as "rochers" (praline-filled, nut covered chocolates), and our personal favourite, black-chocolate pieces, studded with hazelnuts. There are also very good pâtes de fruit (fruit jellies). The tearoom is at the back of the shop, which is long and narrow. It contains seven tables and is generally quite busy. This teashop also sells bread, and savoury quiches and pizzas.

pl. du Champs de Mars,
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Paul Aurelian (c. 500 - 594)

A concise history of one of Brittany's most celebrated saints.

Part 1. The Arrival in Brittany

Paul Aurelian was born in Wales, in the county of Glamorgan. At a young age, he became a pupil of the famous sage and teacher St Iltud, and he soon became widely known for his wisdom. When he was about thirty he was summoned to the court of King Mark of Cornwall, and became one of his advisors. The King was so delighted by his new counsellor that he gave him more and more responsibilities and soon decided to appoint him as his chief minister.

Paul Aurelian had no interest in power or influence, and feeling himself unequal to the position, set sail for Brittany with a large band of close friends and family.

They built little homes for themselves in the thick forest that covered their new country, but Paul Aurelian wished to find the king, or chief man of the district, and set out in search of him. Following the coastline, he and his companions walked and walked without meeting anyone, until they found a swineherd.

"I am looking for the King of these parts," said Paul Aurelian. "Can you take me to him?" "I can indeed," said the man. "In fact these swine you see belong to him. His name is Count Withur, and he has made his home on the island of Batz, far away from all other men."

The swineherd led Paul Aurelian to a place on the coast, opposite the island of Batz. Here they found a ruined Roman Fort. It was quite empty of people, and had become the home of many wild creatures, including a wild boar and her piglets, a swarm of bees in the trunk of a great tree, a bull, and a bear.

Paul Aurelian sailed across the channel to the little island of Batz, and was met by the count himself, who had come hurrying up to meet him.

"Why," exclaimed Withur, "you are my cousin, Paul Aurelian. You are welcome here."

The two cousins embraced and Count Withur led the newcomers to his little dwelling on the island.

Continued page 9

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Editorial
 Welcome to the twenty-first issue of the Central Brittany Journal. This month, I would like to give a special thanks to all those people who have sent in letters and contributions. We have included as many as possible, but, for the first time, there have been things for which we simply have not had room: a sign of success, I suppose, but I hope that this does not put people off from sending us letters, pictures, and interesting pieces of information. The Journal does not have a team of reporters roving over the Breton countryside seeking out stories and I am entirely dependent upon readers to let me know what is going on in the region.
 The Journal was launched in April 2004, and next month's issue will therefore mark the beginning of its third year of publication. To commemorate the occasion, we are planning a special issue for April 2005 that focusses on the coming of spring.
 People keep asking us how we can afford to keep the price of the Journal fixed at one euro, and, in truth, it is not easy to do so. Having lived in Central Brittany for many years, however, I have no illusions about the economic problems facing the region, and, in particular that people living here may not be able to afford to pay the prices and charges that are appropriate in big cities. For as long as we can manage it, our 1€ cover price is our personal contribution to the campaign for fairer prices and charges for people who make their living in the country. GL

The Language of Shakespeare
 Use every man after his desert, and who should 'scape whipping?
 Use them after your own honour and dignity. The less they deserve, the more merit is in your bounty.
 Hamlet 2 ii

Day Trips to the Channel Islands

People who would like to make a shopping trip to the UK but are put off by the long drive to Calais often forget that Brittany is just a short sea crossing away from the Channel Islands which have the full range of UK shops.

Condor Ferries runs a daily service to Jersey from St. Malo. Special offers available up until the 20th March include: 'Valentines' fare: one adult pays for a return crossing and a night in a three star hotel, and another adult goes free - cost 133€.

'Free Child's Fare' Two adults pay for day return tickets and one child can travel for free - cost 52€.

Open Day Le Derrien Motoculture

Louis Derrien warmly invites everyone to attend open days on the 18th, 19th, and 20th March at his shops in Gourin and Carhaix, where latest models of lawnmowers, mini-tractors, and other garden equipment will be available for inspection.

Alternative Education for Young Children

Parents in the Lannion region have taken the first steps towards forming a kindergarten based on the educational principles of Rudolf Steiner. Parents and children meet two or three times per week. Anyone interested to find out more should contact Cloé 02 96 35 15 18.

Workwear Specialist

Paul Butler has started a business in Collorec which specialises in embroidering and printing on fabric, and in particular in producing workwear bearing company logos. He has 15 years of experience of working with promotional clothing and corporate wear in the UK; he is happy to visit clients to demonstrate the quality of his range.

A Taste for Languages

Henri Guéguen's language-learning initiative was featured in the Journal last year. He has now teamed up with the group that run the book festivals in Bécherel. He is hosting a series of trilingual events as part of the Easter Book fair titled 'Le Gout des Langues', in which people can experience using French, English and Breton.

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Paul Aurelian (continued from page 6)
Part II King Mark's Bell

While Count Withun and Paul Aurelian were talking, a fisherman came in, bearing in one hand a huge salmon, and in the other a beautiful little bell. It had been beneath the sea some time, for it was full of shellfish, and spotted with rust.

Paul Aurelian took it in his hands, and began to laugh.

"What is the matter?" asked Count Withun. "I know this bell," said Paul Aurelian. "It belongs to King Mark, and was one of seven that hung in his castle. He used them to summon people to eat, and they have a particularly sweet tone. When I was about to leave for Brittany, I asked him to give me one as a keepsake, but he refused. However, you see that it has been sent to me all the same."*

Continued page 28



*A bell called St Pol's bell can still be seen in the cathedral at St Pol de Léon.

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Letters

Air Wales

I have just found out that 'Air Wales' are commencing flights from Manchester to Rennes from the 27th March 2006.

They will be flying on Saturdays, Sundays, Mondays and Thursdays. More info from www.airwales.com. Thought it maybe of interest for your readers.

Regards
Gareth Noon

Bed & Breakfast Calais

I've discovered your site and wish there was something similar where I live, Pas de Calais.

I run a bed and breakfast which is only one hour from the channel ports and close to both the A16 and N1. I'm sure that many people travelling down to Brittany would appreciate a stopover close to the ports if they have used the Dover/Calais crossing. My web site is: www.les-lavandes-bed-and-breakfast.com

Thanks,
Linda Daldry

Fare Differentials

Just a note of warning on prices. We took out a subscription for cheaper fares, and since we now live in France did it with www.brittany-ferries.fr thinking the prices were the same. By chance I selected the www.brittany-ferries.co.uk to make my booking, but could not put my reference in as it was for the French web site. I noted all the details, and price, then re-keyed via the French web site. Much to my surprise, the price was different! If I put my reference in, it was the SAME price as the UK normal price. Without my reference it was dearer. (Same start and end point) When I queried this with the French Brittany Ferries they said that the 2 companies were different, as were the offers. When I looked at their offer, I was underwhelmed. At the time, I could go to the UK cheaply, as long as I didn't set foot off the boat. Big deal! Needless to say I did not renew my owner's subscription, and would book via the .co.uk site!

Evelyn Taylor
P.S. Many thanks for your magazine. I have used the Breton words as a starting point with a Breton speaking friend, and we have positive feedback from our French friends. I am not interested in other magazines which often only describe people having moved over and settled down. Learning more about fables and culture etc. is great!

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Homeschool & Megaliths

First of all congratulations on the excellent CBJ, it was our first intro to Brittany, and full of interesting articles and art work.

We are now the proud owners of a property near Mellionec and are on the verge of relocating our family. We are concerned about our son's education though - he is a very free thinking, intelligent child, who frequently runs into conflicts with teachers with regards to injustice in classroom management. I have my doubts that he will integrate into the french education system and wonder how the education authorities view home education. Are there many people home educating around Rostrenen? or further afield who we may be able to make contact with.

On a separate subject - do you know anyone who has knowledge of Breton pre history - we are very interested in the megalithic culture of the region and would love to find out more. There has been some great stuff in CBJ.

Many thanks for your time,
Ginny
Replies to info@theobj.com.

Animal rights in Brittany

Thank you so much for last month's article on birds. My garden has been full of birds this winter and it has been a joy to feed them. Do you think the CBJ could go a step further and give some information on how to help our other animal friends, when in a crisis?

