

# THE BRETON MOVEMENT AND THE GERMAN OCCUPATION 1940-44 - ALAN HEUSAFF AND BEZEN PERROT: A CASE-STUDY

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## 1. Introduction

In recent years much research work has been conducted on the activities of the Breton Movement during the German occupation of Brittany 1940-44, which has resulted in a number of publications<sup>1</sup>.

Prominent in the Breton Movement at that time were activists such as Olier Mordrel, Raymond Delaporte, Frañsez Debauvais, Célestin Lainé, etc<sup>2</sup>. One such prominent activist on the paramilitary side at that time was a certain Pierre-Alain Heussaff (Lan Heussaff, or Alan Heusaff<sup>3</sup> (1921-1999))<sup>4</sup>. In this article his situation will be looked at as a case-study in the context of relationships and connections with the Breton Movement and its paramilitary wing, as well as any “spin” put on events by him and others after the war with regard to the same movement and to their activities within it.

Alan Heusaff was born in Saint Yvi (Sant Ivi) parish, east of Quimper (Kemper), on 23 July 1921. His nickname was *Mab Ivi* ‘son of (Sant) Ivi’<sup>5</sup>. His family came from Toulgoat in the same parish near La Forêt-Fouesnant. His father was Sébastien Heusaff and his mother Marie-Anne Faron. He had a brother Jérôme (Jerm) who was not involved in any political activity (Gary German pc: 02.03.04, Ní Mhurchú & Breathnach 2003: 52). In an interview with Hervé Person of *Le Peuple breton*, organ of the UDB (*Union démocratique bretonne*), in 1992 Alan Heusaff himself adds (Person 1992: 20):

Mes parents étaient des petits fermiers, qui possédaient trois vaches vivant sur cinq journaux. Mon père a fait la première guerre mondiale. Il fut aussi domestique. Ma mère faisait des journées par ci, par là (Person 1992: 20).

Concerning his schooling he says (Person *ibid.*):

Je suis arrivé à l'école sans savoir un mot de français. Puis, j'ai eu une bourse pour aller à l'école primaire supérieure à Concarneau. Après avoir décroché le Brevet élémentaire, puis l'École normale, je suis devenu instituteur[...] (Person 1992: 20).

<sup>1</sup> Prominent among these are Caerléon (1974), Leroux (1975), Frélaud (1985), Fréville (1985), Fournis (1995), and more recently Hamon (2001, 2004), Fouéré (2002), Giolitto (2002).

<sup>2</sup> For details of these personalities see Frélaud 1985, Hamon 2001, 2004.

<sup>3</sup> The surname appears variously spelt, viz. *Heussaff*, *Heussaf*, *Heusaff*, etc. Alan Heusaff, so far as I can assess, regularly spelt his surname with one -s-.

<sup>4</sup> After the Second World War Heusaff involved himself in various Celtic organisations, such as the Celtic League, which he co-founded in Wales in 1961 (cf. Mac Aonghusa 1999: 5).

<sup>5</sup> He wrote articles under this nickname for the Breton magazine *Galv* in 1941/42. For his pseudonyms see below.

It was while he was at Concarneau, he tells us, that he first became interested in nationalist politics (Person 1992 *ibid.*):

À Concarneau, des copains m'avaient donné „Breiz Atao“<sup>6</sup> à lire (c'étaient des articles sur la guerre d'indépendance irlandaise). J'ai rencontré Jean Bourhis<sup>7</sup> à l'École normale. On s'est fait remarquer par nos idées... (Person 1992: 20).

Heusaff joined the Breton National Party (*Parti national breton* (PNB) - *Strollad Broadel Breiz* (SBB)) in 1938 at the age of seventeen:

*Me zo aet e-barzh Strollad Broadel Breizh e 1938 d'an oad a 17 vloaz*

'I joined Strollad Broadel Breizh in 1938 when I was 17 years old' (Heusaff 1995: 283)<sup>8</sup>.

In the interview with Person (1992: 20) Heusaff explains that his main function was to disseminate propaganda for the movement:

J'ai rejoint le PNB en 1938. J'ai suivi des cours de breton (pour le lire et écrire) avec Karlann<sup>9</sup> (Ar Falz<sup>10</sup>) et Ober. Lainé<sup>11</sup> nous a recrutés et nous a donné des séances d'entraînement. La guerre est venue et, graduellement, on a repris la propagande. J'ai fait de la propagande à "l'Heure Bretonne" et à "Arvor" avec Yann Ar Beg<sup>12</sup>. On a fait beaucoup de propagande (Person 1992: 20).

In 1938-39 Heusaff underwent military training in various camps (Ní Mhurchú & Breathnach 2003: 52, Le Gall 2005), seemingly as a member of Lainé's *Service Spécial* (see below). In late 1943 he became party to the activities of the Breton paramilitary grouping *Bezen Perrot* 'Perrot Army', also known as *La Formation Perrot*, *Perrot Gruppe* and more informally *Der bretonische Waffenverband der SS* or *Die bretonische SS*<sup>13</sup>. However, before looking at the activities of Bezen Perrot and Alan Heusaff's association with that organisation, it may perhaps be pertinent here to sketch briefly the reasons for Heusaff's involvement with the Breton Movement altogether.

According to Gary German (pc: 02.03.04), whose mother originates from Keronsal in St. Yvi parish and who lives in St. Yvi today, Alan Heusaff's interest in Breton nationalist

<sup>6</sup> organ of the PNB, for which see below.

<sup>7</sup> According to Charles Le Gall (Charlez ar Gall), Brest (comm. April 2005), Jean Bourgeois (Yann Bourc'hiz), born ca. 1921 in Pluguffan, died 02.07.1953 in Dublin, was an old schoolfriend of Alan Heusaff's from their Concarneau school days. From 1938-41 both attended the Quimper Teacher Training College. Le Gall was also a contemporary of theirs at the college but one year above, i.e. 1937-40. Later Bourc'hiz became a member (along with Heusaff) of Neven Hénaff's *Service Spécial*, thereafter commander of the Bezen Perrot group *Dahut*. His cover-name was Guével. See below.

<sup>8</sup> Translation of this and other passages in Breton in this article courtesy of Albert Bock, Vienna.

<sup>9</sup> or Kerlann, i.e. Jean Delalande (1910-1969), schoolmaster, member of *Ar Falz*, secretary of PNB for Finistère. Founded the first Breton school in Plestin-les-Grèves in 1942 (Hamon 2004: 58, fn. 15).

<sup>10</sup> seemingly a Breton pro-communist organisation (Gwendal Denis pc: 08.07.04).

<sup>11</sup> i.e. Célestin Lainé (Neven Hénaff). See below.

<sup>12</sup> PNB chief for Quimper district (Hamon 2001: 257).

<sup>13</sup> Bezen Perrot was always regarded as a German military unit, never a "milice française", and its members always wore the uniform of the Waffen-SS (Hamon 2004: 13).

politics seemingly stems from his interest in and concern for the Breton language<sup>14</sup>. He continues:

Heussaff's argument was basically that since the First World War the Breton of Saint Yvi had degenerated under French influence to the extent that it was barely intelligible to anyone who had spoken pre-war Saint Yvien. Although there can be no doubt that Saint Yvi Breton has evolved, particularly with regard to lexical borrowing from French (e.g. French *chagrin* [ʃa:grm] for Breton *glac'har*)<sup>15</sup>, the phonology, morphology and syntax have hardly changed among native speakers (although there is linguistic variation within the parish). It seems that Alan Heussaff has exaggerated this in his puristic attempts to portray Breton as a formerly normalised language. Having said that, some older people in the parish regarded younger people, such as Alan Heussaff, as different in their Breton speech, because they had had schooling. In his case his Breton was "not at all like ours", though his brother Jerm "spoke like everyone else", as it is said. Nevertheless, it is a fact that Saint Yvi Breton is much reduced phonologically (in comparison with that of Léonais, for example), and seems to have been so for quite some time (Gary German pc: 02.03.04).

This view is also largely echoed by Breton / Welsh historian Iwan Wmffre. In a personal communication to me dated 19.07.04 he noted:

Heussaff's Breton was undoubtedly not deficient, but his attitude from his exile in Ireland was purist and neologist and he subscribed to the [...] popular notion [...] that late twentieth century Breton was simply the language of "terminal speakers" [...] <sup>16</sup>. His articles for Carn<sup>17</sup> had appended to them glossaries with 'rare and not commonly known words' (translation of the Breton original if my memory serves me right). My own interpretation is that, not able to mix with many native speakers [in Brittany] due to his political choices, he [Alan Heussaff] latched on to [Roparz] Hémon's version of the literary language [...] (Iwan Wmffre pc: 19.07.04)<sup>18</sup>.

Alan Heussaff's involvement with Breton nationalism and co-operation with the Germans allegedly brought much anguish, disappointment and shame on his own family. Gary German (pc: 02.03.04) notes:

The people I have spoken to in Saint Yvi who have known the Heussaff family have told me, without exception, that they were all extremely kind, wonderful people. This is why Alan Heussaff's adherence to the Breiz Atao [i.e. *Strollad Broadel Breiz*] came as such a shock and disturbed the people of Saint Yvi so much! I heard people say that after the fall of France, he arrived with the Germans dressed in a German uniform!<sup>19</sup> I don't know if it is true, however, but I have heard it said on more than one occasion. People felt especially badly about this considering the shame it placed on his family [...]. All the World War I veterans - including my grandfather - were understandably horrified by this. In his own defense (*sic*) Heussaff said he was only 19 when he joined the B.A. and he attributed it to the folly of youth. One old friend told me that Heussaff [had] been involved in the torture and killing of resistance people, but I am

<sup>14</sup> This was the justification. Alan Heussaff told me (ca. 1978) that the motivation was gross disenchantment with the constant hostility from the French authorities towards matters Breton, particularly the language, and their promotion. His membership of PNB would have reinforced that position. See also Heussaff's "Déclaration" below.

<sup>15</sup> In addition, Gary German notes (pc: 20.04.04): "Many words linked to outdated rural tasks, etc, are being forgotten by the last generation of speakers for whom Breton was truly a first language. My aunt (who died last year at the age of 95) used the word *prezen*, for instance, for the place under the hearth where firewood was placed to dry and so on. I would guess that most younger speakers (in their early 60s now) would not know what this means".

<sup>16</sup> It is not unusual for nationalists to attribute "defects", as they see them, in their home or national language to the intrusion and influence of an outside dominant language. The "defects" may in fact be internal developments. A case in point is Manx Gaelic (cf. Broderick 1999a).

<sup>17</sup> magazine of the Celtic League.

<sup>18</sup> In the time that I knew Alan Heussaff (1975-1999), he was always insistent that the national language was essential to a country's national identity. He thought very little of Celtic nationalists who did not take seriously their respective home or national language.

<sup>19</sup> The memory of his wearing a German uniform may possibly derive from his activities with Bezen Perrot after December 1943 (see below).

very wary about such rumours and one must be very cautious with regard to such talk in small villages (Gary German pc: 02.03.04)<sup>20</sup>.

However, in an interview with Ronan Caerléon in Dublin in 1970 (Caerléon 1974: 142) Alan Heusaff in a “Déclaration” is unequivocal in his stance vis-à-vis the Breton Movement and Bezen Perrot:

Dès 1938 je partageais les convictions que la Bretagne ne pourrait pas regagner sa liberté “dre gaer” (de gré); l’Etat français s’y opposerait de toutes ses forces. J’étais d’accord pour que nous recherchions des appuis à l’extérieur où qu’ils soient, puisque nous n’étions pas assez forts pour atteindre notre but seuls. Pourquoi ne ferriions-nous pas ce que font tous les pays libres dont la liberté est menacée: rechercher des alliances? En le faisant, nous témoignons que nous-mêmes, nous étions libres déjà.

Pour être libres, il faut accepter de payer un bon prix: rupture avec la famille (qui craint pour notre avenir), avec les voisins (qui ne veulent pas que l’on sorte de son rang), avec la majorité de ses compatriotes qui n’ont pas encore vu qu’on les traite pire que des nègres et se veulent deux fois français. Au bout du chemin, il y avait de fortes chances de trouver la prison ou la mort.

Je m’engageai donc pour l’insurrection armée sous la direction de Lainé<sup>21</sup>, celui des leaders nationalistes qui accordait le mieux ses actes avec l’idée nationale. Lorsqu’il m’apparut que l’Eglise catholique en Bretagne s’abaissait à coopérer avec l’Etat français pour poursuivre la politique d’extermination du breton et d’opposition au mouvement national, je rejetai son autorité et, finalement ses dogmes, pour chercher une base philosophique en accord avec ma volonté bretonne en particulier, dans les meilleures oeuvres de la culture celtique de l’Irlande.

Peu m’importent les accusations telles que celles contenues dans des articles de journaux français et dans certains ouvrages même écrits par des Bretons que “le Bezen Perrot se couvrit d’autant de crimes que la milice Darnand”<sup>22</sup>...D’un côté, les combattants seraient donc des saints et de l’autre des brutes?

Pour moi, ce que j’ai vu de l’action du Bezen Perrot se compare avec les actes des combattants d’autres guerres et c’est un lieu commun de dire que la guerre n’est pas un jeu.

Je fus blessé assez grièvement pour devoir rester l’hôpital plus de quatre mois et ceci, dans un combat à découvert, au cours duquel Larnikol de Plovanaleg et Lezet de Sant-Malo tombèrent pour la Bretagne (Caerléon 1974: 142).

In addition, in a letter to the Breton magazine *Al Liamm* 290/291 (1995) Alan Heusaff himself tells us why he was prepared to collaborate with the Germans:

[...] *Klask harp ur galloud bennak o stourm a-enep unan all ne dalvez ket e vezer a-du gant kerment tra a ra hennezh. Evidon-me e oa ar gudenn zifraeüs an em zizober eus ar galloud gall e Breizh araok ma teufe ar brezhoneg da verzanñ re wan, rak n’eus nemet ur Stad vreizhat a c’hall e harpanñ da adsevel. D’ar gudenn-se e tleemp gouestlanñ hon holl nerzh*<sup>23</sup>

‘To seek to help a foreign power in a war against another does not mean that one agrees with every act carried out by this régime. For me the compelling motivation in co-operating with a foreign power [Germany] in Brittany was to arrest the decline in the Breton language, which risked becoming so weak that only the establishment of a Breton state could ensure its survival: to this problem we had to devote all our strength’ (Heusaff 1995: 284-85).

<sup>20</sup> But see below. Gary German (*ibid.*) adds: “[...] As for the nationalists, the expression people use around here [Saint Yvi] for a laugh is: *Breiz atao, mad da lao* (‘(members of ) Breiz Atao good to kill’). Beneath the surface though...!’ For this slogan see also Hamon (2004: 169).

<sup>21</sup> Alan Heusaff returned to this theme in an interview in 1989 with Harlech Television: *Ac mi ofynodd Hénaff i bob un ohonom ni, ar ei ben ei hun yn gyfrinachol, a fydden ni’n fodlon cymryd rhan mewn gwrthryfel pe deuai’r rhyfel. Mi ddweddes i mod i’n barod. Ro’n i n meddwl bod hi’n angenrheidiol gwneud rhywbeth cyn bo hir, neu mi fyddai’r iaith yn cael ei cholli* ‘Hénaff asked each one of us confidentially on his own, if we were willing to take part in a rebellion should war come. I said I was. We thought it would be necessary to do something before long, or the language would be lost’ (Alan Heusaff HTV1989/I). The idea for the insurrection was evidently inspired by the Irish Rising of Easter 1916 (Heusaff 1991/92: 10).

<sup>22</sup> i.e. Joseph Darnand, head of the PPF militia. See below.

<sup>23</sup> Gary German notes (pc: 15.07.04) that the Breton here is “literary”, which would not be readily understood in St. Yvi.

In the interview with Harlech Television in 1989 for the programme *Y Byd ar Bedwar: Llydaw* Alan Heusaff reiterated his position:

*Mi oeddwn ni'n barod i gydweithio â'r diafol ei hun, os bydde' hynny'n cael gwared o'r Ffrancwyr. Y Ffrancwyr oedd gelynion mwyaf cenedl Llydaw*  
 'We were prepared to co-operate with the devil himself, if that would get rid of the French. The French were the greatest enemies of the Breton people' (Alan Heusaff HTV1989/I).

Frañsez Debauvais, president of *Conseil National Breton* (CNB), always believing in a German victory, also saw the Breton cause allied to the Germans. In his testament published in *Breiz Atao* in May 1944 he wrote:

Camarades de la Formation Perrot. Je vous salue. Je salue en vous la première formation bretonne armée, depuis la disparition de l'armée chouanne [...]. Vous luttez, d'abord et avant tout pour notre patrie la Bretagne, en pleine et loyale collaboration avec l'allié allemand [...]. (Debauvais *Breiz Atao*, May 1944, after Hamon 2004 : 63).

The "received view", i.e. Heusaff's interpretation of events, passed on down through the years is that Bezen Perrot served the interests of the Breton Movement in its fight for Breton independence. Bezen Perrot chief Neven Hénaff, according to Alan Heusaff, made that clear:

*Roedd Hénaff yn dweud - yn y rhyfel yma, os oes raid ymladd, ymladdwn dros Lydaw. Ac mi fydd hanes yn dweud - beth bynnag fydd yn digwydd yn y rhyfel ac i'r Almaenwyr - mi fydd yna hanes bod Llydawyr wedi ymladd dros Lydaw yn erbyn Ffrainc*  
 'Hénaff said (to us) - in this war, if it is necessary to fight, we will fight for Brittany. History will tell, whatever happens in the war and to the Germans, history will tell that Bretons had fought for Brittany against France' (Alan Heusaff HTV1989/I).