Eighteen months ago a dog was lost in Tremargat Village. I tried to find the owners and even put an announcement on the radio. I went to the mairie, and was given the S.P.A. number. Apparently they were in difficulties, so another organisation collected the dog. The man who came was very angry and dragged this little dog through my house. We were told the dog would be kept for twelve days at St Brieuc, then sent to Paris if it was not housed. I was worried about the dog and therefore adopted her. Daisy is now a much loved member of the family along with the other five rescued animals.

Two weeks ago, I spotted a very distressed cat under a car. His front paw was broken and part of his leg injured where it had been caught in a trap. The cat belonged to a family that had moved, and had been left to fend for itself. I was able to give him some food, but it was not possible to catch him. I was extremely concerned as the next day I was going to hospital for a week. I contacted my vet. She said that the mairie was obliged to take responsibility for any hurt animals in the commune; so, next stop, the mairie's office. I got no help at all - they did not want to know. When I returned from hospital it took another three days to catch him. Sadly, the next day the cat was put to sleep.

It has been made very clear to me by my neighbours that animals are just that; that country life is different from town life; tears can only be shed for humans, not animals.

I believe that we are caretakers of this world and of all God's creatures. In England, one knows that one can call the RSPCA and that also the police and the fire brigade will help in extreme emergencies.

WHO WILL HELP HERE? Joan Minns
As may be imagined, this letter caused considerable concern in the CBJ office. We have contacted local vets and mairies, who have all confirmed that the correct course of action if you find an animal in distress is to contact your mairie. Everyone showed great concern and agreed that the response received by Mrs Minns was unacceptable. GL

letters continued overleaf

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Books for free (or almost)

English settlers in Central Brittany are evidently great readers, if the proliferation of English language book sellers and exchanges is an indication. But readers, are you aware that your local library may be an alternative source of English language books?

Libraries here are run quite differently to their English counterparts. They normally depend on volunteers to run them and depend on their customers for a large part of their income.

To enable them to offer a wider choice to their readers, they are served by the Departmental library, which delivers by 'Bibliobus' a new assortment of books at regular intervals.

Here in Huelgoat, where I was welcomed as a new volunteer, we are truly trilingual, having an excellent stock of English books as well as a Breton language collection to add to the French collection - novels, non-fiction, local studies, children's books, and a large selection of B.D.s - bandes dessinées - comic strip books which are respected in France as an art form, and not simply as comics for children.

For the price of 12,50 euros per individual; or a bargain 15,50 for a family, you can borrow three books at a time for up to three weeks. Holiday makers and temporary residents can also borrow books on payment of a returnable deposit.

Not all libraries are as well off as Huelgoat for English language books; and as a result customers come from a considerable distance to visit the Huelgoat library.

Why not give it a try? You will find it behind the Mairie, open on Tuesdays and Wednesdays from 4 - 6 pm and Saturdays from 10 - 12 noon. Information about the library is available in English, and you will be warmly welcomed.

Sue Anderson

Integration & Birds

The letter by Robert Hilton on integration in the November issue of CBJ was quite right, we don't have to lose our individual identity, this is what makes us interesting to others of a different culture. I feel my daughter and son-in-law have got it right. They moved over to Brittany early last summer to live in a very rural area of Scrignac and have made friends with the local farmer and his wife and family. Exchanging their language has helped both families. They also invite each other to dine at their house.

My daughter goes to keep fit classes twice a week with the farmer's wife where all the ladies are French, some only speak Breton, but they have made her very welcome.

There is a Breton family living down the lane who exchange home-grown produce with my daughter. The language isn't a barrier as kindness and understanding will always shine through.

I was interested in your article on wild birds in Brittany, I was amazed at the different species, many having been lost to us in England. My greatest treat was when my son-in-law took me to a local spot to see a grey Heron, it amazed me how big it was in flight.

I look forward to receiving my copy of CBJ which the family send me every month.

Margaret and Dave Warman
Droitwich Spa

More letters: 'Useful travel information' page 28

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Brittany's Textile industry

In these times, when there is so much concern about Brittany's economic reliance upon farming and subsidies, the history of the region's textile industry makes interesting reading. For almost four hundred years - from the fourteenth to the seventeenth centuries - Brittany was ranked amongst Europe's top textile-producing areas, a status which made it one of the most prosperous parts of the continent.

Textile skills are indigenous to most rural communities, and it is probable that the inhabitants of Brittany made their own cloth from the earliest days of recorded history. For the most part, they probably used a mixture of wool and plant fibres, and would have spun and woven only enough cloth as was required for their own use.

This changed at some point in the 1300s, when hemp started to be grown in commercial quantities in Brittany and converted into products that were in high demand in the booming shipping industry - rope, sacking materials, and, above all, sailcloth.

Perhaps because of the existing hemp business, linen production came to Brittany in the late 1400s. Linen became the basis of a flourishing trade between Brittany and Spain, and Brittany and England. The loss of this trade coincided with a downturn in the economic fortunes of the region.



Brittany was pre-eminent in the production of canvas for much of the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries and it is certain that many of the most celebrated voyages of discovery were completed with the aid of Breton sails.

Brittany's Hemp Industry

Hemp production became a significant economic factor in Breton life in the 1300s, when the demand for ship's canvas started to increase. Two regions of Brittany became famous for canvas production: to the east of Rennes, the town of Vitré was essentially the European capital of canvas production, which brought enormous wealth to the town - to the point that on visiting the town Henri IV remarked that if he had not been King of France he would have liked to have been born a merchant of Vitré; in the west, the town of Locronan was the centre of a smaller but equally prosperous trade.

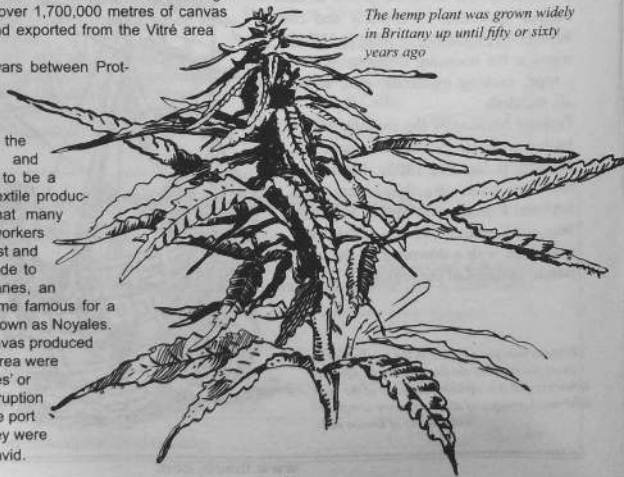
Throughout the age of discovery, Breton canvas was the preferred sail cloth for all the ships of Europe.

At this time, sailing ships were the principal technological achievement which gave Europe an advantage over the rest of the world; they were succeeding in breaking down the thousand-year monopoly that Arab merchants had had over trade between Europe and Asia; they enabled the discovery and colonisation of the New World; they opened up transport between different European countries; and they were the most effective military machines of the age. The fact that so many of these ships were fitted with Breton canvas not only brought wealth to Brittany, but also made it one of the most significant states in the Europe of the time.

Few precise details remain of this early canvas industry: it is believed that when the trade was at its height in the late 1500s over 1,700,000 metres of canvas were produced and exported from the Vitré area alone every year.

During the civil wars between Protestants and Catholics, Vitré was besieged (1589), many of the merchants fled, and the town ceased to be a major centre of textile production; it seems that many of the skilled workers moved further west and restarted their trade to the south of Rennes, an area which became famous for a type of canvas known as Noyales.

The pieces of canvas produced in the Locronan area were known as 'Olonnes' or 'Poldavids', a corruption of the name of the port through which they were exported - Pouldavid.



The hemp plant was grown widely in Brittany up until fifty or sixty years ago

Hemp - What is it?

The Breton name for the hemp plant - kanneb - gives a fairly clear indication that the plant grown for hemp fibres in Brittany for at least seven hundred years is the plant that we know today as Cannabis - there are other hemp-producing plants grown in other parts of the world, but Bretons almost certainly grew cannabis.

Hemp plants appear to have been grown on smallholdings throughout Brittany from an early date in history; the fibre that they produce is highly versatile, and the plants help to nourish the soil. It is interesting to note that there is no evidence to suggest that people used the plant as a drug, and it is certain that it was not harvested and shipped to other countries as part of an international drugs trade. It seems that modern drug laws were only introduced after hemp growing had died out for unrelated reasons.

Only a small proportion of the hemp grown would have found its way to the canvas producers. Most of it was used locally to produce ropes, coarse clothes and sacking material.

Brittany's Linen industry

Brittany's linen industry dates from when new varieties of linen became available from Northern Europe in the late 1400s.