This view is reiterated by P. A. Bridson, editor of *Carn*, in her obituary to Alan Heusaff in 1999:

[...] In 1943 Alan, aged twenty-two, joined the Bezen Perrot, a Breton military unit, to fight for Breton independence. Alan, like many other youthful Bretons at that time, saw an opportunity to end the French occupation of Brittany once and for all (Bridson 1999: 2).

In addition, Bezen Perrot fought against actions from the French government, resistance organisations, both Breton and French<sup>24</sup>. Bríd Heusaff<sup>25</sup>, Alan's widow, notes the following:

[...] He [Alan Heusaff] joined Bezon (*sic*) Perrot after its formation at the end of December 1943, shortly after the assassination of Father Perrot on Dec. 6<sup>th</sup> [i.e. 12<sup>th</sup>] 1943 and of a number of other Breton patriots in the previous months<sup>26</sup>. One of the conditions established by the Bezon Perrot was that its members would not be involved in any actions beyond the borders of Brittany and this condition was maintained until the Bezon was disbanded. They were not fighting as Nazis, but as Breton patriots whose sole concern was to oppose the French in Brittany (Heusaff 2001: 23).

As a result of his activities in the Breton Movement and Bezen Perrot Heusaff was allegedly one of a number sentenced to death (in his case *in absentia*) by the French authorities after the war for collaborative activity with the Germans. This finds expression in Bridson's obituary:

Alan was sentenced to death *in absentia* by the French state. Nearly thirty years after, he was to benefit from an amnesty from the French government, but like many of the other Breton refugees, Alan did not

<sup>24</sup> The French Resistance seemingly contained a substantial communist as well as a small Breton element.

<sup>25</sup> Alan Heusaff married Bríd Ní Dhochartaigh of Donegal in 1953. They have six children.

<sup>26</sup> For details of the killing of other Breton nationalists, cf. also Frélaud (1985: 115, 215).

return to Brittany to live because the French state was still as repressive as ever to the Breton national movement<sup>27</sup> (Bridson 1999: 2).

This assertion is also repeated by Ní Mhurchú and Breathnach (2003: 52):

*I 1945 dhaor rialtas na Fraince chun báis é in absentia*  
 'in 1945 the French government condemned him (Alan Heusaff) to death *in absentia*'<sup>28</sup> (Ní Mhurchú & Breathnach 2003: 52).

However, what is the reality of the situation and how much does the "received view" correspond with it?

## 2. Bezen Perrot

In the light of recent research (see above) the situation regarding Bezen Perrot seems to be as follows: The unit, which later became Bezen Perrot, was initially the brainchild of a certain Célestin Lainé (1908-1983 of Nantes<sup>29</sup>), better known perhaps by his Breton name Neven Hénaff, as his *Kadervenn* ('Sillon de Combat' or 'Service Spécial')<sup>30</sup>, a paramilitary unit modelled on the IRA set up in 1936 comprising some dozen or so members engaged in military manoeuvres (Hamon 2004: 28). It was intended as an embryo Breton army to serve the envisaged new Breton state<sup>31</sup>, but in reality functioned as Hénaff's private army<sup>32</sup>. On 11 November 1943 Neven Hénaff transformed the *Kadervenn* into the *Compagnie Bretonne en guerre contre la France* under the name of Bezen Kadoudal in a formal signing with Hartmut Pulmer, head of the Gestapo / SD<sup>33</sup> in Rennes<sup>34</sup>, thereby throwing in his lot with the Germans (see also below). Also in November 1943 the Germans armed the *Milice Darnard* ('Darnand Militia', under one Joseph Darnand), the paramilitary wing of the PPF (*Parti populaire*

<sup>27</sup> For a different interpretation see Iwan Wmffre's comments above.

<sup>28</sup> Bezen Perrot cases and other cases of collaboration were tried by the Cours de Justice established in Rennes in 1944. These powers were transferred to the Tribunal Permanent des Forces Armées in Paris on 1 February 1951 which was charged thereafter with reviewing cases. However, to date there seems to be no evidence of any condemnation of Alan Heusaff by the French courts post-1944. In 1998 Heusaff mentions (*Al Liamm*, no. 311, p. 520) that of some twelve exiled Bretons in Germany in 1946-48 at least five had been condemned to death *in absentia* (including Yann Bourc'hiz), but apparently not Heusaff himself, though this is not clear. If not, then this may be because the French authorities at that time were not in possession of all the facts relating to Bezen Perrot. However, the French Government proclaimed a general amnesty in 1971.

<sup>29</sup> For details of his life and times see Frélaud (1985: 133-35).

<sup>30</sup> The formula *Service Spécial* is found for various developments of Hénaff's paramilitary group from the mid-1930s to November 1943. Heusaff's involvement with the *Service Spécial* appears to have begun in 1938.

<sup>31</sup> « *L'Heure de la race bretonne sonnera bientôt au cadran de l'histoire [...]. L'État breton n'est pas loin* » Breiz Atao 301 (1 May 1938).

<sup>32</sup> In May 1938 Hénaff was arrested following a slogan-daubing campaign on public monuments. He refused to speak French at the tribunal. He was given a three-month prison sentence (Frélaud 1985: 134). The fact that Hénaff, evidently unilaterally, put his unit at the disposal of the Germans in November 1943 makes clear that he had complete control of it.

<sup>33</sup> *Sicherheitsdienst der SS*, the SS security police. The SD was responsible *inter alia* for round-ups, detentions and deportations to concentration camps (cf. Höhne 1996: 183-209).

<sup>34</sup> This action led to a temporary split within the Breton Movement, involving the creation of a second PNB, which lasted some four years, and the "Néo-Breiz Atao", which lasted a few months in 1944 (cf. Frélaud 1985: 116-21, Heusaff 1995: 283). It is evident that Hénaff was desperate to curry favour with the Germans.

*français*) (Hamon 2004: 54)<sup>35</sup>. This was evidently in response to increased Resistance activity. Matters had deteriorated to such an extent that on 4 December 1943 Hitler bitterly complained to Petain about the “intolerable” situation, whereupon it was decided to extend counter-resistance action to the northern part of the country. On 15 December 1943 Bezen Kadoudal, at the suggestion of one of its leaders, Ange Péresse, and backed by its 33 “premiers volontaires” (Hamon *ibid.*), was officially renamed Bezen Perrot<sup>36</sup> following the shooting of Breton activist Father Yann-Vari Perrot on 12 December 1943<sup>37</sup>.

As already noted, Bezen Perrot was headed by Neven Hénaff (Frélaud 1985: 114-16)<sup>38</sup>. Accompanying Hénaff as leaders were Jean Chanteau (alias Mabinog) and Ange Péresse (alias Carcal or Cocal) (Hamon 2001:197, 209). On entering Bezen Perrot on 15 December 1943 Alan Heusaff was immediately appointed commander of Section 2 of that unit as its *kerrenour* (lieutenant) and had four groups under his charge: Dixmude, Cadoudal, Dahut<sup>39</sup>, and Budoc (Hamon 2004: 59, 68)<sup>40</sup>. According to Caerlén (1974: 141):

La Formation [Perrot] fut ensuite dirigée par un triumvirat: Heussaf, Guiriec et Péresse, qui gardait la haute-main sur les opérations militaires. En fait, Péresse prenait toutes les décisions et les autres s'inclinaient (Caerlén 1974: 141).

Heusaff clearly held a senior position within Bezen Perrot. He belonged to Hénaff's inner circle and enjoyed his trust. He remained a close friend until Hénaff's death in Ireland in 1983.

<sup>35</sup> This unit was evidently particularly brutal in the discharge of its duties with the SS/SD. In this respect Bezen Perrot became associated with this unit in the eyes of many Bretons (Hamon 2001: 203, fn. 22; see also Heusaff's comment on this in his “Déclaration” above).

<sup>36</sup> For its flag Bezen Perrot adopted that of the Breton combatants of the 15<sup>th</sup> century, namely a black cross on a white background (Caerlén 1974: 38).

<sup>37</sup> According to police reports and statements from other interested parties quoted by Hamon (2001:211ff.), Perrot was killed by a certain Jean Thépot of Morlaix who was never arrested (he ended up in the French army). He appears to have acted alone but on instructions. Perrot was evidently shot on suspicion of collaborating too closely with the Germans (Hamon, *ibid.*, Transcript HTV1989/I). Nevertheless, Perrot's death occasioned much emotion and sympathy among Breton nationalists and activists and also had the effect of doubling the membership of Bezen Kadoudal / Bezen Perrot (Frélaud 1985: 116).

<sup>38</sup> In 1938 Hénaff and others made a two / three day visit to Ireland in order to to make contact with the IRA, but in vain (Heusaff 1991/92: 10). In 1939 Henaff also sought to procure guns for the Breton Movement from Germany (Frélaud 1985: 134). Heusaff (1991/92: 10) notes: “[...] Henaff was able to obtain [...] from Germany a shipload of 2.5 tons of arms and explosives which were brought safely to land on the eve of the war in 1939. The outbreak of war occurred however before preparations for a Breton rebellion could be completed”. However, in the HTV interview of 1989 Alan Heusaff added: *Mi gwmpodd bocs o'r papurau i'r môr pan oedd y llong yn trosglwyddo'r arfau i long Lydewig. Cafwyd hyd i'r bocs ger Jersey. Mi rowd y bocs wedyn i'r Ffrancwyr. Ac o ganlyniad i hynny cafodd saith neu wyth eu rhoi yn y carchar* ‘A box containing papers (leaflets) fell into the sea as the ship (from Germany) was transferring arms into a Breton boat. The box was retrieved near Jersey. The box was later handed over to the French. As a consequence of this seven or eight (people) were put in prison’ (Alan Heusaff HTV1989/I).

<sup>39</sup> commanded by Jean Bourhis [Bour'hiz] (Hamon 2001: 198). See also above.

<sup>40</sup> According to Hamon (2001: 198), Bezen Perrot below the level of General Staff (*l'état major*) was divided into two sections, each section comprising four groups of five men each. As noted, Heusaff commanded the second of these sections.

In organisational terms during the German occupation Bezen Perrot came directly under the responsibility of SS-Obersturmbannführer Hartmut Pulmer, head of the Gestapo / SD in Rennes (see also above), and under the military command of SS-Hauptscharführer Hans Grimm, and was attached to the SD in that town. At the end of January 1944 it was based at 7, rue de Vincennes in Rennes<sup>41</sup>. It wore the uniform of the Waffen-SS<sup>42</sup>, and comprised some 80 personnel, of whom the pseudonyms of some 65 activists have thus far been identified (Hamon 2001: 208-09). As with the Resistance, such pseudonyms served to protect them from possible assassination. Alan Heusaff's cover names were "Professeur" (Hamon 2001: 209, 268) and "Rouat" (Hamon 2004: 35, 68). Bezen Perrot was composed of a motley crew drawn from various nationalist organisations; most of its members were quite young, some very young (Frélaut 1985: 116-21, Hamon 2001: 197-98).

Some had also served in anti-partisan activity for the Germans in the LVF (*Légion des Volontaires français contre le Bolchévisme*), a French right-wing collaborationist organisation active at the time. The LVF was set up on 8 July 1941 with a view that its members serve on the Russian Front<sup>43</sup>. It comprised ca. 12,000 men, of whom some 110 were Bretons. A recent trawl of LVF archives in Rennes has revealed that Breton nationalists Yves Le Négaret, Taldir Jaffrennou and Alan Heusaff were associated with this organisation as "Amis de la LVF" (Hamon 2002: 11-12).

According to his own testimony Alan Heusaff served on the Russian Front. Former Manx Language Officer with the Isle of Man Government, Dr. Brian Stowell, recently told Iwan Wmffre and myself at his home in Douglas that he was present at an address delivered by Alan Heusaff to the short-lived Celtic League Youth in Dublin in 1966 on the occasion of the

<sup>41</sup> For other addresses used see Hamon (2001: 197). The General Staff was seemingly installed in 29, quai d'Ille-et-Rance in Rennes (cf. Hamon *ibid.*).

<sup>42</sup> For the first three months Bezen Perrot members wore civilian clothes. It was not till the end of March 1944 that they began to wear SS uniforms (Hamon 2004: 57). In his reminiscences former Bezen Perrot activist Maudit notes: *Nous portions donc l'uniforme vert, avec le calot à tête de mort, épaulettes noires avec liséré vert, chemise brune, cravate noire, ceinturon SS avec la devise: Meine Ehre heisst Treue (Mon Honneur s'appelle Fidélité). Nous étions appelés: SS man, nous les volontaires de la Bretonische Waffenverband der SS!* (Caerléon 1974: 140).

<sup>43</sup> This was its main purpose. The LVF was set up in response to a German request for military support from the occupied territories to fight on the Russian Front "against bolshevism", as it was put. Many French and Bretons took up the cause with the LVF (Hamon 2004: 13-15; see also below). In July 1944 the LVF was reorganised as the *Sturmbrigade der SS Frankreich*, from September to November of the same year as the *Waffen-Grenadier-Division der SS "Charlemagne"* (franz. Nr. 1), and from November 1944 to May 1945 as the *33. Waffen-Grenadier-Division der SS "Charlemagne"* (franz. Nr. 1). Between February and April 1945 *SS-Charlemagne* saw action in Pomerania, but was decimated in the area of Hammerstein-Neustettin, near Danzig. What was left went into action around Belgard-Körlin but suffered heavy casualties. Reorganised into *Kampfgruppen* around Kolberg and Greifenberg, they then moved westwards to Neustrelitz, finally defending the centre of Berlin in the area of the Reichstag in April 1945. They were taken prisoner by the Russians on 2 May 1945 (Hock 1986, Hamon 2004: 14-17).



50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Easter Rising of 1916. In speaking about the activities of the Breton Movement during the Second World War, Alan Heusaff alleged

that he and other Breton nationalists had fought with the “Charlemagne Brigade” on the Russian Front where he had been wounded. Thereafter they gave themselves up to the Americans for fear of maltreatment by the French. Later he managed to escape to Ireland on a coal boat from somewhere in the Low Countries (Brian Stowell, Douglas, 18.09.04; see also below).

According to Hamon (2001: 130, 199), the aforementioned Yves Le Négaret, a young PNB activist, served on the Russian Front with the LVF between 16 June 1943 and May 1944 when he seemingly went absent without leave and returned to Brittany after finding out about the existence of Bezen Perrot, joining its ranks on 6 June 1944. This, if so, would seem to strengthen the case that Heusaff had also served in the LVF (after September 1944 the “Charlemagne Brigade”; see fn. 43). If so, then this would most likely have been 1942-43, as he was a primary teacher at Querrien (Kerrien) near his home area until 1942 (Person 1992: 20, Heusaff 2001: 23). He took part in the 1942 Breton summer-school for children at Begmeil, near Fouesnant. According to Charles Le Gall (April 2005), Heusaff then resigned his teaching job in the autumn of 1942 to become an instructor in the *Lu Brezhon* (‘Breton army’; Hénaff’s secret army) in order to devote his whole energies to fighting for Breton independence:

*I 1942 d’érigh sé as obair chun a bheith lánpháirteach sa troid chun an Bhriotáin a shaoradh ó smacht na Fraince*  
 ‘in 1942 he resigned his job to be full time in the fight to free Brittany from French control’ (Ní Mhurchú & Breathnach 2003: 52).

This, if correct, would suggest that any action Heusaff would have seen on the Russian Front would have occurred in the ‘academic’ year 1942-43.<sup>44</sup> For his part, Heusaff tells us that after Querrien in 1942 he took part in military service with the *Service Spécial*:

[...] on m’a appelé pour faire des manoeuvres à Gouezeg. C’étaient des instructions de Service Spécial [...] (Person 1992: 20).

Later, after running a Breton school in Quimper with Jean Bourc’hiz, he says he was asked if he could go to Rennes to be an instructor with the *Service Spécial*:

[...] on m’a demandé si je pouvais venir à Rennes pour être instructeur du Service Spécial (Person 1992: 20).

Working as an instructor in Rennes is undoubtedly true, but may be a coy understatement of what he was really doing at the time. The period as an instructor for Hénaff’s paramilitaries in Rennes in 1942-43 would be the ideal time for any activity he may have seen on the Eastern

<sup>44</sup> According to the evidence of « Docteur », Heusaff, along with Hénaff, Hénaff’s brother, Chanteau, Feutren, Bourc’hiz and Louarn (members of Hénaff’s *Service Spécial*) took part in an exercise along with two SD officers during the evening of 13 August 1943 at the château of the Du Guerny family near the forest of Boquen (ADIV 213 W 38 quoted by Hamon 2004: 45).

Front (in part as possible German-sponsored military training, in part as a way to demonstrate loyalty to the Germans). Such service in that sphere of operations would almost certainly have brought him into prominence with Bezen Perrot as an officer in late 1943<sup>45</sup>.

Right from its inception in December 1943 Bezen Perrot, according to available evidence, solely served German interests.

The rôle of Bezen Perrot was to help the German Army to rule Brittany and in particular to pursue the Resistance [...] (Transcript HTV1989/I).

During the first three months of 1944 it was deployed either to guard or to keep under surveillance German installations. In addition, it took part in arrests<sup>46</sup>, including those of Jews<sup>47</sup>. As D-Day came and went the increase in Resistance activity led to mass shootings by the SD/SS of what were termed “anti-German elements”, and Bezen Perrot according to accounts took part in some of these<sup>48</sup>. In a personal communication to me dated 20.04.04 Gary German noted that Heusaff

[...] was active with the local milice [militia] and that he had even been present and participated in the interrogation and execution of captured resistance fighters [...] (Gary German pc: 20.04.04)<sup>49</sup>.