Prior to that time, smallholders throughout Brittany grew flax, but simply for their personal use, or to sell on to canvas makers who mixed it with hemp to produce sail cloth. Local linen plants grew to only about one foot high, but the new varieties could be persuaded to reach three to four feet in height if grown in the right conditions, and therefore gave a much higher yield of high-quality fibre.

continued page 17



Spinning the yarn

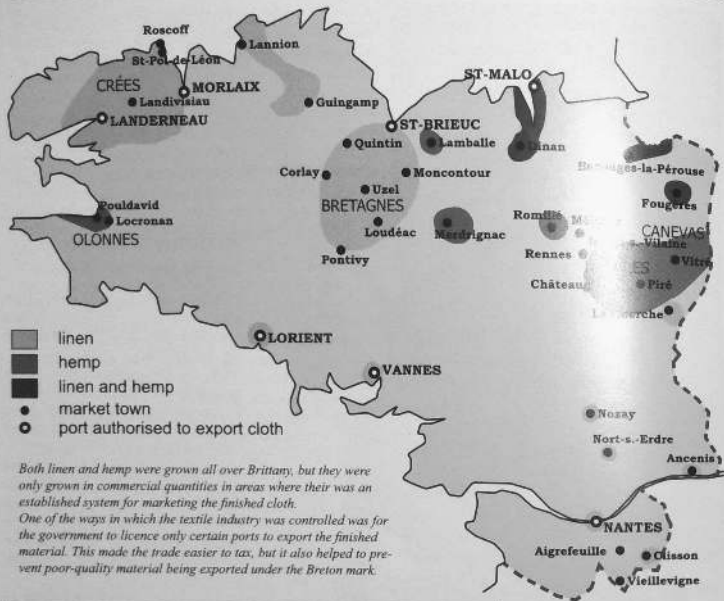
Riddle:

Me am beuz eur wezenn e-dreon va zi.
Ez eo gwelloc'h he c'hroc'henn evit-hi.

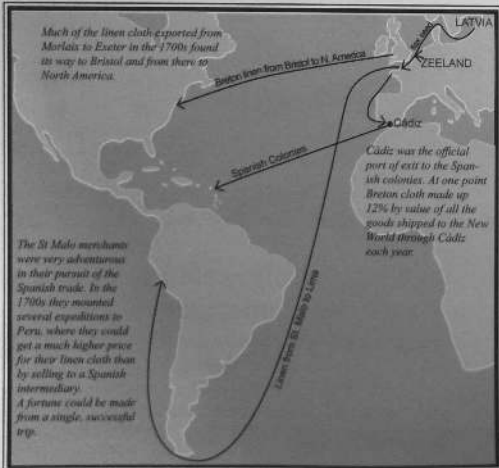
I have a tree behind my house.
Its bark is worth more than it is.

answer overleaf

16 Brittany's Textile Industry



Both linen and hemp were grown all over Brittany, but they were only grown in commercial quantities in areas where their was an established system for marketing the finished cloth. One of the ways in which the textile industry was controlled was for the government to licence only certain ports to export the finished material. This made the trade easier to tax, but it also helped to prevent poor-quality material being exported under the Breton mark.



For several centuries Brittany was at the heart of an international trade in textiles.

Riddle solution from p. 15:
- Ar'chanab
- Hemp

Brittany's Textile Industry 17

Brittany's Linen Industry contd.

Flax Growing

Flax plants are very demanding on the soil and require specific growing conditions: they are planted in April and harvested in July, and it is important that the weather should be mild and wet during this period. The area of Brittany that best fulfilled these conditions was the strip running along the Northern coasts of Finistère and Côtes d'Armor. The region around Lannion and to the west of Morlaix were particularly noted for their flax production.

in the Lannion area, made its way to the famous textile region around Uzel, Moncontour, Loudéac, and Quintin to be prepared into cloth.

Cloth Production

From an early date, there was a division between where flax was grown, and where it was woven into cloth. Flax grown in the region of Morlaix was woven in the moorland parishes of the diocese of Léon, in the region of Landivisiau. Linen grown further east,

The pieces of linen cloth produced in Léon, and exported through the port of Morlaix, were known as 'Crées', and the pieces of cloth produced in what is now Côtes d'Armor were known as 'Bretagnes', and were exported principally through St Malo. For many years the bulk of the Morlaix trade went to England, and the St Malo trade went to Spain. Linen was traditionally produced in lengths of 100 aunes (122 metres) and a width of 3/4 of an aune (89 cm). Both Crées and Bretagnes were regarded as being amongst the highest quality textile produced in Europe and commanded a premium price in the marketplace

The International Linen Trade

The linen industry provides an insight into the sophistication of European trade in the fifteen and sixteen hundreds.

Morlaix and St Malo - where they were measured, polished, folded, pressed, stamped, and packaged.

Seeds From the Baltic

Flax seeds were brought from Latvia to Roscoff on Dutch barges. The barges set out before Christmas to arrive in time for the spring sowings. On average 12,000 80 Kg barrels of seed made the journey every year. Farmers had to replenish their seed every third year to avoid plants losing their vigour due to cross pollination with local plants. A similar trade existed between the Dutch province of Zealand and the port of St Malo.

Export

In Morlaix the prepared bales of cloth were generally sold directly to the agents of English merchants who then bore the risk of the sea crossing to England. The merchants of St Malo were more adventurous in their pursuit of the Spanish trade, regularly sending expeditions across the Atlantic to deal directly with the Spanish colonies, in contravention of trading agreements.

Spinning

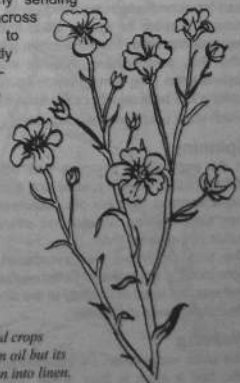
Linen yarn was spun by women who lived in and around the main flax-growing areas.

Weaving

The spun yarn was sold either directly to weavers or to dealers who 'put the work out' to weavers in their employ.

Finishing

The finished pieces of cloth then made their way to the ports authorised to export them - principally



Flax or linseed, one of the oldest cultivated crops known to man, not only yields seeds rich in oil but its stem also contains fibres that can be woven into linen.

Linen Production

In the past, most people would have been able to produce 'homespun' cloth, but in order to produce the top quality textiles that Brittany exported to the rest of the world, every stage of the process from growing the flax to washing and bleaching the finished cloth demanded a high level of skill:

Growers

Flax is very demanding upon the soil and the Breton farmers who produced it are believed to have observed a complex rotation system, growing linen on one piece of ground only once every seven or eight years. Hemp was frequently grown in the year prior to the linen crop to help enrich the soil and to clear it of weeds.

Harvesting

Flax grown for its fibres was pulled up by hand, and stacked up to dry in the fields. It was then combed or threshed to remove the seeds - which were either used as animal feed or sold for linseed oil production.

Retting & Scutching

The next step was to separate the linen fibres from the other vegetable material. This was done by soaking the plants for a period of weeks so that the pithy materials in the stems could rot. In the Léon region this was generally done in stagnant pools but in Côtes d'Armor the flax was submerged in running streams. This process is known as retting. The plants were then dried (in the open air) and then 'scutched' which involved either passing them through a roller or similar hand-made device, to separate the fibres from the rotten pith. After this, the resulting material was combed to separate the long fibres, which could be used for making the best quality cloth, from the short fibres which were used for everyday work.

Spinning

In the early days, spinning was almost certainly done by hand - with a spindle and a distaff; this had the advantage that people could spin yarn while they were walking around and attending to other duties at the same time. The spinning wheel was introduced into Europe from India in the wake of British colonial activities, and was not used in Brittany at the time that its textile industry was at its peak.

Weaving

The cloth was woven by independent tradesmen who had a loom in their home. The reason why

weaving did not take place in and around the linen growing areas themselves seems to be because the people who worked the rich coastal farmland could use their time more profitably than weaving cloth. People who farmed the less hospitable inland areas, on the other hand, did have several months each year that could be devoted to weaving - at that time few people appear to have given up farming altogether in order to pursue work in the textile industry. There seems to have been a deep-seated distrust of a form of employment that was reliant upon forces beyond people's personal control - even in times of great prosperity.

Washing and Bleaching

Flax fibres are grey in colour, and therefore have to be bleached in order to attain the whiteness that we associate with linen. This is done by heating the finished cloth in water containing wood ash and then drying it in the sun, and repeating the process several times until the required degree of whiteness is obtained. In the Léon area the yarn was bleached before weaving.