However, Alan Heusaff sees his activities within Bezen Perrot somewhat differently:

*Roeddwn i'n cydweithredu â'r Almaenwyr. Ac mi gymrais ran wrth gasglu arfau roedd y Saesson yn eu gollwng efo parashwt yn y nos. Wnes i ddim cymryd rhan mewn gweithredoedd lle roedd 'na ymladd - dim ond weithiau. Unwaith pan oeddwn i'n ymladd cefais fy anafu*

'I co-operated with the Germans. I was party to collecting weapons which the English had dropped by parachute at night (for the Resistance). I did not take part in operations where there was fighting - only occasionally. Once when I was (involved in) fighting I was wounded' (Alan Heusaff HTV1989/I).

It was during the summer of 1944 that Bezen Perrot evidently took part in some quite vicious activity<sup>50</sup>. On 7 July 1944 Hitler ordered the “liquidation of all terrorists and suspects”, i.e.

<sup>45</sup> Whatever the case, it is clear that Heusaff was not simply a schoolteacher who, outraged, upon hearing of Perrot's assassination impulsively joined Bezen Perrot. He had been working for Hénaff for quite some time before his engagement in Bezen Perrot.

<sup>46</sup> On 7 February 1944 at 3am members of Bezen Perrot accompanied the SD in an arrest of 37 people regarded as “anti-German” from several of villages, of whom 12 were deported (to concentration camps) (cf. Leroux 1975: 270, Hamon 2001: 201). For details of other sorties of this sort, see Hamon (2001: 202).

<sup>47</sup> Rounding up of Jews was evidently part of Bezen Perrot's duties with the SD. Hamon (2001: 200) quotes the following from former Bezen Perrot activist Jégou: [...] *En janvier 1944 j'ai été commandé pour aller chercher une vieille dame israélite à Rennes avec Konval et P.C., emmenée au SD [...]*. Once arrested Jews were then handed over to the SD for deportation to concentration camps (cf. Höhne 1996: 183-209). As a senior member of Bezen Perrot Alan Heusaff's participation in arrests of this sort is very plausible. He would almost certainly have known of such actions whatever the case.

<sup>48</sup> In an interview with Alan Heusaff in Ramsey, Isle of Man, on 24 July 1993, he was quite tight-lipped about the actions of Bezen Perrot. When I asked him, for instance, what rank he had held he refused to say. However, he did tell me that there was a sort of *quid pro quo* arrangement with the Germans, i.e. they had helped us promote Breton, he said, we would help them on the military side (see also above).

<sup>49</sup> But added: “it is terribly hard to get to the real facts, mainly because the subject is still a very emotional one and the feelings against collaborators intense” (Gary German pc: 20.04.04). Nevertheless, there are a number of stories current that Heusaff was involved in such actions, sufficient to arouse suspicion. It may be that such stories are apocryphal and/or unfounded, but given Heusaff's senior position within Bezen Perrot and bearing in mind that it was Bezen Perrot's main task to assist the Germans in combating the Resistance, any involvement by Heusaff in actions of that sort would seem quite probable.

partisan and resistance fighters, and this quickly became a matter of routine, particularly after the attempt on Hitler's life on 20 July of that year (Hamon 2004: 131). Hamon (2001: 206ff.) lists a number of actions involving SS/SD with Bezen Perrot support from archive sources. These include the following:

1. 19 June 1944 arrest of three Resistance members, all of whom "disappeared".
2. 3 July 1944 some 31 people from Locminé were killed, many of whose bodies were later found in a ditch. Five were deported to Germany and four sent to Mauthausen concentration camp in Austria where they were killed.
3. 14 July 1944 a massacre of 57 partisan fighters in the town of Saint-Hilaire. This was followed a few days later by the shooting of six partisan women in a chapel in Quistinic.
4. Additional activity of this sort involving Bezen Perrot took place in various villages in Brittany on the following dates: 16-17 & 30 May, 22, 27 & 29 June, 2, 11 & 23 July.
5. 15 August execution of 49 alleged Resistance prisoners at Créney<sup>51</sup>, etc.

After the D-Day landings Bezen Perrot evidently took part in the retreat of the German army across France, arriving in Strasbourg in October, and then into Germany, ending up in Tübingen in south-western Germany in December 1944 (Frélaut 1985: 222-25, Lerchenmüller 1994, II: 219ff, Hamon 2004: 157). On 16 December 1944, on the first anniversary of Bezen Perrot, Alan Heusaff with others received the German wounded medal. A number of members received promotion in the Waffen-SS. Neven Hénaff was promoted to *Untersturmführer* (sub-lieutenant), Ange Péresse to *Sturmscharführer* (major), Alan Heusaff to *Hauptscharführer* (chief adjutant). Six were promoted to *Unterscharführer* (sergeant) and eleven others to *Rottenführer* (corporal) (Hamon 2004: 157).

On 29 December 1944 Neven Hénaff totally reorganised Bezen Perrot, dividing it into four groups of eight to ten men each. Group 1 went with the Waffen-SS, Group 2 set up a school

<sup>50</sup> After his arrest in Colombey-les-deux-Églises Bezen Perrot activist Cadoudal said at his interrogation: [...] *Péresse, qui était une véritable brute, était accompagné d'officiers de la SD. Comme papiers militaires, les Allemands nous avaient donnés des Ausweiss. Les atrocités consistaient en exécutions sommaires et sans jugement, quelquefois sans interrogatoire par coup de pistolet dans la nuque [...]* (Hamon 2001: 198).

<sup>51</sup> See also Hamon (2004: 130-46). For details of Bezen Perrot action against the Breton maquis see Hamon (2004: 146-51). Heusaff in his memoirs tells us he was badly wounded in the upper left arm in operations against the Resistance on 13 June 1944 in Ploërdut, Morbihan, and hospitalised altogether for some three months. In the same action Bezen Perrot activists Laizet and Larnicol were killed (cf. Heusaff's "Déclaration" above and Hamon 2004: 125-28). Heusaff's widow Bríd (Heusaff 2001: 23) notes "In June 1944 [...] Alan Heusaff was seriously wounded in an encounter in which two other member[s] were killed. Later he was moved to a hospital in Montabaur in Alsace-Lorraine where he remained for three months until late September in 1944". Montabaur, if correct, is in fact near Koblenz in western Germany. According to Hamon (2004: 129), Heusaff, after two weeks in hospital at Pontivy, was transferred with other wounded to Rennes, thereafter to Paris, then into Germany (probably to Montabaur).

for sabotage and Group 3 a school for radio. Groups 2 and 3 were then sent to the Black Forest for instruction. Group 4 was to be the *Propaganda-Staffel* (propaganda unit). The rest would remain with Hénaff in Tübingen. However, on 25 April 1945, with the Allied advance, Groups 2 and 3 moved out of the Black Forest and into a boys' school at Fürstenfeldbruck, near Munich. However, with the advance of the Americans, the groups were ordered to return to Brittany as best they could and to continue the work of the PNB, but not in places where they might be known, and to seek work on farms after their arrival. The order was to keep in contact and await Hénaff's return for the reconstitution of Bezen Perrot (Hamon 2004: 159)<sup>52</sup>. However, Hénaff went to Ireland in 1947/48 (see also below).

Celtic Professors Leo Weisgerber (Bonn) and Ludwig Mühlhausen (Berlin), who led the promotion of matters Breton for the German authorities during the war years in Brittany<sup>53</sup>, were charged in 1944 by the SS in Germany to look after Breton nationalists and activists till the end of the war. Some were seemingly brought to Marburg in western Germany (Weisgerber had been Professor of Celtic and Comparative Philology there 1939-41; cf. Lerchenmüller 1997: 408-09). Heusaff had evidently been in Germany since before September 1944 (see above). In the Ramsey interview Heusaff told me he studied maths and physics for two years after the war at the University of Marburg<sup>54</sup>. In 1949 he met Mühlhausen in Marburg. Mühlhausen, he said, was still as enthusiastic as ever for matters Breton and added that he had got on very well with him in Brittany. The extent to which Breton was promoted in Brittany seems due more to the interest and enthusiasm of Weisgerber and Mühlhausen than might otherwise have been the case<sup>55</sup>. In this regard Per Denez, Emeritus Professor of Breton at the Université de Haute-Bretagne, Rennes, who lived through the period, notes:

<sup>52</sup> For details of what became of other members of Bezen Perrot see Hamon (2004: 160-66). Bezen Perrot in total sustained six dead and three seriously wounded, including Heusaff (Hamon 2004: 164).

<sup>53</sup> For details of Weisgerber's and Mühlhausen's activities in Brittany for the German authorities during the Second World War see Simon 1982, Lerchenmüller 1997, Dutz 2000.

<sup>54</sup> Before that he had worked a short while as a farm hand (Ní Mhurchú & Breathnach 2003: 52).

<sup>55</sup> The Germans were anxious to nurture the support of those Bretons who were patriotic and wished to safeguard Brittany's identity. They granted resources to promote the Breton language in particular. It was German money that was financing the revival (Transcript HTV1989/I).

Nevertheless, German support for matters Breton, particularly relating to any special political status and cultural autonomy, had its price. In his report dated 17 May 1944 SS-Untersturmführer (F) Ludwig Mühlhausen (to give him his service title; he had been seconded to the SD in mid-May) outlined discussions with other SS personnel (Schröder) to encourage Bretons to join the ranks of the French Waffen-SS; *verstärkte Werbung für die französische Waffen-SS* is how it was put. Mühlhausen wrote: [...] *dass man den Bretonen keinerlei Zusagen oder Versprechungen für die Zukunft machen kann, weder in Richtung auf eine politische Sonderstellung gegenüber Frankreich noch auch auf eine Art kultureller Autonomie (Schutz des bretonischen Volkstums vor der Französisierung). Ohne einen solchen Anreiz scheint aber eine erfolversprechende Werbung unter den Bretonen von vornherein schwer möglich* (Bericht des SS-Untersturmführers (F) Mühlhausen, 05.-17.05.1944 Personalakte Ludwig Mühlhausen; cf. also Lerchenmüller 1997: 407).

In a letter to me dated 29 July 1993 Alan Heusaff comments on Mühlhausen's report as follows: *An t-eolas a thagann sa tuairisc sin ar an agallamh idir Mühlhausen agus Schröder (1944:1/5) réitíonn sé leis an eolas*

*Nid oedd fawr ddim awdurdod gan Ffrainc yn Llydaw ar y pryd. Roedd hi'n bosib i bobol siarad dros Lydaw, ysgrifennu dros Lydaw, argraffu llawer o lyfrau Llydaweg. A fe sefydlwyd am y tro cyntaf orsaf radio Lydaweg*

'France didn't have much authority in Brittany at that time. It was possible for people to speak in favour of Brittany, to write in favour of Brittany and to print a lot of Breton (language) books. For the first time a Breton radio station was set up' (Per Denez HTV1989/I).

Alan Heusaff remained in Germany until 20 May 1950 when he came to Ireland (Person 1992: 20, Heusaff 2001: 23). He was evidently one of the last to arrive and first went to Galway where his comrade Neven Hénaff had worked as an engineer since 1948 (see also below). He used the opportunity to complete his studies there at the university (Ní Mhurcú & Breathnach 2003: 52).

### 3. Anti-semitism within the Breton Movement

Anti-semitic sentiment seems to have been quite prevalent within the Breton Movement (in line with what was also rife throughout France in general), even before the Second World War. These sentiments find expression in the following Breton publications: *Breiz Atao*<sup>56</sup> 20.11.1932 and 11.12.1932 (*Le Juif et «Notre Juif»*), 11.12.1938 (*La France aux Juifs, la Bretagne aux Bretons*); *L'Heure Bretonne* 05.07.1941 (*Comment la Bretagne se défendit contre les Juifs*) 18.07.1942 (*A la Porte: les juifs et les enjuivés*), 15.08.1942 (*Nous devons connaître nos ennemis...*), 19.09.1943 (*ar Iudeuion hag ar Franmasoned a oa da benn er Frans - les Juifs et les Francs-Masons étaient à la tête de la France*); *Dihunamb* Aug. 1943, pp. 265, 272 (concerning the excesses against the Jews of Duke Jean le Roux of Brittany in 1240), to give just a few examples<sup>57</sup>.

Alan Heusaff in his letter to *Al Liamm* (1995: 284) maintains he had nothing to do with anti-semitism and denies that he ever heard any anti-semitic comment from his associates in the Breton Movement or that it had played any part in their activities or in those of Bezen Perrot:

*[...] E-pad ar bloavezhioù 1940-1944 en em ouestlis da gentan d'ar bruderezh evit degas tud a-du gant ar Strollad ha goude d'an aozadur milourel. N'he doa an enepsemittegezh perzh ebet en obererezh-se. E*

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*a bhí againn cheana: ní raibh aon rud geallta dúinn, ach ní raibh siad ag casadh a ndruim linn ná i n-á gcoinne Bhí siad ag fanacht go mbeadh an cogadh thart roimh aon rud a shocrú 'the information given in the report of the discussion between Mühlhausen and Schröder agrees with the information we had already: nothing was promised us, but they weren't turning their back on us or against us either. They were waiting till the war was over before doing anything' (Alan Heusaff pc: 29.07.1993).*

<sup>56</sup> Editions of this publication during the 1920s carried the swastika as its emblem on the title page (cf. the edition for 02.09.1928, for example). It fell out of use for a while, but was revived in 1933 on Hitler's accession to power. For the use of this emblem in Manx cultural circles also during the 1920s see Broderick 1999b.

<sup>57</sup> Even Father Perrot himself is recorded as having made anti-semitic comment in 1940, glorifying the systematic persecution and murder of Jews by Duke Jean le Roux of Brittany in 1240 (cf. *Feiz ha Breiz* Nov.-Dec. 1940). Whether or not he would have supported the Final Solution / Holocaust is quite another matter, however.

*Roazhon ne oa ket anv eus ar Yuzevien gant ar re a oa en-diudin, ha heñ vel e oa e Kernev-Izel evit ar vroadelourien a geien ganto*

'During the years 1940-44 my main concern was publicising the Strollad with a view to gaining popular support, and later with the military formation (Bezen Perrot). Anti-semitism had no part in any of this activity. Among my associates in Roazhan there was no mention of Jews, nor in Lower Cornwall among the nationalists' (Heusaff 1995: 284).

Indeed, he makes clear he did not support the Final Solution / Holocaust at all:

*[...] Kredañ a ran koulskoude e kollas e-leizh a Yuzevien (ha re all) o buhez en trevvac'hoù. Ha n'eus digarez ebet, din da c'houzout, evit bezañ o lazhet pe lezet da vervel*

(...) 'Yet I do believe that many Jews (and others) lost their lives in concentration camps. And there is no excuse - in my view - for having killed them or having let them die' (Heusaff 1995: 284).

Nevertheless, as a member of PNB he would have come across anti-semitism within the Breton Movement, as well as in PNB publications at the time (such as the above). As a senior member of Bezen Perrot he would also have known of the arrest of Jews by members of that organisation (see above). His uncritical acceptance of a downward re-assessment of the Final Solution / Holocaust figures in his letter in *Al Liamm* (1995), if not injudicious, would seem to tar him with the anti-semitic brush:

*[...] N'em eus lennet nemet daou levr gant Faurisson, anezho disoc'h enklaskoù graet gantañ hag em eus kavet doare perverzh hag onest dezho. Ha dall e oan ouzh nammoù enno? [...]. N'em eus ket gwelet c'hoazh levr na danevellskrid ebet o tiskouez e oa faos an disc'hoù-se*

'I have only read two books by Faurisson containing the results of his research - which seemed meticulous and honest to me. Was I blind to errors in them? (...). I have not yet seen one book or article which would show that these results [re-assessment of the Holocaust figures] are wrong' (Heusaff 1995: 284).

Faurisson is a known apologist for the Third Reich. Heusaff could have got to the truth of the matter had he or his agent visited the relevant archives. He seems to have been blind to matters he did not wish to see.

#### 4. After 1945

It is not known whether Bezen Perrot survived the war<sup>58</sup>. But there was a group of Bretons in Ireland<sup>59</sup> who had come there via Wales in 1947/48 to escape French government harassment in Brittany<sup>60</sup>.

<sup>58</sup> Apart from his position in Bezen Perrot, Alan Heusaff does not seem to have figured prominently in the Breton Movement until the mid-to-late 1950s by which time he was in Ireland.

<sup>59</sup> Ireland's neutrality was one reason why they were accepted there. But the prime reason was that no extradition treaty existed between Ireland and France for the return of wanted persons. (Transcript HTV1989/II).

<sup>60</sup> cf. Transcript HTV1989/II: "In the midst of the chaos at the end of the war, five war prisons were set up in Brittany, and six thousand Bretons were imprisoned in them for collaboration with the Germans. The St. Charles School in Quimper was used as one of these sites. Among the prisoners were more than 1500 Breton Nationalists, including Yann Fouéré. Torture and rape were commonplace in the camps". This assertion evidently stems from Fouéré. The persecution of Bretons at the hands of the French authorities in 1946 was such that it attracted the attention of British Government ministers. Arrangements were then made for persecuted Bretons to escape to Ireland through Paris, Dover, London and Wales. The Welsh National Party *Plaid Cymru* played a pivotal rôle in this undertaking. "The leaders of Plaid Cymru did not wish to know all the details of the backgrounds of those they were helping". However, given the nature of the persecution, it

Heusaff confirms that a number of the members of a regiment of Breton Nationalists [i.e. Bezen Perrot] which had fought alongside the Nazis came through Wales before crossing to Ireland (Transcript HTV1989/II).

Alan Heusaff was one of those who went from Germany to Ireland<sup>61</sup>:

*Mi oeddwn i wedi cael enw ffug, Bernhard Heubacher, enw Almaenwr. Mi oedd 'na ddeuddeg ohonom ni wedi cael enwau Almaenwyr. Mi wnaethom ni groesi ffiniau Belgium a Ffrainc yn y nos heb bapurau. Mi aethon ni i Baris a chael papurau ffug i fynd i Gymru - dau ohonom ni. Mi aeth y gweddill o Lydaw i Iwerddon*

'I received a false name, Bernhard Heubacher, a German name. There were twelve of us who received German names. We crossed the borders of Belgium and France by night without papers. We went to Paris and got false papers to go to Wales - two of us. The rest went from Brittany to Ireland' (Alan Heusaff HTV1989/II).

The Irish authorities, according to Heusaff, were seemingly happy to grant asylum to Neven Hénaff and other Bretons:

*Mi ddwedon nhw wrth Hénaff a phobol eraill - arhoswch yma. 'D oes 'na ddim peryg i chi yma. Wnawn ni ddim eich trosglwyddo chi i'r Ffrancwyr. Ond os ewch nôl i Lydaw - wel, fyddwn ni fel gwlad fach ddim yn gallu rhoi unrhyw help i chi*

'They (the Irish authorities) said to Hénaff and others - stay here. There is no danger for you here. We will not hand you over to the French. But if you go back to Brittany, - well, as a small country we will not be able to give you any help' (Alan Heusaff HTV1989/II).

However, Hénaff and Heusaff were evidently still interested in conspiratorial politics in 1960, according to the testimony of Jean le Dû, Emeritus Professor of Breton at the Université de Bretagne Occidentale, Brest, and a native Breton speaker, in a letter to me dated 24.04.03:

[...] Did I tell you I met the man [Heusaff] in Ireland? He came to visit me with Lainé and another activist a short time after I had arrived in Galway in 1960. I told him [Heusaff] he was a Nazi (by the way he addressed me in English!) and he corrected me [by saying he was] a National Socialist. Amazing. The other two remained in the car, as I did not seem to be a possible recruit. I met him later in Dublin. He spoke Irish at home, his wife was from Donegal [...] (Jean le Dû pc: 24.04.03.).

Hénaff had seemingly been involved in secretive conspiratorial activities since the early 1930s and Heusaff since 1938, as already noted. There does not seem to have been any "coercive movement" in Ireland, but it can hardly be doubted that these people were extremely circumspect with outsiders. It could possibly be argued that there was an "atmosphere of fear", i.e. a fear of talking about people's backgrounds and / or about what they had done. However, a refusal to talk derives also from group interest and the natural desire not to upset people with whom one may have dealings.

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was decided to help the Breton nationalists irrespective of whether they had collaborated with the Germans or not (Transcript HTV1989/II).

<sup>61</sup> A number of Breton nationalists were apparently assisted in their flight to Ireland by a certain Friedrich Hielscher, a Nietzsche ideologue and anti-imperialist. He was seemingly party to the German "Neo-Nationalists" or "Nazi Left" (advocating a mixture of nationalism and bolshevism) during the 1920s. The Nazis suspected him of being involved in the July Plot against Hitler in 1944 and as a result he was imprisoned in a concentration camp till the end of the war. Once liberated Hielscher began obtaining false papers for Breton nationalists then resident in Germany to enable them either to remain there or to flee to Ireland. Two of Hielscher's close friends and contacts, Ernst Jünger and Fritz Heimsheimer (a German Jew),

## 5. Conclusion

Bezen Perrot, if the foregoing is correct, in its entire short existence served the interests, not of the Breton Movement at all, but those of the German occupying power, essentially as an ancillary arm of the SD/SS, operating out of conviction in arresting “anti-German” elements, as well as Jews, and in combating Resistance activity. Alan Heusaff’s senior position in Bezen Perrot would indicate that his role in that organisation was not insignificant and he would almost certainly have known what was going on. In addition, his apparent association and that of other Breton nationalists with the LVF<sup>62</sup>, i.e. with a French right-wing collaborationist organisation, would indicate that their main interest lay in promoting an “anti-bolshevist” ideology (however that may be interpreted) in which the Breton Movement would form part. In other words, the Breton cause for Heusaff and his colleagues seems to have played a subordinate rôle to their political philosophy<sup>63</sup>, which, if so, would go quite some way to explaining their conviction in supporting German interests.

However, as always, the problem is justification with hindsight. A number of Breton nationalists, including Hénaff and Heusaff, felt that an unequivocal alliance with the Germans was the only way to ensure that Breton independence would win respect (see also above). When I met Neven Hénaff (the only time) at Alan Heusaff’s home in Dublin in September 1975, he told me that for him and his Breton comrades “Hitler was the best thing that happened to the Breton Movement” (his actual words). He added they were in no doubt they had done the right thing in co-operating with the Germans<sup>64</sup>. Alan Heusaff reinforces this view and justifies the stance that he and others had taken for the Breton cause:

[...]. Par le Bezen on a montré que des Bretons étaient prêts à tout endurer, la mort comme la diffamation parmi leurs concitoyens contemporains, afin que dure la nationalité bretonne. Grâce à cette occurrence la foi en la Bretagne sera renforcée. La Bretagne nationale a fait ce que fait tout peuple qui combat ses despotes : s’allier à ses ennemis [...]. Pour la première fois depuis La Rouërie (1791) des Bretons se sont groupés pour combattre avec des armes pour les droits de la Bretagne. Et le coup a été mené à terme. Nous n’avons pas lutté comme les Chouans de Cadoudal dans le but de remplacer une classe de Français par une autre. Hénaff a toujours refusé d’avoir à faire avec des collaborateurs comme Doriot<sup>65</sup>, car

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evidently kept up contact with Bezen Perrot leaders Neven Hénaff and Ange Péresse after the war (Hamon 2001: 36-37, Heusaff 2001: 23).

<sup>62</sup> In spite of Hénaff’s refusal to have anything to do with such organisations as being “too French” (cf. Hamon 2004: 17), Breton participation in the LVF and SS-*Charlemagne* seems to have been a quid-pro-quo arrangement with the Germans (see also Heusaff’s comment above).

<sup>63</sup> This seems to be the reality of Heusaff’s new *base philosophique*, as alluded to in his “Déclaration” above.

<sup>64</sup> At the same meeting in 1975 Hénaff also told me that he was pagan and an adherent of Celtic religion and belief (see also Hamon 2001: 154 where this was used to engender a certain amount of religious mystique and fervour in his *Kadervenn*). This may have been partly responsible for his interest in the Nazis, among some of whom pagan belief was actively encouraged (cf. Lixfeld 1994). For details of Nazi overtones in the PNB, in its presentation, symbols and rallies, etc, see Hamon (2001: 154-55).

<sup>65</sup> i.e. Jaques Doriot, founder of the right-wing PPF (*Parti populaire français*), who was put in charge of the enforcement of the STO (*Service du travail obligatoire*), an edict introduced by the Germans in 1943 obliging French males to work in German factories in support of the German war effort (cf. Hamon 2004: 5,



jusqu'à preuve du contraire, toute la classe politique française est équivalente pour nous (Alan Heusaff, *Memoirs*, after Hamon 2004: 168-69).

In seeking refuge in Ireland<sup>66</sup> in 1947/48 Neven Hénaff had left the Breton Movement in ruins as a result of his political and military alliance with the Germans 1943-45 (Frélaut 1985: 135; see also above). As Alan Heusaff held a senior position in Bezen Perrot, he was, intentionally or otherwise, also party to that débâcle, from which it has taken the Breton Movement some time to recover. He was asked by HTV in 1989 whether the co-operation with the Germans had not been a big mistake. He answered:

*Mae'n rhaid cymryd siawns. Os oes llawer yn y fantol - mae'n rhaid bod yn barod i fentro er gwaetha'r peryg*  
 'One has to take a chance. (Even) if a lot hangs in the balance, one has to be prepared to venture even in the face danger' (Alan Heusaff HTV 1989/II)<sup>67</sup>.

However, Heusaff (1991/92: 10) later admitted that Breton military co-operation with the Germans towards the end of the war did not receive popular support in Brittany:

Thos who were engaged in an armed struggle for a Breton Brittany towards the end of the war [i.e. with the Germans] went ahead in spite of the absence of popular support for their action, for which they have been criticised (Heusaff 1991/92: 10).

The alliance with the Germans in the form that it took was evidently not a requirement from the German side, but seems to have been an exercise in currying favour on Hénaff's part. As we have already seen, the only known German military requirement to secure any political and cultural autonomy for Brittany was Breton recruitment into the French Waffen-SS. Hénaff's formal alliance with the Germans, whilst it may have had different aims in mind, made clear that Bezen Perrot solely served the interests of the SS and SD, as we have seen, with Bezen Perrot unnecessarily involving itself in SS excesses<sup>68</sup>. It is unfortunate that the actions of Neven Hénaff and his supporters led to Bretons taking up arms against Bretons.

fn. 1). In addition, Doriot was more interested in seeing a federal Europe rather than Breton autonomy (Hamon 2001: 76). In the 1920s/30s he had been a member of the central committee of the PCF (*Parti communiste français*, the French communist party) (Gwendal Denis pc: 08.07.04).

<sup>66</sup> Of Hénaff's refuge in Ireland it is said: [...] *Il vit dans un complet dénuement, exilé sur un roc celtique, dans un isolement mystique, foudroyé par la défaite qui anéantit ses projets d'indépendance bretonne. Vingt-cinq ans après sa chute, il justifie opiniâtrement sa révolte: Plus tard, on s'apercevra que j'ai eu raison [...]. Mon temps viendra!* (Caerléon 1974: 50-52).

<sup>67</sup> At the Celtic League annual general meeting which I attended in Edinburgh in 1976, if I correctly recall, Alan Heusaff was quizzed by members of the Breton delegation about his activities in Brittany during the war. He was careful in his response. He then added, "we backed the wrong horse" (his actual words). He offered to resign as General Secretary there and then, if the meeting felt that his activities had been unacceptable. Nothing further was said on the matter.

<sup>68</sup> Alan Heusaff sought to continue to promote the Breton cause after the war via involvement in Celtic organisations, such as the Celtic League. In 1993 he was awarded the prestigious Prix Xavier de Langleiz of the Institut Culturel de Bretagne for services to Breton literature, and not for any activities with Bezen Perrot. The prize was evidently recommended by individuals prominent in the Breton national movement who, nevertheless, would undoubtedly have been aware of Heusaff's "past" with Bezen Perrot.

Alan Heusaff died in Galway, Ireland, on 3 November 1999 and lies buried near his home at An Spidéal in Conamara<sup>69</sup>.

### Abbreviations

ADIV - Archives départementales d'Ille-et-Vilaine.  
 BA - Breiz Atao.  
 CNB - Conseil national breton.  
 Gestapo - Geheime Staatspolizei.  
 HTV - Harlech Television; v. *Y Byd ar Bedwar: Llydaw*.  
 LVF - Légion des Volontaires français contre le Bolchévisme.  
 PCF - Parti communiste français.  
 PNB - Parti national breton.  
 PPF - Parti populaire français.  
 SBB - Strollad Broadel Breiz.  
 SD - Sicherheitsdienst.  
 SS - Schutzstaffel.  
 STO - Service du travail obligatoire.  
 UDB - Union démocratique bretonne.

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<sup>69</sup> Ní Mhurchú & Breathnach (2003: 53). I am grateful to Albert Bock, Vienna, Gwendal Denis, Rennes, Gary German, Saint Yvi / Brest, Pierrick Le Guennec, Vannes, Sabine Heinz, Berlin / Pošnaň, Brian Stowell, Douglas, Iwan Wmffre, Koatilouarn / Lublin, for helpful comments and suggestions in the preparation of this article. Any mistakes that remain are my own.

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## ***Bezen Perrot: The Breton nationalist unit of the SS, 1943-5***

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### **Abstract**

This article charts the origins and course of the wartime Breton collaborationist force, the *Bezen Perrot* (Perrot Unit). For the first time in English, and employing source material previously unused in any language, it investigates the impact of the 'Irish example' upon Breton militancy from clandestine beginnings to military 'alliance' with Nazi Germany, with particular focus upon nationalist leader Célestin Lainé (aka 'Neven Henaff'). Employing primary material such as interviews with *Bezen Perrot* veterans and their descendants, previously unpublished photographs, and Lainé's own unpublished memoirs, the motivations of the *Bezen*'s chief identities are contextualised within a Celtic nationalist framework. The article presents an anglophone readership with a largely unexplored chapter of Celtic history while simultaneously challenging much of the French historiography on this controversial subject.

### **Keywords**

Brittany, Breton nationalism, collaboration, *Bezen Perrot*, French Resistance, Second World War, Irish inspiration, Célestin Lainé

It is one of the more bizarre footnotes in the story of the Third Reich that it was defended to the last by many non-Germans. Spaniards, Frenchmen and Norwegians battled the advance of the Red Army amidst the ruins of Berlin in 1945. Likewise, autonomists from minority regions such as Flanders and the Ukraine still wore German uniform, legacy of the vain hope that military support for the Nazi regime would result in political independence.

In the district of Tübingen, in the southwest of Germany, one such formation was cooling its heels after a lengthy retreat from Rennes. It was not the smallest of the Reich's foreign legions (the ragtag British Free Corps [BFC]<sup>1</sup> would probably take that distinction), but it was perhaps "the smallest fighting army in the world".<sup>2</sup> For, unlike the BFC, it had seen action against Allied forces and had suffered combat casualties, including fatalities. Its men were known by *noms*

## 2 Leach

*de guerre*, designed to confound French authorities and limit Resistance reprisals, and which had often been carried over from earlier, more secretive organisations.<sup>3</sup> It had grown from an initial core of around thirty militants, more than doubling in number at its peak.<sup>4</sup> Now, in December 1944, that committed core of original members was all that remained. As they commemorated their first anniversary with a formal photograph, few present were under any delusion that they might celebrate a second. As 'Pipo' predicted to 'Eskob' that afternoon (in English, so the Germans present wouldn't understand), this would be their "first and last" photo as a unit.<sup>5</sup> Some among them were already planning to flee abroad. The destination was already decided: Ireland, the country that had haunted their autonomist dreams since the Easter Rising of 1916. These were the 33 remaining *gour*<sup>6</sup> of "the first armed Breton formation since the disappearance of the *Chouan* army";<sup>7</sup> the unit listed in the German order of battle as the *Bretonische Waffenverbände der SS 'Bezen Perrot'*.<sup>8</sup> (Fig.1).



Figure 1. The *Bezen Perrot* prepares for a formal photograph, Tübingen, December 1944. ("*Bezen Perrot* archives" [previously unpublished]).

For the first time in English, and employing source material not previously used in any language, this article charts the course and origins of this controversial unit. It focuses upon its leader Célestin Lainé (otherwise known as 'Neven Henaff'), his conceptions of the 'Irish example' of independence and its impact on Breton nationalism. The objectives and motivations of the unit's chief identities are examined, employing primary source material such as interviews with

*Bezen Perrot* veterans and their descendants, as well as Lainé's own previously unpublished (albeit incomplete) memoirs.<sup>9</sup>

Although this formation decided to throw in its lot with the Germans and its members wore *Waffen-SS Feldgrau*<sup>10</sup> devoid of Breton insignia, its members did not see themselves as collaborators. Instead they viewed themselves as a national force continuing Breton military resistance against France. As such, most were opposed to identification with French collaborationist formations such as the *Milice française* (the internal security force of the Vichy government) or the *Légion des volontaires françaises contre le Bolchevisme* (Legion of French Volunteers against Bolshevism: LVF). Indeed, most in the *Bezen* considered these 'Jacobin' forces as inimical to Breton interests as the Gaullist and communist fighters of the Resistance with whom they engaged in combat. "All the French political class were the same for us", *Bezen* veteran Alan Heusaff 'Rouat' or 'Professeur'<sup>11</sup> wrote in *Argoad*, an exile newsletter that appeared in Ireland in the 1950s.<sup>12</sup> "We are soldiers", Lainé himself declared early in 1945, "Breton soldiers [...] We have therefore always rejected the idea of enlisting in French formations."<sup>13</sup>

Inspired by foreign-sponsored forces in Breton history,<sup>14</sup> and more recent examples such as the Czech and Polish legions of the First World War, militants steeped in tales of Irish rebellion found their most powerful inspiration in the struggle of their Celtic cousins to the northwest. MacBride's Brigade, which fought for the Boers in South Africa, was an especially potent example.<sup>15</sup> Roger Casement's Irish Brigade of former POWs, whilst never actually seeing combat, was likewise powerfully intertwined in the Breton nationalist imagination with the glories of the Easter Rising in 1916 (Fig. 2). By this time, the nationalist Camille Le Mercier d'Erm had embraced the "old *Sinn Féin* formula" and imagined a time when "France's difficulty would be Brittany's opportunity".<sup>16</sup>

Louis Le Roux's *La vie de Patrice Pearse* (Life of Patrick Pearse, published in 1932) was an especially influential publication for young autonomists, and cemented their identification with the Republican struggle in Ireland. Indeed, for many nationalists, Irish heroes exerted greater influence than their own:

The heroes of Easter Week and particularly P. Pearse became our heroes alongside the Breton heroes of the past: more real since they were our contemporaries. Easter Week was for us a sign of Resurrection and its martyrs died for us too, and if the heroes of Easter Week came to replace our own long dead heroes in our minds we owe it to that great book of L.N. Le Roux.<sup>17</sup>



Figure 2. Easter Rising commemorative issue of *Breiz Atao* (Brittany Forever), May 1935. "Easter Monday 1916! Nineteen years ago, the Irish saved their country by shedding their blood for it." (Photograph by author from material at Trinity College, Dublin).