Selling

The woven cloth was bought by merchants who were usually based in the ports through which the cloth was exported. To a large extent, it was upon the probity and the business acumen of the merchants that the fortunes of the linen industry hung. The merchants were responsible for ensuring that all the cloth exported bearing the Breton mark was of a sufficiently high quality to maintain their standing in the marketplace. The merchants of Morlaix cultivated a profitable trading relationship with the port of Exeter, which for many years gave Breton linen a pre-eminent position in the English market, while the merchants of St Malo pursued the even more lucrative market of Spain and its New World colonies.

What Happened to the Wealth?

Over the years, there has been much discussion about what happened to all the wealth that poured into Brittany from its textile industry. Many of Brittany's churches date back to this, but it has been calculated that the cost of their construction represents only a small fraction of the money earned. It seems that the textile industry, up until the end of the 1700s, was an egalitarian business, and that its earnings were spread out fairly evenly amongst everyone who worked in it. This is thought to explain why there are few extravagant monuments dating back to this period.

A salutary tale: The Loss of the English Trade

The Breton textile industry reached its peak in the late 1600s, when trade to both England and Spain was at an all-time high. Its decline, however, was swift and dramatic.

The first major blow that the industry suffered was in the 1680s, when it lost the English market. This commercial catastrophe seems to have been almost entirely due to the policies of the government in Paris and, for this reason, is often cited as an example of why a region such as Brittany needs a degree of autonomy to be able to enjoy economic success.

A train of events was set in motion by Colbert, Louis XIV's prime minister, imposing import duties on textiles imported into France from Great Britain. This tax caused the sale price of some English goods to rise by a factor of twelve.

This move was made in the context of wider political tensions between the two countries, but it had serious local repercussions in Brittany. The traditional trade between Morlaix and Exeter had involved an exchange of textiles - Breton linen was exported,

Devon woollen fabrics imported into Brittany; the high import duties soon led to a collapse in demand for the Devon fabrics, and the trade became one way. This contributed to a large imbalance of trade and the English parliament retaliated by first imposing an embargo on all French goods, and then charging import duties on certain imports, including textiles. This marked the start of a commercial war between the two countries which lasted throughout most of the 1700s. There were many opportunities for differences to be resolved and for normal trade to be resumed, and Breton representatives repeatedly warned ministers in Paris that unless peace was restored, England would supply its needs from elsewhere. The belief in Paris, however, was that England would never be able to free itself from a dependence upon French textile products and that there was therefore no need to give way.

History shows how, initially, England replaced Breton imports with cloth from Germany, and then proceeded to encourage the development of a linen industry in Ireland. Irish linen imported into England was free of all tax, while the import duty on Breton linen was still running at one hundred percent. In 1680, seven million metres of top-quality linen cloth

'Scutching' the flax after it has been soaked and dried - to separate the linen fibres from the rest of the plant material.



20 Brittany's Textile Industry

was exported from Morlaix to England, ten years later, there was virtually no legitimate trade in cloth between the two countries.

From then on, Morlaix and St Malo competed for the only remaining significant market - Spain and its colonies. Due to its well-established trading partnerships, St Malo was inevitably more successful, and the linen industry in the Morlaix region slowly dwindled away over the course of the 1700s.

The Irish linen industry, on the other hand, boomed: in 1696, 120,000 metres of cloth were exported to England, a century later, in 1790, 30,000,000 metres were exported. More ominously for all small-scale European textile workers, England was starting to import large quantities of linen yarn from Ireland which was then mixed with cotton from North America to produce new, industrially-produced cotton fabrics.

This was the beginning of the cotton industry, upon which the wealth of the British Empire was built. It is the first example of a modern, technologically-advanced, global industry, that revolutionised the production of a basic commodity and in the process disrupted the lives of millions of people around the world.

The Nineteenth Century

The French Revolution proved to be disastrous for what was left of the Breton linen industry, which was centred around Quintin, Moncontour, Uzel and Loudéac: roads and bridges were destroyed; transport links to the Spanish market were severed by the British naval blockade; the merchant class which underwrote the industry was decimated by revolutionary politics; and compulsory conscription reduced the availability of the manpower required in the labour-intensive textile industry of the time. Furthermore, there was a belief at the time that many of the troops sent to Brittany to suppress the Chouan rebellion came from other textile-producing regions of France, and that they maliciously destroyed looms and other equipment in order to reduce competition for their own products. Consequently, by the time that peace was restored in the early 1800s, the textile industry was in a poor condition.

There was a revival during the first part of the nineteenth century, but this seems to have been due to established custom rather than any coherent policy; for a while there was a strong home market, and dealers in Spain who had a long tradition of buying Breton cloth continued to do so. Breton workers were, however, still using traditional techniques and could not compete in a world market in which industrially-produced fabrics from Britain were starting to

dominate.

During this period, many textile workers were drawn into the trap of working longer and longer hours for less and less money in an attempt to compete with the price of machine-produced cloth. This meant that they no longer had time for farming, and, for the first time, large numbers of families became entirely dependent upon their earnings from spinning and weaving. This led to times of great hardship as the price of yarn and fabric underwent wild fluctuations: in 1840, for example, the price of linen cloth fell from 2 francs per metre to 20 centimes per metre in the course of just a few months. Twenty years later, the price was still just 90 centimes per metre.

For reasons probably to do with the low esteem in which Brittany was held by the government in Paris at the time, no investment was forthcoming to modernise the Breton textile industry, and during the later part of the nineteenth century, the production of linen and hemp fabrics, an industry that had flourished in Brittany for at least five hundred years, faded away to almost nothing.

Conclusion

The story of Brittany's textile industry gives ample cause for reflection: in the past, everyone, including even the poorest farm workers, could afford to wear exquisite hand-spun, hand-woven linen fabrics; and these fabrics were produced without forcing anyone into a life of hardship or overwork. Later, after two revolutions - the French Revolution and the Industrial Revolution - Bretons still had access to high-quality fabrics, but their production involved making people work excessively long hours for insufficient remuneration.

Now, only the wealthiest amongst us can afford to buy fabrics comparable in quality to the 'Bretagnes' and 'Crées' produced in olden times; we are more or less obliged to buy imported clothes, often made of synthetic and poor-quality fabrics, at an unknown cost to the people who produce them. There is something in this that makes one suspect that we cannot be using our talents and the natural resources of our region to their full advantage.

Madou a zeu, madou a ia,
Karante marse na guita

Belongings come, belongings go
Love will never leave us.

What's On

Le Lion: Sundays in March

Every Sunday evening from 7.30 p.m. onwards, musicians meet & play at Le Lion pub situated on the crossroads between Séglien and Cléguérec. Free bowl of soup for all guests.

Wednesday March 22nd Monthly Charity Pub Quiz. 8 p.m. Bookings preferred.

All proceeds in aid of Martin House Hospice for terminally-ill children (<http://www.martinhouse.org.uk>)

Le Lion Bar/Restaurant, Bobes, 56160 Séglien
Tel: Peter Smith, on 02 97 38 05 11

Sundays in March

10.30 a.m. Guerlesquin Christian Fellowship meet at Chapelle St Jean - opposite library in the main street. English-speaking group - all denominations welcome. Tel: 02 98 78 21 28

Fleur de Bretagne: Sundays in March

Sunday Book/Bric a Brac Sales and demonstrations. **March 5th & April 2nd**: Master tarot card reader. Please book. **March 12th**: Insurance problems - advice given. **March 19th**: Clogmaking demonstration. See how it's done and try the products. **March 26th**: Painting contest. Bring along your paintings. All held at the Fleur de Bretagne, Rostrenen campsite, 2 p.m. start. Sunday lunches also available. Booking essential. For more information, Call Ray/Yvonne: 02 96 45 79 11

Thursdays in March: Thursday 2nd: Quiz night; **Thursday 9th** Pool Night; **Thursday 16th** Bingo night; **Thursday 23rd** Quiz night; **Thursday 30th** Darts Night 1€ Entry - Cash Prizes 8 p.m. start. More info: 02 96 29 16 45

Friday March 10th: Fish & Chips Night 6€ 7.30 - please book.

Tuesday March 14th: Pub night for Classic Car & Motorbike Enthusiasts from 7.30 pm. Free Entry.