Whatever their inspiration, notions of enduring Breton military heritage allied to whatever power opposed Paris were particularly inspirational for Lainé and the militants of the *Bezen Perrot*:

In this war, and for the first time in several centuries, Breton nationalists have engaged themselves in a military formation to combat France in the ranks of its enemies.<sup>18</sup>

But the *Bezen* and its Irish-inspired ideology of 'my enemy's enemy is my friend' was not purely the result of wartime circumstances. It was, in great measure, the result of the uncompromising attitude Lainé had developed many years earlier when he first determined to struggle against the French state "à la manière irlandaise".<sup>19</sup>

At the end of 1930, the 22-year-old Lainé was studying chemistry and Irish language at the Sorbonne in Paris.<sup>20</sup> Contrary to popular belief, he did not already belong to a secret Breton

nationalist society known as *Kentoc'h Mervel* (Sooner Death),<sup>21</sup> which he is said to have formed with Gwilherm Berthou in 1929.<sup>22</sup> In fact, as Lainé makes clear in his unpublished memoirs, he and Berthou had discussed forming a secret society committed to direct action in the name of Breton independence, but while Lainé went about cautiously recruiting trusted associates for the as-yet-unnamed group at Paris, Berthou independently arranged for Théophile Jousset of the small *Parti nationaliste intégral breton* (Breton Integral Nationalist Party: PNIB) and the staff of his journal *Breiz da Zont* (Brittany Of The Future) to join *en masse* the group Berthou now dubbed, without Lainé's knowledge, *Kentoc'h Mervel*.<sup>23</sup> Lainé considered it "illogical" for a group engaged in overt political activity such as publishing a journal to be simultaneously involved in an underground "activist secret military society". Lainé's unease became suspicion when Berthou demanded the names of Lainé's recruits. Despite their long association,<sup>24</sup> Lainé resolved to break with Berthou. As a ruse, he announced he and his members were "quitting the risky domain of secret societies".<sup>25</sup> "I don't know what became of *Kentoc'h Mervel* after that," Lainé writes, "except that it never grew beyond fancy words."<sup>26</sup>

Lainé reasoned that if Brittany was a nation it would have to fight as the Irish Republican Army (IRA) had done, and not "beg crumbs off the French table".<sup>27</sup> Lainé and his comrades Fant Rozec 'Meavenn', Hervé 'Bob' Helloco and Armand Girard therefore pledged to create their own, truly clandestine organisation dedicated to fomenting a nationalist uprising. *Gwenn-ha-Du* (White and Black, the Breton national colours) was therefore born late in 1930 on a street corner in Paris.<sup>28</sup>

Following Lainé's cautious strategy, recruitment for the secretive group was slow and deliberate. Helloco and Rozec left off all public nationalist activity, and 'Bob' became Head of Operations for the new group.<sup>29</sup> *Gwenn-ha-Du's* spectacular entry into French politics was the destruction in August 1932 of a monument at Rennes, known to autonomists as the *Honte nationale* (national dishonour), which featured the Breton Duchess Anne kneeling before the King of France and commemorated the union of the two countries 400 years earlier. The group declared in a communiqué to the press:

We open the struggle for the deliverance of our country, on this, the anniversary of our annexation, by destroying the symbol of our enslavement that dominates the centre of our capital.<sup>30</sup>



## 6 Leach

Ironically, many PNIB members were arrested on suspicion of involvement in the Rennes bombing<sup>31</sup>—a development that vindicated Lainé's insistence upon secrecy. The police suspected Lainé as well, however, especially as the bomb would have required extensive knowledge of chemistry. His position as a reserve artillery officer no doubt also fit the police profile (Fig. 3). But he was soon released when a former co-worker provided him an alibi.<sup>32</sup> The following November *Gwenn-ha-Du* struck again, cutting the rail line at Ingrandes and delaying Prime Minister Édouard Herriot's train on its way to union commemorations at Nantes. As had been the case in August, this action was condemned as "a German attack" by elements of the French press.<sup>33</sup>



Figure 3. Reserve Lt. of Artillery Célestin Lainé, 1931. ("Bezen Perrot archives" [previously unpublished]).

The actions of *Gwenn-ha-Du* proved popular among the more youthful sections of the Breton movement—so much so that the leaders of the constitutionalist *Parti national breton* (Breton National Party: PNB), Fañch Debauvais and Olier Mordrel, became anxious Lainé might usurp their position.<sup>34</sup> It was clear that younger nationalists were frustrated with the PNB's unsuccessful forays into electoral politics, and were increasingly radicalised not only by the example of Irish independence, but also by the rising tide of fascistic nationalism that had brought Mussolini to power in Italy and would soon bring the Nazis to government in Germany. This influence also emphasised the prominence of an all-powerful, charismatic leader. Action and militaristic discipline under a hierarchical leadership, combined with *Völkisch* concepts of race and nation, held greater appeal for these young militants than the mild regionalism or constitutionally-constrained autonomism preached by the older generation.<sup>35</sup> Nascent Breton fascism, embodied by the cult of action developing around *Gwenn-ha-Du* and its leader Lainé, could not therefore be ignored by the PNB. Its journal *Breiz Atao* (Brittany Forever) was usually cautious when it came to extolling the virtues of 'direct action', but now went so far as to term the

Rennes bombing "the first sign, the first cry of an awakening of our people".<sup>36</sup>

Plaudits aside, Debauvais and Mordrel determined to rein in Lainé and his militants, whilst simultaneously ensuring the popularity of *Gwenn-ha-Du* was harnessed for party ends. They determined "to harmonise initiatives and converge disparate efforts towards the same goal, under the leadership of the same strategy".<sup>37</sup> In May 1933 a secret *Kuzul Meur* (Grand Council) of Breton nationalism was therefore established. Mordrel and Debauvais represented the PNB and its organ *Breiz Atao*, while Lainé and his chief of operations 'Bob' Helloco represented *Gwenn-ha-Du*. Raymond Delaporte of the Catholic regionalist association *Bleun Brug* (Heather Bloom) was also included, so that efforts could be co-ordinated across all politico-cultural platforms, both overt and covert.<sup>38</sup>

There was a curious lull in *Gwenn-ha-Du's* activities between 1933 and 1936. This was not entirely due to the restraint exercised by the *Kuzul Meur*. The real reason was more mundane, and indicates that, despite its growing membership, the direct action group was still reliant upon the energy of its founder to plan and carry out attacks: throughout this period Lainé was living and working at the Kuhlmann plant at Loos, in French Flanders.<sup>39</sup> Upon his return, however, there was a co-ordinated arson strike against four of the five Breton prefectures,<sup>40</sup> followed by another communiqué which recalled the glorious monument bombing of four years earlier and promised "All of our blood for Brittany; not a drop for France."<sup>41</sup> Despite the restraining influence of the *Kuzul*, younger militants were evidently still hoping to incite "war pure and simple" against France, in the style of their heroes in the IRA.<sup>42</sup> Indeed, in a swipe at the older generation in the *Kuzul* (and an indication of his increasing anti-intellectualism), Lainé appended an appeal to "young people" to the communiqué, warning them "not to attach an exaggerated importance to theories that make tongues work to the detriment of arms".<sup>43</sup>

Unbeknownst to the other members of the *Kuzul*, Lainé and Helloco decided to harness this youthful exuberance on the fringes of the Breton movement and create a new clandestine force completely under Lainé's control.<sup>44</sup> Whereas *Gwenn-ha-Du's* role remained sabotage action against the symbols of French power in Brittany (a form of "violent propaganda", in Faligot's phrase),<sup>45</sup> the new force would concentrate upon training the nucleus of a future Breton army. "Each Breton must prepare himself physically and spiritually to be a soldier," Lainé declared.<sup>46</sup> Recruitment and training took place with such discretion that even Mordrel and Debauvais were taken by surprise when the new group—christened *Kadervenn* (roughly translating as "nursery of

combat")<sup>47</sup>—held its inaugural manoeuvres on the isolated Monts d'Arrée in 1937.<sup>48</sup> Lainé's brother Albert, a French army officer, was put in charge of training the group, which numbered only around a dozen members at this stage.<sup>49</sup>

There was a fair amount of dual membership between *Kadervenn* and *Gwenn-ha-Du*, yet Lainé and Helloco purposed to create another, more secretive organisation drawn from the executive branches of both groups—a "secret within a secret" tasked with carrying out confidential missions.<sup>50</sup> This was the *Service Spécial* (Special Service),<sup>51</sup> and Helloco was again placed in charge of its operations. Even Mordrel, his membership of the *Kuzul Meur* notwithstanding, confesses he never learned the precise composition of the *Service*.<sup>52</sup> Lainé and Helloco's efforts at bypassing the PNB leadership were obviously proving successful.

Also kept secret from the *Kuzul Meur* was the mission of *Service Spécial* members Guy Vissault de Coëtlogon and Ange Péresse to Germany in November 1938, ostensibly to undertake Celtic Studies at Rostock,<sup>53</sup> but actually to establish closer relations with Celticists employed by the *Abwehr Abteilung II*—the German secret service's 2nd department, tasked with utilising foreign subversive movements for German strategic ends.<sup>54</sup> Principal among these were men like Dr. Gerhard von Tevenar, who undertook recruitment missions to Celtic countries in the late 1930s. Vissault, in his testimony to British intelligence after his capture in 1944, claims to have first met the German Celticist in Ireland in July 1938.<sup>55</sup> This trip was itself a *Service Spécial* mission, and one which convinced the Bretons that the German intelligence service was a much more effective supporter of their struggle than the IRA, which was by that time a proscribed organisation in Éire.

Lainé and Helloco also travelled to Germany, via the residence at Brussels of Breton autonomist Paul 'Fred' Moyse, in July 1939.<sup>56</sup> Their mission was to go further than improve relations with German intelligence, but to capitalise upon the deteriorating political situation in Europe and "reverse the 150 year old trend of submission and renew the tradition of armed resistance to French domination".<sup>57</sup> To do this, the *Service Spécial* needed weapons.

Early in August 1939, a crate washed up at St.-Aubin Bay, Jersey.<sup>58</sup> The contents were brought to the attention of local police, who informed their counterparts on the French mainland. What had been found was some 50kg of seditious Breton nationalist propaganda; tracts and posters declaring *Pourquoi les Bretons se feraient-ils tuer pour la Pologne?*<sup>59</sup> (Why should Bretons get killed for Poland?) and *Pas de guerre pour Dantzig!*<sup>60</sup> (No war for Danzig!). This

was not the first time slogans of this nature had made an appearance in Brittany: Célestin Lainé himself had been sentenced to a three-month prison term for his part in a nationalist graffiti campaign the previous year,<sup>61</sup> although it is probable his insistence upon speaking Breton at his trial was a contributing factor to the severity of his sentence.<sup>62</sup> What perturbed French police was not so much the nature of the tracts but the appearance of such a large amount of nationalist material in the international waters of the English Channel. This testified to some sort of seaborne mission, and if one crate had been lost, it was reasonable to assume there might be others. Hardcore Breton militants were therefore put under increased surveillance<sup>63</sup>—especially those with access to ships. Police soon learned that a fishing boat capable of hauling large cargoes named the *Gwalarn* (Northwest) was registered under the name of one Hervé Helloco.<sup>64</sup>

When the police finally located the *Gwalarn* beached near Locquirec, they swiftly detained all on board. A thorough search of the vessel revealed nothing incriminating. Arresting the suspects all the same, the police then raided the nearby farm of one Andrev Geffroy. Again, nothing was found. Those arrested were then taken to successive prisons, where they reportedly endured five months of detention interspersed with interrogations and threats.<sup>65</sup> None of the detainees ever admitted any wrongdoing, maintaining throughout they were "peaceable vacationers". They were eventually released in January 1940 for lack of evidence.<sup>66</sup> Each—Andrev Geffroy, 'Bob' Helloco, Ange Péresse, Jacques Bruchet, Alan Louarn and the young Guy Vissault de Coëtlogon—was a member of Lainé's *Service Spécial*. Despite their arrests, the mission had largely been a success: the *Gwalarn* had managed to rendezvous in the English Channel with a German vessel from Hamburg,<sup>67</sup> and (the loss of one crate of leaflets notwithstanding) managed to transfer a cargo containing, according to one rather outlandish claim, some 50 tonnes of revolvers, submachine guns, munitions and nationalist propaganda.<sup>68</sup> None of this, contrary to some later claims, was an expression of militant Celtic solidarity;<sup>69</sup> Geffroy himself later acknowledged the shipment was a "gift" from the *Abwehr*, and not from "some mysterious organisation in Ireland".<sup>70</sup>

Geffroy's *Service Spécial* comrades Jacques de Quelen, Patrick Guérin and others had managed to unload the cargo before the police struck, and have it dispersed to secret arms caches throughout Brittany. The police searched in vain for the rumoured weapons, and among the many Breton individuals visited in this connexion was the parish priest of Scignac and head of *Bleun Brug*, a certain Abbé Yann-Vari Perrot.<sup>71</sup>

Until it was time to put the weapons to use in an insurrection against French rule, Lainé ordered those of his men not already in jail to lie low while the repression of the Breton movement, which had begun with a law forbidding "attacks upon the integrity of the state" in May 1938, gained in force. On September 3, 1939 France declared war on Germany, and finally on October 20 the PNB was banned and its property seized as "enemy goods".<sup>72</sup>

The day France ordered general mobilisation, Lainé the reserve artillery officer rejoined his regiment. Hamon claims this caused consternation amongst the *Service Spécial*.<sup>73</sup> However, Louis Feutren, a close associate of Lainé's, claims there were express orders to rejoin regiments and defect to the Germans at the first opportunity.<sup>74</sup> Two days previously PNB leaders Olier Mordrel and Fañch Debauvais had fled to Germany via 'Fred' Moyse in Brussels.<sup>75</sup> Awaiting them in the Reich were a number of German Celticists, many of whom, like von Tevenar, doubled as operatives for the *Abwehr Abteilung II* or the *Ahnenerbe*,<sup>76</sup> the Germanic ancestry research office that had been incorporated into the SS in January 1939. Chief among these was Dr. Hans Otto Wagner, a longtime subscriber to *Breiz Atao* whom Mordrel describes as a "Rhenish federalist" passionately interested in minority nationalism.<sup>77</sup> He and von Tevenar assisted the PNB leaders to become established in Berlin, assisted by Kurt Haller, Director of the German Society for Celtic Studies,<sup>78</sup> and Baron Schenk von Stauffenberg, former deputy for Sigmaringen in the Reichstag.<sup>79</sup>

Another "left Nazi" was Friedrich Hielscher, an *Ahnenerbe* researcher, Celticist and "pagan"<sup>80</sup> who had first introduced Lainé to the *Abwehr*.<sup>81</sup> As war broke out between Germany and France he was central in ensuring the exiled PNB leaders were granted as favourable a reception in the German Reich as possible. This meant providing access to military officers known for their desire to dismember a defeated France, absorb its 'Germanic' regions such as Alsace and French Flanders, and establish an independent Brittany that would remain tied to Germany. Owing to this latter proclivity, these officers were known as *Die Bretonen*.<sup>82</sup>

By April 1940 the Germans established a *G-Sender* propaganda radio station dedicated to fomenting Breton nationalist sentiment. 'Radio Breiz' broadcast from Krems in Moravia. The German Celticists Julius Pokorny and Ludwig Mühlhausen were in charge of censorship, but otherwise the operation was, in Mordrel's phrase, "100 percent *Breiz Atao*".<sup>83</sup> The broadcasts were seldom received in Brittany, but may have been heard by troops on the front lines. Mordrel claims that morale amongst Bretons in the French army before the German invasion was

particularly low, and that desertions were common. Many of these were of nationalists under instruction to do so, but others were ordinary Bretons who feared Paris would once again sacrifice them to the Germans,<sup>84</sup> as had happened (according to Breton legend) to General Kerartry's *Armée de Bretagne* at Conlie during the Franco-Prussian war of 1870.<sup>85</sup>

The Germans segregated Breton POWs thought responsive to nationalist propaganda, placing them in separate camps such as Luckenwalde. These Bretons were to 'smooth the way' for the projected German advance into France, but in the end the invasion was so spectacularly successful this 'Breton vanguard' proved unnecessary.

While Helloco and other nationalists recruited under the POW scheme worked for the 'government-in-exile' at Berlin or broadcast for 'Radio Breiz', Célestin Lainé was in the early months of a five-year prison term at the *centrale* (military prison) at Clairvaux.<sup>86</sup> He had been sentenced in October 1939 for sowing defeatism in his regiment. According to one story, the inoffensive-looking nationalist leader was taunted by a group of tough Parisian gangsters when beginning his sentence.

"What are you in for, little one? A week's holiday?"