Fleur de Bretagne, (Camping Rostrenen) Kerandouaran, (dir. D31 Silliac) 02 96 29 15 45

Au Rendez-vous Des Celtes: Wednesdays in March
Every Wednesday at 8pm. Au Rendez-vous Des Celtes, Plussulien. FREE 1 wine tasting and tapas. 'No strings, no hard sell just a couple of wines available locally, some nibbles and good company.' 02 96 24 04 26

Tuesday March 14th: Darts and Skittles, 5€ to include Full English Breakfast. Can the Breton Babes win again? Will anyone ever score 180? Booking advised, teams made up on the night. 02 96 24 04 26 7.30 p.m. start

Friday March 17th: St Patrick's - Au Rendezvous Des Celtes, Plussulien. Can you remember last year's? Live music featuring Plussulien's very own - 'The Angle' - Fancy Dress - come as a Leprechaun/Leprechauness (you decide!) bottle of Jamesons/ Baileys for the winners - Hot Buffet Roast Beef, Salmon, Honey Roast Ham, Langoustines etc adults 15€, kids 8€. Several barrels of Murphy's to get through. Early booking advised.

Tuesday March 28th: Quiz Night & Annie's Steak Pie and Chips 5€. Starts 8pm, very popular evening - early booking advised (ps. no more questions on TV ads - promise!)

Au Rendez - vous Des Celtes, Plussulien 02 96 24 04 26

Wednesday March 8th

First of a regular fortnightly discussion group for people suffering from depression. 5€ charge includes wine and snacks. Please call Ray 02 96 45 79 11.

Sunday March 12th

Indoor car boot sale. Tables free but booking essential. Carolann's, Carmoët. (On left as you enter village). Well marked. 10 a.m. - 1.30 p.m. 02 96 21 54 62

What's On 21

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Reservations: 02 97 07 05 01

Sunday March 12th

Celebrated Turkish clarinettist Hasan Yarimudina finishes his tour at St Nicolas du Pelem. 3 p.m. Accompanied by other musicians. Also Fest Deiz. Entrance charges: 10/ 12/ 15€. Booking: 02 97 23 83 83 d.a.w.@wanadoo.fr

Wildwalks: Tues. 14th & Tues. 28th March
Wildwalks organise a monthly programme of guided walks. 2.30pm, meet Le Relec Abbey car-park (D111) 2-2.5 hours long. 3€. For more information, Tel: 02 98 24 15 19

March 20th - 22nd and 27th - 29th
Two 3-day practical French language courses for all levels at Kergrist Moëlou (Le Chat Qui Lit) These will be relaxed & fun, concentrating on the day-to-day use of French. Bookings now taken. Contact Peter on 0296 36 59 00 or see www.chatquilit.com

Sunday March 26th

Christ Church Brittany, MOTHERING SUNDAY, 10.30 am Bonen Church near Rostrenen. Holy Communion taken by Rev. Roger Fray, C of E. All welcome. For further information contact Robin and Laura Hillman, tel: 02 97 51 74 26, email:kermoran@wanadoo.fr

Sunday March 31st

Ragamuffins play Old Time Jazz at the Pub/Café La Brasserie, 2 place de la Mairie, Carhaix. 9 p.m. Entrance free.

Saturday April 1st

Games for all the family at the Ludothèque, Guéméné sur Scorff, (beside Salle polyvalente). Entrance free. Come and play and try out all sorts of games - large wooden games, card games and board games - for all ages. English will be spoken. More info: 02 97 39 95 58



Q.: "We travel all over Europe and need Internet Access for our business. What's the best way of doing it?"

A.: The cheapest option is to use Internet Cafés as I explained in January (FAQ 16). However, this may not be the most convenient or secure way for someone in business. It is much better to be able to use your own computer where you can access your own files and know that you are, mostly, in control of your own security.

The trick is to find a way of gaining access to the Internet. Whilst it is possible to use some mobile telephones as modems, my experience is that they tend to be slow and expensive. Even as I write this, someone is probably introducing an "all-singing-all-dancing" phone that does the works for peanuts. Such is the pace of development.

Vodafone has a "Mobile Connect Card" that uses their mobile network. It fits in the side of any modern laptop (Windows of course!). It's easy to set up and use, but costs £150 to buy. Then you have to pay the £25 monthly fee. You do get 75 megabits of data transfer included. The downside is that, the last time I checked, the card was only available in the UK, although it works wherever Vodafone has a network.

My main objection to this card (and Vodafone) is that the 75Mb can only be used in the UK. Elsewhere it costs nearly £6 to transfer each Mb of data. That's expensive but, possibly acceptable from a business viewpoint! They don't make this clear in their documentation and getting any assistance out of Vodafone is like looking for hens' teeth.

If expense is no problem one could try satellite technology. Inmarsat (Rbgan) control a number of sputniks and you can connect through them

with the right kind of modem. Transfer speed is excellent. However, because the satellite nearest us is over the Indian Ocean it's low in the eastern sky. Getting a fix from Europe can be tricky without a clear horizon. Buildings and trees cause problems, but you might like the idea of sitting on a mountain top talking to your friends – at £5 a Megabit and up to £900 for the box of tricks.

The most convenient and economical way of achieving "Roving Access" is by using wireless technology, "Wifi" to the initiated. Do you remember the TV ads where a chap was sitting in the middle of a football field sending email? He was promoting "Centrino" technology. Load of tosh, of course, because you need to be close (30 metres) to a "Hot Spot." That's a wireless computer network that anyone with the login information can connect to. Most "business" hotels across Europe offer this. Pay the fee, typically €6.00/hour, get the information you need; sit in the comfortably warm bar and away you go.

By the way, this message came to you from Spain, using one of these technologies. You'll never guess which, and I bet you didn't realise just how technologically advanced your €1 Journal really is!

Safe surfing wherever you are.



Any questions?
graxwarrior@wanadoo.fr
 or leave a message with the CBJ:
 02 96 21 52 21



Website Workshop

Last month we looked at Phishing, this month we shall examine the practice of Pharming.

Q – Pharming - what exactly is that?

A – Pharming operates a strategy of DNS poisoning which redirects users from legitimate websites - for instance your online bank - to completely bogus websites. DNS (the Domain Name System covered in a previous article) translates website addresses into numerical strings (commonly known as IP addresses), acting as a sort of telephone directory for the Internet. If a DNS directory is 'poisoned' - in other words, altered to contain false information regarding which website address is associated with what numerical string, users can be silently transferred to a bogus website even if they type in the correct website address.

When the victim arrives at the bogus site, they enter their ID, password and PIN in the usual manner. A popup then explains that the password is invalid. Victims think they have mis-keyed and start again. By that time the unfortunate user has been unknowingly transferred to the real website, but the hackers already have what they want: your security details and access to your account.

Q – How will I know I have been redirected to a bogus site?

A – That's part of the problem; pharming is very difficult to detect and for the scam to work the bogus site must be as close as possible to the site it is mimicking.

Q – How does it happen and can it be stopped?

A – The vulnerable spot is DNS software with the security issue specifically pointing back to Berkeley Internet Name Domain (BIND), which is riddled with security problems that have been widely reported for the past five or six years. Bind version 9.x implements much-needed updates that should, in the long term, solve the various problems involved in DNS spoofing. Other significant innovations rest with the

support of next generation technology such as IPv6 (Internet Protocol version 6) and possibly protocols or DNS extension mechanisms such as IXFR, DDNS, Notify and EDNSO.

Q – How can I minimise the chance of becoming a victim?

A – Look for the gold lock icon in the bottom right-hand corner of your browser; double click on it to check that the site is verified and that you have a secure connection - but do not rely on this alone. You can also check to see if your bank, online shop or any other shopping website you use is running a BIND-based DNS server. If so, check with them to ensure they are following best practices for DNS management such as:

- Are their DNS servers patched and up to date?
- Do they have regular and updated training for DNS-related personnel to minimise configuration mistakes?
- Do they employ a change-process to ensure that new name server configurations and zone data are tested before they are put into production?
- Have they created business continuity and disaster recovery plans for DNS setup?

More information on BIND can be found at the Internet Systems Consortium:

(<http://www.isc.org>).

Malcolm Wearing

Next month: Digital Cameras - Part 1

You can contact Malcolm at malcolm@practicalnet.com or on 02.96.26.04.83. Practical Net - Website Design, Hosting, Computer Repairs/Upgrades & Computer Coaching. www.PracticalNet.com



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SIR BAYARD AND THE PRINCESS WITH THE GOLDEN HAIR



Once upon a time there lived a King in France who had one son, called Sir Bayard. The young man longed to see the world, and one day he mounted his horse and set out, accompanied by his servant, Izanik.

He also took a purse filled with money, but that was soon spent, for as soon as he met anyone in need, he gave them everything they required. At last they reached an abandoned castle. It was surrounded by a forest filled with birds and animals, and they decided to stay there for some time.

"Very good," said Sir Bayard. "We will not die of hunger here, for I can go out hunting, and you can take care of the castle, and prepare the midday meal."

That day he brought home more than they could eat, and Izanik sold the remainder in the nearby village. He earned seven écus and was very pleased, for he saw that in this way they could earn enough money to continue their travels.

The next day Sir Bayard brought home even more animals, and Izanik sold them and earned 14 écus. The following day he earned 28 écus, and on the fourth day Sir Bayard set out into the forest with a glad heart. As he was riding along a path he saw a female wild boar, and her nine piglets. He was about to shoot them, when the animal started to speak.

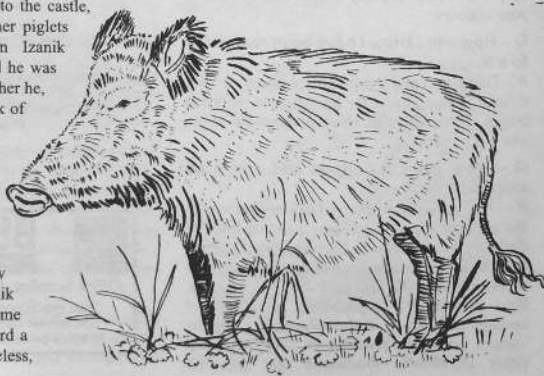
"Young man," she said in a sweet voice, very like that of a young girl. "Do not kill me. I am not the animal you take me for. In fact, I wish to become your wife."

"Oh no, no," exclaimed Sir Bayard, starting back in dismay. He scrambled quickly up a tree, to escape from them, but in a moment the nine piglets felled it to the ground.

"It is up to you," said the sow. "If you refuse, then I will end your life. You have a night to make up your mind."

Sir Bayard rode home to the castle, with the wild boar and her piglets following behind. When Izanik heard what had happened he was filled with horror, but neither he, nor the prince, could think of anything they could do.

On the evening before the betrothal feast the poor prince was in a sorry state. He sent Izanik again and again to the stable, in which they had shut up the sow and her piglets, but all Izanik could tell him when he came back was that he had heard a terrible noise. Nevertheless,



Sir Bayard sent him once again to the stable, and this time when Izanik peeped through the keyhole he saw a magnificent room, blazing with light and filled with precious things. In the middle was a maiden of great beauty, seated upon a throne, and round about her stood nine other maidens, who were brushing her hair. With each stroke of the comb, gold coins fell to the ground, and soon they quite covered the floor.

Izanik told his master what he had seen, and all Sir Bayard's fears were removed. He accepted the sow as his betrothed, and began to make preparations for the wedding. It was to take place in eight days, and during that time they were not to see each other. However, on the seventh day Sir Bayard could not restrain his curiosity any longer, and when night fell, he went to the stable, and looked through the keyhole.

He saw a beautiful princess, combing her golden hair, but she knew immediately that he was behind the door, and became very angry. She arose and came out to meet him, with all her ornaments shining and sparkling.

"Prince," she cried, "you have broken your word. I can no longer be your wife, I must leave at once. If you wish to find me, my home is between the Black Sea and the Blue Sea, and it is joined to them by three chains of silver and three chains of gold. Farewell."

So saying she disappeared. Sir Bayard was greatly distressed, but he decided to go after her without delay. He set out with two horses, leaving Izanik behind at the castle, and taking with him a purse full of money.

After a few days the purse was empty, for Sir Bayard had once again given all his gold away to the beggars he met along the road; now he had nothing left but his two horses. One day, when he was riding up a hill, he met two wagon-drivers, who were stuck in the mud and could not free themselves.

"Wait, wait," they cried. "Please lend us your horses, so we can pull our wagons out of the mud."

"Lend you my horses?" said Sir Bayard. "Never. I never lend anything. Take my horses and keep them for your own. All I ask in return are your good wishes for my success; for I am looking for the Princess with the Golden Hair."

"May God grant you success, generous Prince," cried the two wagon-drivers, and Sir Bayard continued on his way.

As night was falling he entered a forest. Soon he came to a great oak tree and, looking up, he saw a strange shape, very like a charcoal-burner's hut, amongst the branches. He climbed up to it and found a bed made of leaves and twigs. Being very tired, he lay down upon it and fell fast asleep.

At midnight he was awoken by a terrible commotion. The oak tree was trembling at the roots and, looking down, he saw that someone was climbing up. Quickly he hid beneath the bed and the next moment a giant over 30 digits high, entered the hut. He seemed very pleased, and rubbed his hands, and chuckled to himself.

"I have never had such a good day's work," he said. "Just fancy, a pair of boots that travel a hundred leagues at a stride."

The giant lay down on the bed of dry leaves, but before he had been asleep an hour, a second giant arrived, even larger than the first.

"It smells of a mortal man in here," he said.

"Be quiet and let me sleep," mumbled the first giant. The second giant lay down on the bed, and Sir Bayard heard him mutter:

"I have not wasted my day; I have found a cloak that makes the wearer invisible, and allows him to see everything."

The young man wisely remained beneath the bed, for soon a third giant, even larger than the others, came bursting into the hut.

"What luck! What luck!" he cried, "I have taken a sword that can slay five hundred men at a stroke."

"Tell us about it tomorrow," said the other giants. "Right now we want to sleep."

26 Sir Bayard and the Princess with the Golden Hair

All three giants fell asleep, and Sir Bayard crept out, picked up the boots, the cloak, and the sword, and slipped quietly down the tree. He put on the wonderful boots, and by daybreak he was far away, for with each stride he travelled a hundred leagues.

He found himself upon the vast heath of Menéicu Gad, which stretched on for a thousand leagues, and was free from all inhabitants. However, at last he caught sight of a little cottage, whose roof was so low that it seemed on a level with the ground. He was very hungry, so he went in.

He was met by an old woman. She was bent with age, her face was covered with wrinkles, and she had a beard that reached to her waist. She was stirring a steaming cauldron of loud silet (oat gruel).

"Good morning Mam goh (grandmother)", he said. "I have not eaten for eight days. May I have some of that delicious gruel?"

"Eat, my son," said the old woman. "I always pity those in need. But tell me what you are doing in this lonely place."

"I am looking for the home of the Princess with the Golden Hair," said Sir Bayard. "It lies between the Black Sea and the Blue Sea. Do you know where it is Grandmother?"

"No," replied the old woman. "I am two hundred years old, and I have never heard of such a place. However, I have a sister who is three hundred years older than I am. She lives a thousand leagues from here, on the heath of Millebroches. Tell her that you are my son, for then you will receive a good welcome. Perhaps she will be able to help you. And remember – take care of her sons, for they have bad tempers.

The next day he travelled to the home of the second old lady, and found her preparing a meal for her sons.

"Good day, Aunt," he cried. "I bring you news of your sister."

"My sister?" said the old woman. "It is a hundred years since I heard any news of her. As you are her child, you are welcome here."

Sir Bayard ate and drank, and then lay down to sleep at the bottom of a large wardrobe. Before long he was awoken by the arrival of January, the old woman's eldest son. He was a giant, over 20 digits tall.

"I can smell a mortal man," he grumbled.

"Yes indeed," said his mother. "It is your cousin, come to visit you. You will not eat him now, I hope."

"My cousin – I am glad to hear it. Let him sleep on."

An hour later the second son, February, arrived, and was given the same explanation. At midnight the third son, whose name was March, entered the house. He was the strongest and fiercest of them all, and he rushed at the wardrobe crying:

"A man – I must taste the flesh of a mortal man!"

He broke down the door, and had taken hold of the poor prince, when the old woman called to him.

"For shame – would you eat your own flesh and blood? That young man is your cousin."

"Why didn't you tell me before?" said the giant. "I could have done a great wrong to the family."

Henceforward the giants and the young man were the best of friends. They talked of their plans and travels and one day January asked Sir Bayard what he intended to do, when he left that place.

"I am looking for the home of the Princess with the Golden Hair," said Sir Bayard. "But I do not know where it is."

"That is easy" said March, in his rough voice. "I am King of the birds, and one of them is bound to know the way."

With that he blew upon a whistle and birds came flying from every direction.

"Do you know the way to the castle of the Princess with the Golden Hair?" asked March.

"No, Sire, we do not," they all replied.

Just then an old jay came flying up, and began to apologise for his lateness.