"No," Lainé replied. "They'll probably guillotine me for trying to destroy the train of the President of the Republic." After that, it is said, Lainé was bothered no more.<sup>87</sup>

Liberated by his comrades after the surrender of French arms, Lainé was one of the central committee members of the *Conseil national breton* (Breton National Council: CNB) declared at Pontivy in July 1940. Despite some early ambivalence on the issue of Breton independence, the Germans were now demanding the more radical elements of Breton nationalism, especially references to a Breton "nation", be deleted from the CNB's proclamations.<sup>88</sup> The promise of collaboration with France proper was taking precedence over schemes for the dismemberment of the country, but until the Montoire agreement in October between Hitler and Pétain there were still many who expected German support for Breton independence. There were even rumours the banks were designing a Breton currency.<sup>89</sup>

During these crucial months, Lainé holed up first at Pontivy and later at Gouézec in Finistère with members of his *Service Spécial* and *Kadervenn*,<sup>90</sup> many of whom had been repatriated under the POW scheme. Here they secretly planned for independence and drilled as the nucleus of Brittany's future military. The *Kadervenn* was renamed *Lu Brezon* (Breton Army) in anticipation of this development, but this wasn't the only change afoot. Lainé—steeped in

what Hamon calls a Celtic, Nordic and druidic neo-pagan syncretism,<sup>91</sup> devoting himself to arcane studies in Celtic mysticism, astrology and the spiritual aspects of nutrition—was developing bizarre military theories. Among other strictures, his men should not eat potatoes, as they grow hidden from sunlight.<sup>92</sup> They should adopt a new 'Celtic' goosestep in which the toes touch the ground first.<sup>93</sup> Like his German mentors Hielscher and von Tevenar, his beliefs were becoming overtly non- (or perhaps even pre-) Christian, and racialist conceptions distinguishing 'northern' Celtic and Germanic races from 'southern' Latins were becoming more pronounced in his thinking. From the early 1930s, Lainé had detected a "sense of Nordism" growing in him as he realised only Germany could defeat France. Perhaps conveniently (and in contradistinction to the views of many British Celts, no doubt) he developed notions of "a Germanic culture related [*parente*] to Celtic culture."<sup>94</sup> Olier Mordrel was developing similar theories in both *Breiz Atao* and his alternative, more overtly fascist publication *Stur*, which made references to a Celto-Germanic "Nordic super-race" united in blood and spirit.<sup>95</sup> Pagan conceptions such as Lainé's would have a negative impact in such a devoutly Catholic region as Brittany, and also upon internal relations within his own small nationalist force. For the moment, though, the *Lu Brezon* bided its time to see which way the German wind blew, knowing that, secreted in caches around the peninsula, the arms landed in the *Gwalarn* adventure awaited use.

At this early stage, then, Lainé and his small band of nationalists had already made their ambitions contingent upon the attitudes of the German occupiers. Guy Vissault de Coëtlogon, for one, had advocated rebellion against France when war was declared in September 1939,<sup>96</sup> but Lainé had insisted upon harmonising Breton nationalist objectives with those of the invaders.

After the Montoire agreement guaranteed French collaboration under the Vichy government, however, the Germans ousted the separatists Mordrel and Debauvais from the PNB leadership. Prospects for Breton independence under German aegis thereafter retreated considerably. The Germans now only tolerated the nationalists—largely as a guarantee of Vichy compliance—and the party itself under the new moderate leader Raymond Delaporte moved further towards a nominally neutralist and federalist line as a result. Moderates in the PNB found a compelling example for this position in contemporary Ireland,<sup>97</sup> just as militants found inspiration in the IRA. Removing separatists from the PNB leadership eased the pressure upon Franco-German relations, but the armed hardcore group around Lainé remained a potentially destabilising element. It was not until July 5 1941 that the occupiers acted against this threat.

The disarmament of militant nationalists that occurred on that date was precipitated by public reaction to Vichy's administrative detachment of the Nantes region from Brittany, declared less than a week earlier. The upsurge in popular resentment towards central government could, the Germans realised, lead to increased support for the nationalists and a general undermining of Vichy collaboration. Anxiety in this area became profound concern when an angry communiqué attributed to *Gwenn-ha-Du*, officially dormant since 1938, hit the regional press:

Any attack upon the integrity of Brittany will be considered by us a criminal act to which we shall immediately respond in a violent manner, with the certitude that we shall be understood and followed by the Breton people in their entirety...<sup>98</sup>

The *gendarmerie* at Carhaix was the subject of a bomb attack only a few days later.<sup>99</sup> Significantly, though, *Gwenn-ha-Du* did not claim responsibility,<sup>100</sup> perhaps nervous as to what the German response might be should they do so.

The Germans were now forced to take action. The *Lu Brezon* was obliged to surrender its weapons by order of the *Kommandantur* at Rennes. Lainé, however, contrived to ensure only a portion of the arms were handed over. There was a fair deal of distrust towards Vichy within the German general staff—the transfer of many of *Die Bretonen* away from Brittany notwithstanding. Allies might be needed in future, especially if the Resistance were to grow in power. The *Wehrmacht*, therefore, ensured no awkward questions were asked about the balance of the *Lu Brezon's* armoury.<sup>101</sup>

Fears of an increase in Resistance activity were soon realised. On June 22 1941, the Axis invasion of the Soviet Union sundered the Nazi-Soviet Non-Aggression Pact. The *Parti communiste français* (French Communist Party: PCF) now reversed its attitude towards the "imperialist" war. Clandestine resistance networks now grew exponentially. Perhaps with greater violence, any local elements thought to be assisting the occupiers began to be targeted. As the Resistance attacked Germans and their local supporters alike, so the reprisals of the occupiers came down more heavily upon the average citizen—often with a random savagery that simply drove more into opposition. Fifty residents of Nantes, for example, were taken hostage and executed in reprisal for the assassination of the German commandant in October 1941. His assassin was a communist of the *Francs-tireurs et partisans français* (FTP, the armed Resistance wing of the PCF).<sup>102</sup> As the tide of war seemed to turn after Stalingrad, so Resistance efforts



became further emboldened. More young Bretons—as citizens were to do throughout occupied countries—began to *prendre le maquis*, forming irregular guerilla bands to harass German lines of supply, ambush convoys and mete out harsh punishment to 'collabos'. The introduction of *Service du travail obligatoire* (STO, a compulsory labour draft) from June 1942 also served only to increase the flight of youngsters to the Resistance.

The militants of *Gwenn-ha-Du* had once hoped to provoke the French state into a blind repression of Breton particularism that would force even non-nationalists into rebellion.<sup>103</sup> But even at its most Jacobin, the French state had never resorted to the kind of repression witnessed in occupied Brittany during the war. As the German position became more desperate, captured members of the Resistance as well as innocent hostages could expect little mercy from the *Sicherheitsdienst* (Security Service of the SS: SD) and its various auxiliaries, including French units like the *Franc-Garde* of the Vichy *Milice* or the *Groupe d'Action* of the fascist *Parti populaire français* (French Popular Party: PPF).<sup>104</sup> Soon these French fascists would be joined by others of local origin yet rather different political motivation.

From the installation of Delaporte at its head in late 1940 the PNB had espoused a neutralist line. But many in Brittany recalled how the CNB had been rescued from loyalists by German troops at Pontivy in 1940, and how nationalist POWs had been repatriated while loyalists still mouldered in German prison camps. Many also had been schooled in French media depictions of the 'German' origins of Breton nationalism, dating back to *Gwenn-ha-Du's* first action in 1932. Furthermore, any attempt to convince Bretons that the war was a dispute between French and Germans that should not concern them was unlikely to hold much sway in an era of mass executions, food shortages and Allied aerial bombing.

There was also increasing division within the Breton nationalist camp—not only between the *attentistes* ('wait-and-see' types) of the PNB and the extremists of the *Lu Brezon*, but also those who began to reject the occupiers altogether. The '*Liberté*' troop of the *Bagadoù Stourm* (Combat Detachments, the uniformed youth wing of the PNB), defected to the Resistance, for example.<sup>105</sup> The conflict in Brittany was taking on aspects of civil war, but not of the kind Lainé had hoped for. In Mordrel's analysis, the war was becoming not a national struggle between Bretons and French, but an internecine clash between the majority of Bretons who were allied to "international communism, Anglo-Saxon capitalism and Gaullist revanchism" on the one hand, and "the German people, allied to international fascism, a minority of Bretons and the

collaborationist fraction of the French people" on the other.<sup>106</sup> Lainé's militant tendency was therefore marginalised not only within Breton society at large, but within the nationalist movement itself.

In September 1943, a *Maquis* gunman killed Yann Bricler, head of the PNB's Quimper section.<sup>107</sup> The impact upon the PNB was, according to Bricler's cousin Olier Mordrel, like a "lightning bolt". The sense of alarm and isolation was heightened by the Church hierarchy's refusal to allow Catholic funeral rites,<sup>108</sup> a reinforcement of Bishop Duparc's earlier threat to excommunicate nationalists.<sup>109</sup> At the funeral itself, onlookers insulted mourners and had to be held back by armed German military police—which only added to the sense that this was a *collabo* ceremony.<sup>110</sup> Soon afterward, *Service Spécial* militant Yves Kerhoas survived one assassination attempt, only to succumb to a second some weeks later.<sup>111</sup>

The PNB was teetering on the point of schism, and the targeting of its members hastened that division. Some demanded weapons from the Germans to defend themselves against these "communist terrorists".<sup>112</sup> Others felt feelers should be extended toward the Allies.<sup>113</sup> While most stuck to the neutralist line, militants agitated for more open alignment with the Germans, as the only force capable of defending nationalists and the traditional separatist goals of *Breiz Atao*. Some of these militants found great motivation in Breton variants of national socialism, roused by Mordrel's *Stur* or *Brezona*, a small Breton Nazi group at Lorient.<sup>114</sup> Still others are said to have held little faith in ultimate German victory, but simply felt the time had come to "put their faith in Brittany and the necessity to fight for her".<sup>115</sup> For most militants, though, this was an opportunity to demonstrate their value to the occupiers. The more supportive nationalists were of the Germans, they reasoned, the more likely Berlin would be to abandon Vichy and create a Breton state. In a choice between Germany and France, the latter had historically been a worse enemy to Brittany, they reasoned.<sup>116</sup>

Were Lainé's men therefore Nazis? There is no doubt their vision of an independent Brittany was as heavily influenced by national socialist and fascist doctrines as Irish Republicanism. They shared with Catholic traditionalists within the PNB (and, indeed, throughout much of Europe) a strong anti-communism and acute anti-Semitism. Often they, like many on the contemporary Right, conflated these two 'threats' into conceptions of 'Judeo-Bolshevism'.<sup>117</sup> A minority even felt that the Germans' 'crusade' in Russia was worth participating in directly. Most Breton separatists, however, could not countenance joining French

units like the LVF, and felt their principal anti-communist struggle was in Brittany against the forces of the FTP.<sup>118</sup> They were also influenced by elements of Mordrel's abortive program for Breton independence *Strollad ar Gelted Adsavet* (Union of Celts Reborn: SAGA),<sup>119</sup> which imagined the future 'cleansing' of racial and political enemies. Guy Vissault de Coëtlogon reportedly stated his willingness to eliminate 90 percent of Bretons so long as it brought about an independent state.<sup>120</sup>

Louis Feutren, however, claims the origin of external assistance was immaterial, and that nationalists would willingly have accepted aid from Moscow but such was never offered given the strength of the PCF and the 'Popular Front' Stalin sought against fascism.<sup>121</sup> Alan Heusaff, for his part, is said to have been radicalised in defence of the Breton language not by Breton Nazis, but by a Breton-speaking communist.<sup>122</sup> Only Germany was interested in destabilising France, they believed.

It is debatable whether these were beliefs held at the time or are the product of later justifications. Certainly, Hamon claims an enthusiastic young collaborator who participated in arrests and conversed in German with Nazi officers in 1944 was none other than Louis Feutren<sup>123</sup>—an accusation Feutren rejects. "It's not me. I hadn't a word of German at the time."<sup>124</sup> Claims also recurred that Lainé's circle still embraced the label of 'national socialist' long after they fled to Ireland,<sup>125</sup> although they themselves described their politics as "socialist"<sup>126</sup> or even "liberal".<sup>127</sup> Single-minded nationalism, modelled in great measure upon the IRA's, appears to have blinded these militant nationalists to the ramifications of their alliance with Berlin.

In late 1943, Lainé, who still believed in ultimate German victory,<sup>128</sup> decided to pursue his alliance with Germany still further. Adopting the name of Brittany's famous rebel assisted by Britain, he again renamed his small nationalist force *Bezen Kadoudal* (Cadoudal Unit),<sup>129</sup> and offered its services to the occupiers. It would aim to protect nationalists from Resistance attack, but perhaps more than any other objective was the desire to field a purely Breton military force, thereby demonstrating the endurance of the Breton nation. In the words of his associate Feutren ('Maître' of the *Bezen*), Lainé wanted "to connect back with the Breton army that was defeated at St.-Aubin."<sup>130</sup> The simple presence of such a force would, Lainé reasoned, have a powerful impact upon Breton psychology. He "tried to have us as a unit protecting trains," says Feutren. "Anything at all that would have given us a uniform." But, mindful perhaps of how its enemies would seek to portray it, Lainé was, reportedly, especially concerned the unit should not operate

on behalf of the SD.<sup>131</sup>

The security arm of the SS was by this time desperate to recruit collaborators for counter-insurgency work. It was also loath to jeopardise valuable Vichy co-operation. It thus had very different plans for the Breton unit, and the result was a curious compromise: *Bezen Kadoudal* members would be classed as agents of the *Sicherheitspolizei* (Security police of the SD, or *Sipo*), but the men of the unit could consider themselves Breton soldiers of an independent military formation. "All precautions were taken that the German quality of the formation would remain unknown in Brittany," Mordrel explains, "and that the Breton character imprinted on the troop by its animators would not be known outside."<sup>132</sup> The terms of enlistment specified engagement only against 'French' power within Brittany itself.<sup>133</sup> It is testament to Lainé's burning desire to combat France in whatever form that he accepted this unsatisfactory role of German police auxiliaries for his unit, at a time when it was clear the Nazi leadership would never reward his efforts with Breton independence and an increasing number of Bretons were rejecting the occupiers and all who supported them.

Another prominent Breton was targeted less than a week later, however. In the aftermath of this killing, the *Bezen Kadoudal* took its most fateful step into collaboration in German uniform in the name of Breton independence.

*Abbé Yann-Vari Perrot* was director of *Bleun Brug*; member, alongside Yann Fouéré, of Vichy's *Conseil consultatif de Bretagne* (Consultative Council of Brittany: CCB); and editor of the journal *Feiz ha Breiz* (Faith and Brittany). In this latter capacity he had written favourably of the clerical-fascist regime of Msgr. Tiso in Slovakia and of the Axis campaign against 'Bolshevik hordes' in the East.<sup>134</sup> His commitment to Breton nationalism was likewise well-known, a position that put him at odds with the Church hierarchy whose bishops were supportive of Marshal Pétain and his *État français* (French State). It is perhaps owing to his Breton nationalist convictions that the Church posted Perrot to Scrinac, a town noted for its Leftism and hostility to autonomism.<sup>135</sup>

Perrot had been visited by the police some years earlier as they searched for the weapons landed at Locquirec.<sup>136</sup> Lainé even claimed the *Abbé* had offered his garden as a hiding place for these arms.<sup>137</sup> It is also said, however, that Perrot distrusted Lainé and his plans for open collaboration with the Germans.<sup>138</sup> This was partly owing to Lainé's neo-paganism,<sup>139</sup> a common element of Nazism that often brought condemnation from a Church otherwise favourably

disposed towards corporatism, anti-communism and other features of national socialism. Perrot was also respected by a broad range of regionalist opinion in Brittany. If Perrot were to be killed, it would send a powerful signal that the Resistance regarded all autonomists as *collabos*, which would, out of outrage and fury, likely force them into overt alliance with the Germans.<sup>140</sup> This, then, is what a lone communist assassin did at a crossroads near Scignac on 12 December 1943.<sup>141</sup>

Shock at Perrot's death shook even many non-nationalists in Brittany. Mordrel claims even the communist press referred to it as a "tragic error".<sup>142</sup> For Lainé, however, this was an opportunity to "step from the shadows" and offer militant Bretons an instrument of vengeance. His emotive appeal at Perrot's funeral for action in defence of an imperilled Breton identity was largely unchanged since the time of *Gwenn-ha-Du*:

When all the means of discussion are exhausted [...] when offers, promises and seductions remain ineffective [...] Then [...] the cause has no further need of sloganeers [*phraseurs*], but of soldiers. Victory will decide the issue.<sup>143</sup>

After Perrot's death, members of the *Bezen Kadoudal* unanimously voted to rename their unit once again, this time in honour of this Breton martyr in priest's robes.<sup>144</sup> By so doing, however, the division between these thirty or so uncompromising militants and the rest of the Breton movement became blurred. The "peaceful regionalist" Perrot—and, by extension, all other constitutionalist streams of Breton autonomism—would now be forever associated with direct collaboration with the occupiers.<sup>145</sup> The *Bezen's* very existence, let alone its wartime conduct, would soon "allow Brittany's enemies [...] to crucify the Movement with the assent of the Breton people."<sup>146</sup>

One of the most controversial aspects of the *Bezen Perrot*, and one that assisted efforts to depict it as a force serving purely German interests, was the seemingly mundane question of its uniform.<sup>147</sup> The primary sources of recruitment for the *Bezen* were of course the PNB and the *Bagadoù Stourm*. Many recruits were reportedly told prior to enlistment that, as in the *Bagadoù*, with its *triskell* armbands and 'Scottish' caps, they would be serving and fighting in uniquely 'Breton' uniform.<sup>148</sup> This uniform, combining Celtic and Nazi German overtones, had been a considerable source of pride for Yann Goulet, the *Bagadoù's* leader. It had been designed by both Goulet and Lainé earlier in the war.

In the *Bezen*, however, different considerations applied. The *Bagadoù* had been involved in occasional brawls with political opponents—especially the hated fascist/centralist *Francistes*, and even Vichy's police on at least one occasion<sup>149</sup>—but it had never been armed with anything more threatening than paving stones, clubs and Goulet's personal sidearm.<sup>150</sup> Numbering some 400 members,<sup>151</sup> it performed a function somewhere between nationalist scout troupe and political 'street muscle' for the PNB. A force equipped with deadlier weapons engaged in anti-partisan work by the SD, however, was a rather bolder statement of German support for Breton nationalism—particularly if that force was committed to separatism and opposed the federalism the PNB now espoused. For this reason ("not to offend the French!"<sup>152</sup>), the *Bezen Perrot* served first in mufti and then, from March 1944, in SS



Figure 4. (l-r) Louis Feutren 'Maître', Yann Guyomarc'h 'Pipo' and Ange Luec 'Forster' in the SS uniform of the *Bezen Perrot*, Tübingen, c. early 1945. Note absence of any Breton insignia. ("*Bezen Perrot* archives" [previously unpublished]).