"Please forgive me," he panted. "but I was at the marriage of the Princess with the Golden Hair,

Sir Bayard and the Princess with the Golden Hair 27

between the Black Sea and the Blue Sea."

"Take us there at once," commanded March.

"And you, cousin, climb onto my back."

Sir Bayard obeyed and in a moment they passed over land and sea and came to the island of the Princess.

"I will leave you here, cousin," said March. "Good luck, and farewell."

Sir Bayard put on the invisible cloak and entered the palace. He soon found the Princess preparing for the wedding, with her nine ladies-in-waiting standing round her.

"Ah, Sir Bayard, dear Sir Bayard," she murmured sadly. "Why do you not come to rescue me?"

"I am here, my love," said Sir Bayard, removing the cloak. "And so long as we live, we need never part again."

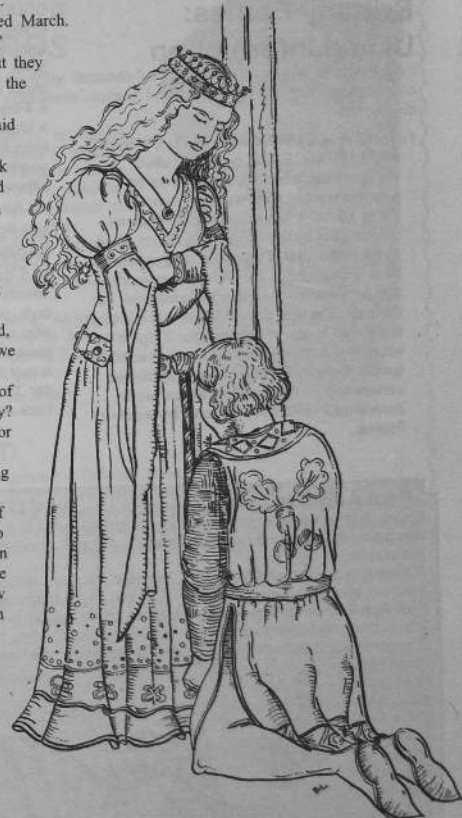
"Alas," said the Princess. "But what of my husband to be, the King of Turkey? He will slay you when he finds you, for he is very cruel."

"I do not fear him," said the young man. "Let him come."

As he said these words, the King of Turkey entered the room. He flew into a rage, at the sight of a young man in the presence of his bride, but in the twinkling of an eye Sir Bayard slew him, and all who tried to fight him, with his wonderful sword.

The Prince then married the Princess with the Golden Hair, and gave one of her ladies-in-waiting to his servant, Izanik. He ruled over his subjects wisely and well, and the people continued to remember him for many years.

Retold from an original Breton story
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Biskoaz glao n'evz gret na dawfe,
Avel-greon pini na gouezfe.

There was never rain that did not stop,
Nor storming wind that did not cease.

Brittany Ferries: Useful Information

I am writing to tell you some facts about channel crossings with Brittany Ferries, which I have discovered.

1) **TARIF ACCOMPAGNEUR TO ENGLAND FROM FRANCE** This came into effect six years ago when the age limit for an unaccompanied child went up from 12 yrs to 16 yrs. It is available on all channel crossings at a cost of only 25€ return, at all times of the year, if you fetch and/or take back a child under 16. The foot passenger fare for the child (one way) is additional, but minimal. The best part of this is that the adult is allowed to stay in England for 2 nights on either trip, and only one trip is required to qualify. Brittany Ferries have no published information on this service (almost worth borrowing a child for!!) It is only bookable in France.

2) **COUCHETTE CABIN ACCOMMODATION**

If you are travelling and don't mind sharing with strangers, you can book a 'couchette', or berth, in a female or male cabin at a cost of about £16 - £20. Frequently you end up with a 4-berth cabin to yourself. (You can request a lower bunk if you can't climb up.) Also, the French side will allow you to book 2 berths for yourself and a child in a shared cabin (even different sexes) whereas the English side will not!!

3) **SPECIAL OFFERS FROM FRANCE (SHORT BREAKS)**

These breaks are usually 3 days or 5 days with car, at a very good rate, but specify that it must be the same passengers on both crossings. If you have extra passengers who wish to travel one way only, book them separate tickets as foot passengers only. No query is made if they travel with you in your car. Thus you can visit and carry a passenger back and forth.

Muriel Burgess 02 97 34 31 34

Paul Aurelian (continued from page 9): Part III The Dragon

Count Withur soon perceived that his cousin was a man of exceptional wisdom and force of character. He had long been troubled by a great anxiety, and he decided to seek Paul Aurelian's assistance.

"There is a dragon on this island," he said. "It lives in a cave in the cliffs and carries off men and animals alike. Everyone is afraid of it, but there is nothing we can do."

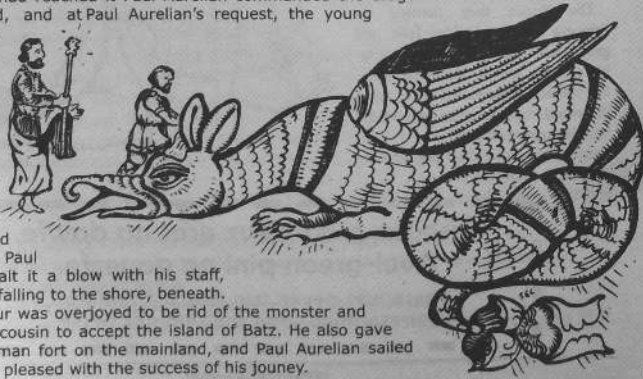
Paul Aurelian promised to help, and he and a young nobleman set out for the monster's cave. When they had reached it Paul Aurelian commanded the dragon to come forth.

It appeared, and at Paul Aurelian's request, the young

man tied a scarf about its neck. Cowed by the presence of the sage, the dragon followed them to the north of the island, and

once there, Paul Aurelian dealt it a blow with his staff, that sent it falling to the shore, beneath.

Count Withur was overjoyed to be rid of the monster and begged his cousin to accept the island of Batz. He also gave him the Roman fort on the mainland, and Paul Aurelian sailed back, well pleased with the success of his journey.



Business Focus:

Esprimo Games

The old fire station in Guémené has recently become home to Esprimo - a company that is passionate about games.

Esprimo's core business is providing games to schools and care workers. Their games are designed to be used by peoples of all ages and abilities, and aim to develop qualities such as awareness, concentration, patience, reasoning, etc. The company philosophy in relation to games is that everyone who takes part is a winner.

Esprimo has recently started to supply its games to the retail trade, and, in mid 2005 took on the world distribution rights to a range of ergonomically-designed playing cards - ergomania.

The Esprimo team of Mohamed, Christine, André and Céline, welcome visitors to their factory in Guémené where customers can purchase games such as Permis en Question pictured right and reviewed below.

Esprimo, 8 rue de Saint Roch, Guémené sur Scorff
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Permis en Question

Gold medal winner 'Concour Lépine Univers d'Enfants 2004'

This is a particularly interesting game for English speakers who move to France. The game consists of a board laid out in the form of a road network and over 400 cards which contain questions relating to road signs, driving regulations, and road facts. Points are gained by answering questions correctly, and lost when one commits a driving infraction in the course of one's turn.

The game thus provides practice in the French language and useful information about driving at the same time. Questions are modelled on the written test that you have to sit before learning to drive in France. A solid well-made game. 43.50€.

Paul Aurelian:

Part IV Castell Paul

Word of Paul Aurelian's deeds spread far and wide and people began to call him St Paul, or St Pol, as a mark of respect.

He built a retreat, and centre of learning on the island of Batz, and established his chief residence in the Roman fort.