*Feldgrau* devoid of any Breton insignia<sup>153</sup> (Fig. 4). To many in Brittany, then, the *Bezen* would have seemed indistinguishable from civilian informers in German pay, or from regular German SS on operations.

Of greater significance, of course, was the *Bezen's* operational history. *Gour* participated in arrests of Resistants and evaders of STO, intercepted arms drops intended for the *Maquis*, and assisted in the infiltration of Resistance networks. As a security measure, many Resistance networks in Brittany communicated only in Breton, and Breton-speaking collaborators were therefore greatly prized.<sup>154</sup> More than one Resistance fighter is said to have been unpleasantly surprised when their 'German' captors began conversing in fluent Breton.<sup>155</sup>

The *Bezen* began operations alongside the SD early in 1944. At this time they were armed

only with pistols. In addition to raids against Resistants, they were used to mount guard at the SD interrogation centre at Rennes. By spring the elite groups were given SS uniforms to wear on operation, and were armed with sub-machine guns.<sup>156</sup> They operated in concert with another French '*collabo*' force, the *Selbstschutzpolizei* (SSP), which operated in a blue uniform similar to the Vichy *Milice*.<sup>157</sup>

These operations became more dangerous as D-Day approached, and sharp engagements with the *Maquis* became more common. Ange Péresse 'Cocal', the unit's field commander, earned a particularly ferocious reputation in these engagements, especially one against a hideout of "Spanish Reds".<sup>158</sup> Finally, in May 1944, Auguste Le Deuff 'Verdier' was shot dead by a captured Resistance fighter who had secreted a handgun in his beret, who also managed to wound Goulven Jacq 'Maout' in the hand. Le Deuff was laid to rest with full military honours, under a headstone that declares him a "German soldier"<sup>159</sup> (Fig. 5).

Yann Laizet 'Stern' and Jean Larnicol 'Gonidec', were killed in a firefight with Free French commandos shortly after D-Day. Alan Heusaff 'Rouat' or 'Professeur' was gravely wounded in this engagement. Local peasants who came to his assistance were stunned by his explanation that his wounds were the result of a skirmish "between Bretons and French".<sup>160</sup> Yann Louarn 'Le Du' fared rather worse when arrested by *maquisards*; led into a forest, he was executed with a shot to the head.<sup>161</sup> His body was later dumped into a flooded quarry.

Anger at the targeting of Breton nationalists by the FTP motivated some *gour* to excessive violence. Gilles Foix 'Eskob' was known to have struck prisoners during interrogation,<sup>162</sup> contrary to Lainé's supposed orders to avoid such duty altogether.<sup>163</sup> Ange Luec 'Forster' was also known for his "bestiality" towards prisoners.<sup>164</sup> André Geffroy 'Ferrand' is said to have bragged of his role in the execution of fifty captives of the *Forces françaises de l'intérieur* (French Forces of the Interior or FFI, the amalgamated forces of the Resistance after



Figure 5. Auguste Le Deuff 'Verdier', first fatality suffered by the *Bezen Perrot*. ("*Bezen Perrot* archives" [previously unpublished]).

March 1944).<sup>165</sup> Finally, after the unsuccessful attempt upon Hitler's life in July, the SD was ordered to take no prisoners in its anti-partisan war. The *Bezen Perrot* was thereafter accused of assisting in massacres of captured Resistants at various locations throughout Brittany, although some veterans of the unit maintained they simply stood guard while the SD and other auxiliaries carried out the atrocities.<sup>166</sup>

It must be noted that not all militant nationalists favouring collaboration with the Germans joined the *Bezen Perrot*. Lainé's old *Service Spécial* comrade Andreu Geffroy 'Le Grand Geff'<sup>167</sup> enlisted instead with a *Sipo* outfit composed of nationalists and German SD that operated in Finistère, known as the *Kommando de Landerneau*. Guy Vissault de Coëtlogon likewise bypassed Breton units "allied" to the Germans and offered his services directly to the SD. His group of operatives specialised in infiltrating and betraying Resistance networks. He was eventually trained in espionage with a view to conducting operations against Britain in either the UK or Ireland. It is for this reason the British evinced such interest in him after his capture by the Americans in Normandy in 1944, where he had allegedly been organising 'stay-behind' agents to sow chaos in the Allied rear.<sup>168</sup> The British took him to London for extended interrogation before handing him over to the French. Defiant at his trial, and raised on tales of Irish sacrifice, Coëtlogon revelled in his death sentence. "God," he announced, "gives me the honour of dying for my country."<sup>169</sup>

Division within the militant section of the Breton movement was minor compared to the rupture between it and the moderate majority. A schism had threatened to erupt since Perrot's funeral, when Lainé had issued his militant appeal and shocked Catholics with his displays of Celtic paganism.<sup>170</sup> The final crisis came when Fañch Debauvais, terminally ill with tuberculosis, issued a political testimony in which he named Lainé heir.<sup>171</sup> Upon the death of 'Deb', Lainé and his political affairs chief Marcel Guieysse formally declared in May 1944 their own PNB, the resurrection of the CNB, and launched a new journal named *Breiz Atao*. This suggested they, and not the *attentistes* of what would come to be known as the PNB-*Croupion* ('Rump PNB'), were the real heirs of the movement first established in 1919. Raymond Delaporte, however, refused to dissolve the existing party. The schism was complete.

Lainé's *néo-Breiz Atao*, as Mordrel calls it, managed only a single issue in Brittany.<sup>172</sup> In the first days of August 1944 the Germans issued orders for the *Bezen* to quit its barracks in Rennes and join the retreat to the east. American forces had broken out of Normandy and were



advancing on the Breton capital. Along with the SD, the *Bezen Perrot* piled into trucks and fled, pausing to collect other nationalists who were likely to fare badly under Republican rule such as Fant Rozec 'Meavenn', the writer Roparz Hemon, and Marcel Guieysse.

If the *Bezen's* German uniform and its brutal anti-Resistance operations served to earn the antipathy of the majority of Bretons, its flight from Brittany alongside the retreating invaders sealed its image as a collaborationist force serving purely German interests. Many nationalists, including members of the *Bezen* itself, came to question the wisdom of this precipitate departure. Celtic militants schooled in the martyristic heroism of the Easter Rising, they asked how different the outcome might have been if, after the departure of the *Wehrmacht*, Breton militants had seized an important public building at Rennes, run up the *Gwenn-ha-Du* (the Breton flag), declared a Breton republic and defended it against all challenges.<sup>173</sup> Efforts to depict such a desperate gesture as a purely *German* stratagem—as French newspapers had portrayed the Easter Rising in 1916—might have encountered considerable difficulty. Mordrel—somewhat improbably—claims the Americans would have "looked twice" if faced with such a scenario.<sup>174</sup> While loyalists in the FFI may have reacted with increased fury, it is a matter of speculation as to what the reaction of Breton elements of the *Maquis* or FFL (Free French Forces) may have been.

Lainé's unstinting belief in German victory was perhaps the key reason why an uprising à l'*Irlandaise* was not attempted. What would be the value in sacrificing the best fighters of the movement in a heroic but futile gesture if the Germans were to hurl the Allies back with devastating 'miracle weapons' only a month or two later?<sup>175</sup> Having so firmly attached his fortunes to the Reich, the thought of German surrender was obviously beyond Lainé's imagining. His immersion in esoteric Celto-Nordic mysticism at this time could not have helped in his assessment of military or geopolitical realities, either.<sup>176</sup> So, in August 1944 just as in June 1940, the opportunity for nationalists to fill the brief power vacuum left by the collapse of public order in Brittany quickly evaporated without result. Now all that was left was flight toward the east, and a hope that one day Breton nationalists would return in the van of a reconquering German army.

In Paris, several chose to leave the unit, including staff intelligence officer Jean Chanteau 'Mabinog'. Louis Feutren, for one, disputes these as desertions:

Some came to Neven and told him, "We don't want to go to Germany." And Neven said, "OK, of course," because the bond was broken...<sup>177</sup>

Foix 'Eskob' however, says the "desertion" of Lainé's lieutenant hit the unit especially hard, and brought morale to new lows.<sup>178</sup> Three of those who absconded later decided to switch sides and join the FFI, and one—Joseph Le Berre, formerly 'Kernel' and later 'Stern' of the *Bezen*—perished attacking a German position during the liberation of the capital.<sup>179</sup>

At Troyes, 'Eskob', Yann Guyomarc'h 'Pipo'<sup>180</sup> and another man known as 'Bleiz' were alleged to have participated in the execution of 49 prisoners.<sup>181</sup> 'Eskob' maintains the arrival of the *Bezen* simply "coincided" with this German atrocity, and that his unit was "wrongly accused" of having taken part.<sup>182</sup> Whatever the truth of the matter, the *Bezen Perrot* was now associated with the worst kind of collaboration.

The unit headed further east, eventually passing into Germany. Here the idea of parachuting them back into Brittany to conduct sabotage operations was mooted.<sup>183</sup> Arriving at Tübingen, however, Feutren says he was surprised the Germans honoured their original agreement and did not pressure them to serve in any further capacity.<sup>184</sup> Lainé's involvement with his men was also becoming more distant. Pious Catholics in the unit—especially men from the Vannes region—resented his inner circle of "celticards",<sup>185</sup> and the fact that he ventured forth only occasionally to deliver motivational speeches on the glorious "impossibility" of the *Bezen's* mission or to compare his *gour* with the depictions of Celtic warriors in Tacitus.<sup>186</sup> There was, writes 'Eskob', a "*fin du monde*" aspect to these final days,<sup>187</sup> and Lainé (now employing his 'Breton name' of 'Neven Henaff') was increasingly turning in upon himself, even while exhorting others to maintain the struggle.<sup>188</sup>

Finally, some weeks after their anniversary celebrations (at which Lainé was promoted to the rank of *Untersturmführer* in the SS proper)<sup>189</sup> (Fig. 6), the *Bezen Perrot* was informed it would be broken into groups. *Gour* had the choice either to undertake sabotage or radio training for insertion back into Brittany, or enlist with the *Waffen-SS*.<sup>190</sup> Whatever their choice, the dream of an independent Breton military force in combat against France was at an end.

Rumours at this time were rife that separatists were conducting guerrilla campaigns against the forces of



Figure 6. SS-Untersturmführer Célestin Lainé, ID photo, early 1945. ("*Bezen Perrot* archives" [previously unpublished]).

Republican France in Brittany. In what might be termed a '*maquis blanc-et-noir*', these diehard '*Breiz Atao*' (as autonomists were known) were said to have joined German stragglers (*maquis brun*) and assorted Vichyites and fascists (*maquis blanc*), and were operating with support from besieged German pockets at Lorient, St.-Nazaire and Brest, as well as airdrops from mysterious aeroplanes said to be sighted at night by nervous FFI sentries.<sup>191</sup>

While there were indeed instances of autonomist guerrillas operating after the Liberation, most units trained by the Germans for 'stay-behind' duties belonged to French fascist units like the *Milice* or PPF.<sup>192</sup> Members of the *Bezen* in Germany were ignorant of this fact. Whether much optimism as to the possible outcome of reinsertion operations was felt at this stage is debatable; it is equally possible some believed it was the most effective way to strike back at the eternal Jacobin foe, or afforded them the best chance of getting back to their families.

The *Bezen* now divided as instructed. Two groups went on to train in sabotage and radio operation, respectively.

Another went to the *Waffen-SS*. A fourth was, according to 'Eskob's' account, supposedly to be a "Propaganda" unit,<sup>193</sup> but Feutren remarks this was a title they awarded themselves because they were unsuited to all other tasks and the staff section didn't know what to do with them<sup>194</sup> (Fig. 7). These latter remained at Tübingen as the others departed for missions around Germany. While travelling by train to one such posting, Pier Hirc'air 'Ivarc'h' was killed in an Allied strafing attack.<sup>195</sup> He was the *Bezen's* final combat fatality. He would not, however, be the last to die by hostile fire.

In April 1945, as the *Führer* prepared to commit suicide in his bunker at Berlin, the staff section of the *Bezen*

*Perrot* retired to Marburg. Here Lainé had prepared a "little hideaway", according to Mordrel, arranged by Prof. Leo Weisgerber whose German Society of Celtic Studies was based in this university town on the Lahn.<sup>196</sup> It was Weisgerber's society, under the cover of conducting research for the *Ahnenerbe*,<sup>197</sup> which had allowed researchers like von Tevenar to establish links with subversive movements in Celtic countries on behalf of their secret paymasters in the *Abwehr*.



Figure 7. SS-Oberscharführer Louis Feutren, ID photo for his *Soldatenbuch*, c. early 1945. ("*Bezen Perrot* archives" [previously unpublished]).

Recognising now that the war was lost and that no miracle weapons would turn the tide of the Allied march across Europe, Lainé and his inner circle resolved to preserve the movement—and themselves at its head. Members of the *Bezen* were instructed, according to Hamon, to get back to Brittany and lie low in regions in which they were not well known, there to await further instructions.<sup>198</sup> Mordrel, however, contends that most of those who had not joined the *Waffen-SS* and were not in Lainé's clique were abandoned to their own devices.<sup>199</sup> Many of these spent the war's final weeks wandering between southern Germany and northern Italy, searching for some way to escape the wrath of the French armies fording the Rhine and their vengeful intelligence service, the *2e Bureau*.

Weisgerber sheltered Lainé and his associates in Marburg first as the town fell to the Americans, and then as the Reich finally surrendered early in May 1945. Soon they were joined by Friedrich Hielscher, recently released from a concentration camp, where he had been sent for his alleged involvement in the anti-Hitler 'July Plot' of 1944. Still a passionate defender of Breton culture and a close friend to both Lainé and Feutren,<sup>200</sup> he determined to assist his old contacts in their latest predicament. With Weisgerber's help, he provided the Bretons with a safehouse and obtained false documents, reportedly certified by the mayor of Marburg himself, that testified to their Resistance service. With these, Lainé and his associates were placed in neighbouring farms, "where they never had anything to fear".<sup>201</sup>

Whether these false documents testified to Resistance service in France, or identified them as liberated German political prisoners, is unclear. It is also possible that the documents declared their bearers to be STO workers newly released from labour service. This was an artifice used by many of the *gour* who found themselves left to their own devices in the Tübingen area, and who finally managed to track down Olier Mordrel at Innsbruck in the war's final days.<sup>202</sup> It was especially popular to claim to be a native of one of the German-occupied Breton ports, as these were the last areas of occupied Europe to fall to the Allies and French *gendarmes* could not easily discount such claims.<sup>203</sup> St.-Nazaire, the last such German bastion, was not surrendered until 11 May 1945—three days after the fighting ended at Berlin.<sup>204</sup> As for Tübingen, it would be, as luck would have it, in the French Zone of Occupation, meaning many *Bezen* veterans would find those early postwar months especially anxious. Many were of course captured in Germany or France. Léon Jasson 'Gouez' and André Geffroy 'Ferrand' were executed by French firing squad in July 1946 (Fig. 8). Many of those spared execution for "attacks upon

the integrity of the French state" would instead serve lengthy prison terms, such as the unapologetic Marcel Bibé 'Targaz', and a *gour* named Gervenou 'Docteur', whose death sentence was commuted to life imprisonment. Many younger soldiers of the nationalist force—especially those who had enlisted late and deserted early—were acquitted, or were dealt with leniently owing to their youth. The older militants, many of whom had been members of the *Kadervenn* or even *Gwenn-ha-Du*, were almost entirely successful in avoiding French justice and escaping in the main to Ireland, where de Valera's government granted them discreet asylum. Some others, however, escaped to Spain, Argentina or Brazil, or managed to lie low in Germany or even France. Unlike many in the PNB, very few returned voluntarily to Brittany to face trial in the 1950s, and most remained in their countries of asylum. Even amnesties from the late 1950s to the 1960s failed to entice them back permanently.