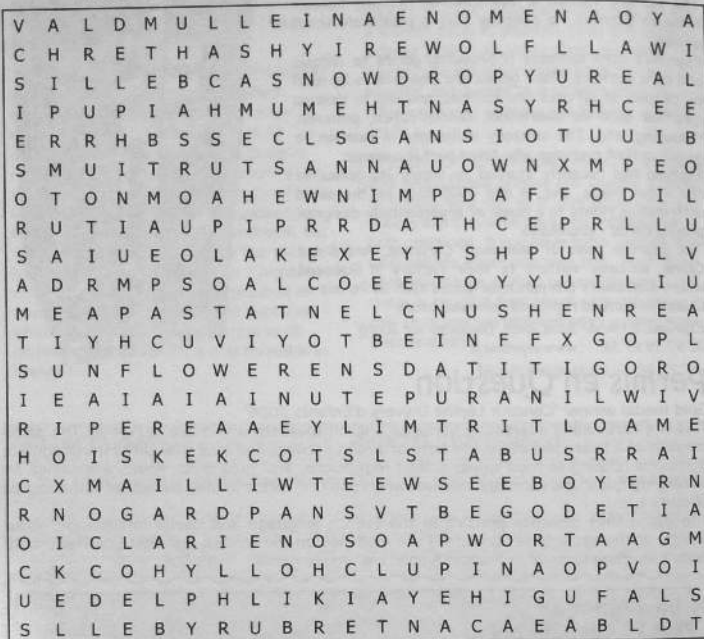
The bees who lived in the hollow tree, he divided into swarms and sent them out into the countryside to carry their gifts of wax and honey to the inhabitants. The bear and the bull he chased away into the forest, but he stroked the head of the wild boar and she became tame and gentle. Her piglets grew into fine animals, and were the forefathers of a breed of pigs that became famous throughout Brittany.

Many people came to speak with St Pol and benefited from his learning and his skill as a healer. He came to be known as one of the seven saints of Brittany, and a large town sprang up around the centre which he founded. He spent his long life in this retreat, and passed away at the age of a hundred and forty, having made a deep impression on the land where he had chosen to live.

*St Pol de Leon, a town in the north of Brittany; the Breton name of this town is still Castell-Paul (or Paul's Castle).

Word Search: 52 GARDEN FLOWERS to be found.

Words can run forwards, backwards, up, down, and diagonally.



- | | | | |
|------------------|--------------------|---------------|----------------|
| ALKANET | DAFFODIL | LUPIN | SNAPDRAGON |
| ALYSSUM | DAHLIA | MARIGOLD | SNOWDROP |
| ANEMONE | DELPHINIUM | MORNING GLORY | SOAPWORD |
| ASTER | FORGET-ME-NOT | MULLEIN | STATICE |
| BEGONIA | GODETIA | NASTURTIUM | STOCK |
| BELLIS | HOLLYHOCK | PAEONY | SUNFLOWER |
| BORAGE | HONESTY | PANSY | SWEET WILLIAM |
| CANDYTUFT | IRIS | PETUNIA | TULIP |
| CANTERBURY BELLS | LAVATERA | PHLOX | VALERIAN |
| CHRISTMAS ROSE | LOBELIA | POPPY | VIRGINIA STOCK |
| CHRYSANTHEMUM | LOOSESTRIFE | PRIMULA | WALLFLOWER |
| CLARKIA | LOVE-IN-A-MIST | RUDBECKIA | WELSH POPPY |
| CROCUS | LOVE-LIES-BLEEDING | SCABIOUS | YARROW |

The Garden In March

Although there may be warm spells in March, the normal weather pattern in Central Brittany is for there to be long periods of quite cold, wet weather. This results in the soil being cold and waterlogged: the worst conditions for vegetable seeds and seedlings. Unless you have a particularly sheltered and well-drained garden it is therefore advisable to wait until April before planting the majority of your outdoor vegetables: carrots, beetroot, spinach, etc. Potatoes planted outdoors in March will be at serious risk of catching the frost in April or early May.

This does not mean, however, that there is not plenty to do in the garden. Vegetable beds can be hoed to keep them free of weeds; compost or well-rotted manure can be worked into the surface of areas that are going to be used to grow demanding crops such as cabbages and sweet corn; and trenches can be prepared for potatoes. Smooth-skinned peas are one vegetable that can be sown successfully this month.

Greenhouses & Polytunnels:

Aubergines, tomatoes and peppers can be sown indoors. The seedlings should be pricked out into individual pots as soon as they have formed their first leaves. The aim is to enable the plants to grow continuously without suffering a 'growth check'. To get good plants, you have to water the plants every day, report them if they get too large, and cover them at night if the weather is particularly cold. All this effort will be rewarded later in the year because it is the vigour of the young plants which determines the eventual yield.

Celeriac: The simplest way to grow celeriac is to sow the seed in the ground in a polytunnel in March. Water daily, and the plants should be ready for planting out in May.

Lettuce: Plant successive sowings of lettuces in trays, transplant some into the ground in the polytunnel; harden others off and plant them outdoors. This should provide a constant supply of lettuces from May onwards.

Potatoes: A few early potatoes planted under cover now will produce a crop in early May, just when they are most needed.

Overleaf: the secret of growing Kiwi fruits



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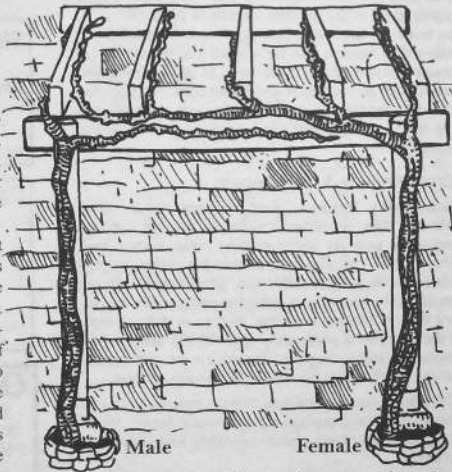
32 Gardening

Kiwis

Conditions in Brittany are well suited to growing kiwis. You need to select a spot which gets a reasonable amount of sunshine and where you can erect a strong support for the plants. A south or west-facing wall is ideal. Traditional varieties of kiwis have single-sex flowers, meaning that you have to buy both a male and a female plant if you want to get any fruit. The plants should be planted four or five feet apart, and you can have up to four female plants for each male plant - but be warned, even a single, mature plant can yield up to a hundredweight of fruit in a good year.

The plants are at greatest risk during the first two years after they are planted, before they have had a chance to develop a strong root system: water young plants copiously during hot dry spells during the summer months. Kiwi plants grow in a similar way to grape vines, i.e. they produce long, creeping stems which require support. They can be trained on a wall or over a pergola, or grown on a wire frame built specifically for the purpose. You should not expect to get any fruit for the first few years, but your plants may start to produce their attractive flowers in the second year of growth. Kiwi plants are very vigorous growers and produce a copious number of shoots each spring. These ought to be pruned each winter to prevent the plant from becoming an entangled mass of foliage. The strongest shoots can be selected and trained along the

wires or posts that you are using to support the plants. All the side shoots can be pruned from these main branches each year. The fruit and flowers are produced on the new growth each year. One of the big advantages of the kiwi is that its fruit is ready for eating at a time when there is not much fresh produce available in the garden. The kiwis are picked before Winter sets in, usually in November, and if they are stored in a frost-free cellar or barn, they will ripen gradually and will be ready for use from December to February. March is the ideal month for planting your kiwi plants.



Kiwis growing up a pergola in winter.

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Animals contd. page 34

Gardening

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Animals contd. from page 33

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Building services contd. page 35

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animals contd. from page 34

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B&B contd. page 37

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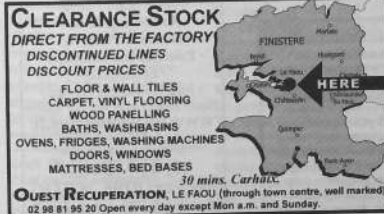
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Building & Property Services 39

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42 Property

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Property 43



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Wild Boar

(*sus scrofa*) French: sanglier Breton: hoc'h-gouez

Many newcomers to Brittany are surprised to hear that wild boar are a native species. It has been a matter of centuries since they went extinct in Britain, but on mainland Europe they have always been widespread, and as far as one can tell there are still many in the Breton countryside, particularly the forests.

Wild boar are unusual looking creatures with long snouts, tiny eyes, big ears and bristly brown fur - but they are so extremely shy you will probably never see one.

They love to wallow in the mud, and their shallow pools, which they make in boggy areas, are an easy way of telling if you have one nearby. Once they have waded they sometimes rub their muddy sides against a tree trunk so hard that the moss is knocked off, and this is another way of telling if wild boar live near.



A shallow pool created by a wild boar

Wild boar have a reputation for ferocity. Although this is by no means unfounded, it is when they are being hunted that it is most often seen. They are so elusive that it would be quite easy to spend your entire life here and never catch a glimpse of one. All the same, if a wild boar is sighted you would do well to keep your distance, particularly in Springtime (from February to May) when the females have their young with them and can be quite protective. After all, these creatures have sharp tusks, are fast runners and good swimmers; they often weigh several hundred pounds, and from snout to tail can be as long as six feet! So if you do see one, the best advice would be to climb the nearest tree as quickly as possible!



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