The *Bezen Perrot* saw active service in Brittany only between early to mid-1944. It was, says Mordrel, "six months that weighed more heavily upon the destiny of the movement, and upon us all, than all of our [previous] twenty-five years of political engagement."<sup>205</sup> Despite mustering fewer than seventy effectives at its height, the unit's acceptance of an auxiliary anti-partisan role for the forces of foreign occupation condemned Breton nationalism to twenty years of political taboo. Conflating all autonomists with this force in German *Feldgrau*, Republican authorities were able to stigmatise even mild regionalism with the 'collabo' taint. Breton nationalists' difficulty, in Maynard's apposite phrase, became Paris's opportunity.<sup>206</sup> When in 1966 young Bretons of the *Front de Libération de la Bretagne* (Liberation Front of Brittany: FLB) again embraced symbolic violence in their efforts to win autonomy, their avowed models were the national liberation movement in Algeria, the nationalists of Québec, and the Marxist-inspired program of the IRA. Any continuity with the *Bezen Perrot* or even the wartime PNB,

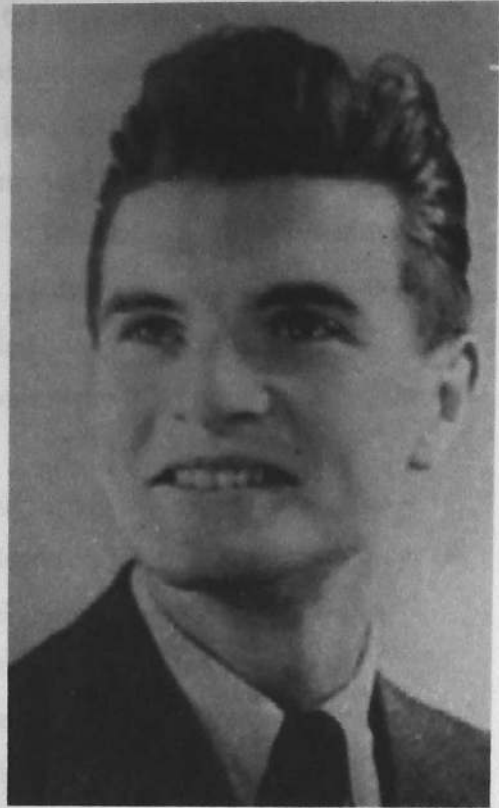


Figure 8. Léon Jasson 'Gouez', executed by French firing squad July 1946. ("Bezen Perrot archives").

however much alleged by the French press, was vigorously rejected.<sup>207</sup>

As for its exiled leaders, few retained an interest in the movement, let alone involvement in militancy. Alan Heusaff channelled his energies into constitutional activism on a pan-Celtic scale, becoming General Secretary of the Celtic League in 1961. Others led relatively uneventful lives in Irish business or education. Ange Péresse in Germany was the only *Bezen* veteran alleged by the French state to have had any involvement in FLB attacks.<sup>208</sup> The Irish-based spokesperson and 'letterbox' of the movement, who formed a *Comité nationale de la Bretagne libre* (National Committee of Free Brittany: CBL) at Bray in County Wicklow from 1967 on was in fact Yann Goulet—the former leader of the *Bagadoù Stourm* who had opposed the formation of the *Bezen Perrot*.

Also in Ireland, Lainé, now 'Neven Henaff', retreated further into Celtic mysticism—developing a Celtic 'Giam/Sam' spirituality leavened with Japanese yin/yang theory courtesy of an association with George Ohsawa.<sup>209</sup> He remained unapologetic about the *Bezen* and its conduct. It has even been suggested that he claimed to have deliberately led it on an "unforgettable"<sup>210</sup> course so as to more strikingly assert Breton rights to independent action. While some of the unit may have been motivated by such desperation, and by an ardent hatred of 'Jacobin' France, Lainé's own motivations in 1943 and 1944 appear to have been more firmly grounded in a very rational, if ultimately erroneous, assessment. This was simply that Germany would win the war and Breton nationalists would do well to curry favour with them. In that respect, it is worthy of note that, in private—his unrepentant attitude and belief that time would eventually vindicate him notwithstanding<sup>211</sup>—Lainé is said to have admitted to "serious political miscalculations" during the war.<sup>212</sup> Heusaff, too, is reported as commenting he and his comrades "backed the wrong horse".<sup>213</sup> Lainé was also, it is claimed, known to deny the Holocaust. "After a while, one avoided the subject with him," remarks the historian Peter Berresford Ellis.<sup>214</sup> It is perhaps for these reasons that the wartime actions of the *Bezen Perrot* continue to weigh heavily upon Breton nationalism. For that movement, as the Breton historian Christian Bougeard remarks, they remain "*le passé qui ne passe pas*"<sup>215</sup>—the past that does not pass.

## Endnotes

<sup>1</sup> See Adrian Weale, *Renegades: Hitler's Englishmen*, (London: Warner Books, 1994), *passim*.

<sup>2</sup> "La plus petite armée du monde en guerre." Ronan Caerléon, *Le Rêve fou des soldats de Breiz Atao*, (Quimper: Nature et Bretagne, 1974), p. 100.

<sup>3</sup> Louis Feutren, *Bezen Perrot* veteran, letter to author, 3rd Jan. 2006.

<sup>4</sup> Estimations of the size of the *Bezen Perrot* vary. Louis Feutren, in an untitled and undated tract purportedly written in the late 1950s for *The Observer*, claimed the unit was "purposedly [*sic*] limited to 100 members" [document courtesy James McLeod]. The most reliable figure, however, is Kristian Hamon's: 67 militants as of January 1944, with perhaps slight fluctuations owing to desertion and later recruitment [*Le Bezen Perrot 1944: Des nationalistes bretons sous l'uniforme allemande*, (Fouesnant: Yoran Embanner, 2004), p.8]. Mordrel counts a maximum of 72, including the Lainé brothers [Olier Mordrel, *Breiz Atao, ou Histoire et Actualité du Nationalisme breton*, (Paris: Éditions Alain Moreau, 1973), p. 386.]

<sup>5</sup> Quoted in Caerléon, *Rêve fou*, p. 171.

<sup>6</sup> A Breton term for 'man', used by members of the *Bezen* to describe themselves. See Hamon, *Bezen Perrot 1944*, p. 6.

<sup>7</sup> "La première formation bretonne armée, depuis la disparition de l'armée chouanne..." Fañch Debauvais' appeal to the *Bezen Perrot*, 1944, quoted in Caerléon, *Rêve fou*, p. 97. The *Chouans* were counter-revolutionary irregulars who opposed Republican rule in Upper Brittany and surrounding regions from 1792 to 1800.

<sup>8</sup> "Breton armed detachment of the SS 'Bezen Perrot'".

<sup>9</sup> The typed manuscript entitled *Biographie-Memoires* was provided courtesy of the son of a Breton exile who prefers to remain anonymous. It details Lainé's involvement in Breton nationalism from his earliest recollections to around 1931. See later citations for further details.

<sup>10</sup> 'Field grey', the standard colour of the German military uniform.

<sup>11</sup> The identification by name of all *Bezen* veterans remains incomplete in the literature, owing in part to the continued sensitivity of the topic in Brittany. This article connects names to *noms de guerre* in as complete a fashion possible through 'triangulation' of published and unpublished sources, including interviews.

<sup>12</sup> Quoted in Hamon, *Bezen Perrot 1944*, p. 169.

<sup>13</sup> "Nous sommes des militaires, et des militaires bretons... Nous avons donc toujours repoussé l'idée de nous engager dans les formations françaises". Quoted in Yann Fouéré, *La Bretagne Écartelée: essai pour servir à l'histoire de dix ans 1938-1948*, 2nd ed., (Paris: Nouvelles Éditions Latines, 1962), p. 114.

<sup>14</sup> A Breton company of the British-equipped Loyal Emigrant Regiment supported the *Chouans* from 1795 to 1799. René Chartrand, *Émigré & Foreign Troops in British Service (I) 1793-1802 (Men-At-Arms series #328)* (Botley, Oxford: Osprey, 1999), p. 45. Gilles Foix 'Eskob' of the *Bezen* reasoned that if

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Georges Cadoudal's men donned British uniform in 1795, he was justified in donning German uniform in 1944. See his account in Caerléon, *Rêve fou*, p. 139.

<sup>15</sup> Neven Henaff (Célestin Lainé), *Biographie—Memoires* (unpublished manuscript, n.d., 65pp.), p. 32.

<sup>16</sup> Quoted in Jack E. Reece, *The Bretons Against France: Ethnic Minority Nationalism in Twentieth-Century Brittany* (Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press, 1977), p. 83.

<sup>17</sup> "Biography of Louis Napoleon Le Roux (1890-1944)", *Carn: A Link Between Celtic Nations*, (9) May 1975, p. 21.

<sup>18</sup> "Dans cette guerre et pour la première fois depuis plusieurs siècles des Bretons Nationalistes se sont engagés en troupe militaire pour combattre la France dans les rangs de ses ennemis". Quoted in Fouéré, *Écartelée*, p. 114.

<sup>19</sup> Henaff (Lainé), *Biographie*, p. 60.

<sup>20</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 54, 60.

<sup>21</sup> From the historic Breton ducal motto *Kentoc'h Mervel Eget Bezañ Saotret*, or 'Sooner Death Than To Be Sullied'.

<sup>22</sup> See Kristian Hamon, *Les Nationalistes bretons sous l'Occupation*, (Ar Releg-Kerhuon: An Here, 2001), p. 153; Mordrel, *Breiz Atao*, p. 163, among many examples.

<sup>23</sup> Henaff (Lainé), *Biographie*, p. 64.

<sup>24</sup> Lainé and Berthou had formed the *Fédération des Étudiants bretons* (Federation of Breton Students) while studying at Rennes in the late 1920s. *Ibid.*, p. 44.

<sup>25</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 64.

<sup>26</sup> "J'ignore ce que devint Kentoc'h Mervel par la suite, sauf que jamais elle ne se dégagea des langes des belles paroles." *Ibid.*, p. 64. *Gwenn-ha-Du* later banished Berthou from Brittany on pain of death for indiscreet chatter, informing police, and otherwise jeopardising clandestine militants. See Alain Déniel, *Le Mouvement breton de 1919 à 1945*, (Paris: François Maspero, 1976), p. 151.

<sup>27</sup> Quoted in Peter Berresford Ellis, *Re: Neven Henaff: Notes for Dan Leach*, unpublished Word document, e-mail correspondence with author, 22 September 2003, p. 3. Ellis worked with Lainé (aka Neven Henaff) on the committee of *The New Celt* in London in the late 1960s.

<sup>28</sup> Mordrel, *Breiz Atao*, p. 163.

<sup>29</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>30</sup> Quoted in Ronan Caerléon, *Complots pour une république bretonne: les dossiers secrets de l'autonomisme breton*, (Paris: Éditions de la Table Ronde, 1967), pp. 83-4.

<sup>31</sup> Déniel, *Le Mouvement breton*, p. 150.



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- <sup>32</sup> Per Denez, interview with author, St.-Benoît-des-Ondes, Brittany, 2 Jun. 2005.
- <sup>33</sup> *La Liberté* quoted in Déniel, *Le Mouvement breton*, p. 153.
- <sup>34</sup> Hamon, *Nationalistes bretons*, p. 25.
- <sup>35</sup> Mordrel himself declared his admiration for fascism in his journal *Stur* (Tiller), albeit adapted to Celtic sensitivities. It represented, he wrote in 1935, "youth, force and renewal". See Jean Bothorel, *Un terroriste breton*, (Paris: Calmann-Lévy, 2001), p. 46.
- <sup>36</sup> Quoted in Reece, *Bretons Against France*, p. 124. Debauvais did seek to deny any PNB responsibility for the actual attack, however.
- <sup>37</sup> *Breiz Atao* quoted in Hamon, *Nationalistes bretons*, p. 26.
- <sup>38</sup> Mordrel, *Breiz Atao*, p. 166.
- <sup>39</sup> Hamon, *Bezen Perrot*, p. 28. Here Lainé established connections with both Flemish and Alsatian autonomists.
- <sup>40</sup> Vannes had been targeted also, but the militant tasked with setting fire to the prefecture there broke down in his car on his journey from Rennes. See Mordrel, *Breiz Atao*, p. 201.
- <sup>41</sup> Caerléon, *Complots*, p. 108.
- <sup>42</sup> Mordrel, *Breiz Atao*, p. 167.
- <sup>43</sup> "Jeunes gens [...] N'attachez pas une importance exagérée aux théories qui font travailler les langues au détriment des bras", quoted in *Ibid.*
- <sup>44</sup> Hamon, *Bezen Perrot*, p. 29.
- <sup>45</sup> Roger Faligot, *La Harpe et l'Hermine*, (Rennes: Terre de Brume, 1994), p. 82.
- <sup>46</sup> Quoted in Caerléon, *Rêve fou*, p. 55.
- <sup>47</sup> *Kad*, combat; *ervenn*, in agriculture, a raised bank between two furrows, used for cultivation. (In French this is given as *sillon de combat*, or "furrow of combat". Among other examples see George Broderick, "The Breton Movement and the German occupation 1940-44; Alan Heusaff and the Bezen Perrot: A Case Study", PDF document available at *Klask online*, [http://www.uhb.fr/langues/klask/documentations/bezen\\_perrot.pdf](http://www.uhb.fr/langues/klask/documentations/bezen_perrot.pdf), p. 6. Accessed 13 Jun. 2005).
- <sup>48</sup> Feutren, unpublished tract on *Bezen Perrot*. While never a member of the group, Per Denez contends *Kadervenn's* training regime was "funny" and "not really [...] for people who were going to fight", consisting only of marching and similar drill. (Interview, 2 Jun. 2005). Mordrel, on the other hand, claims the training included "guerilla tactics and bomb making" (*Breiz Atao*, p. 204).
- <sup>49</sup> Mordrel, *Breiz Atao*, p. 204.
- <sup>50</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 205.

<sup>51</sup> Broderick conflates *Kadervenn* and the *Service Spécial*, and adds "The formula *Service Spécial* is found for various developments of Hénaff's paramilitary group from the mid-1930s to November 1943." ("The Breton Movement", p. 6 fn.) In reality, the *Service Spécial* was always a separate (albeit related) organisation to *Kadervenn* and its successors.

<sup>52</sup> Mordrel, *Breiz Atao*, p. 205.

<sup>53</sup> 90a full report, Oct. 1944, KV2/303, "Guy Vissault de Coëtlogon", National Archives (NA), Kew, England.

<sup>54</sup> MI5, "Report on *Abwehr* up to March 1942", Jun. 1942, KV3/7 NA.

<sup>55</sup> 90a. Oct. 1944, KV2/303, NA.

<sup>56</sup> Hamon, *Bezen Perrot*, p. 29.

<sup>57</sup> Alan Heusaff, "Neven Henaff, Activist and Druid" (obituary), *Carn—A Link Between Celtic Countries*, (45), Spring 1984, pp. 10-11; p. 11.

<sup>58</sup> Caerléon, *Complots*, p. 187.

<sup>59</sup> Hamon, *Nationalistes bretons*, p. 31.

<sup>60</sup> Philippe Aziz, *Le Livre Noir de la Trahison: Histoires de la Gestapo en France*, (Paris: Editions Ramsay, 1984), p. 206.

<sup>61</sup> Mordrel, *Breiz Atao*, p. 219.

<sup>62</sup> Per Denez was present at these proceedings at St.-Brieuc in May 1938. Refused the right to continue in Breton, Lainé thereafter steadfastly remained silent. (Per Denez, letter to author, 21 May 2004).

<sup>63</sup> Aziz, *Livre noir*, p. 206.

<sup>64</sup> In contrast to some claims that Helloco procured it specifically for the Locquirec landing, Louis Feutren, a former *Service Spécial* member and close associate of Lainé's, claims Helloco had previously used the vessel to travel to Ireland. (Interview with author, Ireland, 8 Jun. 2005).

<sup>65</sup> Aziz, *Livre noir*, p. 206.

<sup>66</sup> Yann Fouéré, *La Maison du Connemara: Histoire d'un Breton*, (Spézet: Coop Breizh, 1995), p. 53.

<sup>67</sup> Faligot, *La Harpe*, p. 86.

<sup>68</sup> Aziz, *Livre noir*, p. 204.

<sup>69</sup> For example: Mordrel claims Geffroy was told to await a shipment of arms from Ireland [*Breiz Atao*, p. 230]; Philippe Burrin claims the arms were delivered "through the intermediary of the IRA" [*Living with Defeat: France under the German Occupation, 1940-1944*. Translated by Janet Lloyd. (London: Arnold, 1995), pp. 50-1.]

- <sup>70</sup> Aziz, *Livre noir*, p. 205.
- <sup>71</sup> Caerléon, *Complots*, p. 188.
- <sup>72</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 194.
- <sup>73</sup> Hamon, *Bezen Perrot*, p. 31.
- <sup>74</sup> Feutren, unpublished tract on *Bezen Perrot*.
- <sup>75</sup> Mordrel, *Breiz Atao*, p. 237.
- <sup>76</sup> Feutren, interview, 8 Jun. 2005.
- <sup>77</sup> Mordrel, *Breiz Atao*, p. 214.
- <sup>78</sup> Georges Cadiou, *L'Hermine et la Croix Gammée: Le Mouvement Breton et la Collaboration*, (Paris: Mango Document, 2001), p. 46.
- <sup>79</sup> This latter was the uncle of Count Claus von Stauffenberg, who would famously fail to assassinate Adolf Hitler with a bomb concealed in his briefcase at the 'Wolf's Lair' bunker in East Prussia in July 1944.
- <sup>80</sup> Feutren, interview, 8 Jun. 2005.
- <sup>81</sup> Hamon, *Nationalistes bretons*, p. 36.
- <sup>82</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 37. Mordrel claims he, Debauvais and their families were still obliged to enter Germany under aliases, owing to the hostility towards *Die Bretonen* in the Reich's foreign service. See Mordrel, *Breiz Atao*, p. 246.
- <sup>83</sup> Mordrel, *Breiz Atao*, p. 259.
- <sup>84</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 244.
- <sup>85</sup> See William R. Beer, *The Unexpected Rebellion: Ethnic Activism in Contemporary France*, (New York: New York University Press, 1980), p. 11.
- <sup>86</sup> Hamon, *Bezen Perrot 1944*, p. 31.
- <sup>87</sup> Recounted in Ellis, *Re: Neven Henaff*, p. 4.
- <sup>88</sup> Fouéré, *Écartelée*, p. 54. Jacqueline Sainclivier claims the CNB published two tracts at Pontivy that ignored these German restrictions and spoke openly of a "Breton state". See *La Bretagne dans la guerre 1939-1945*, (Rennes: Éditions Ouest-France, 1994), p. 81.
- <sup>89</sup> Fouéré, *Écartelée*, p. 45.
- <sup>90</sup> Hamon, *Nationalistes bretons*, p. 51.

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- <sup>91</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 154.
- <sup>92</sup> Hamon, *Bezen Perrot 1944*, p. 36.
- <sup>93</sup> Hamon, *Nationalistes bretons*, p. 154.
- <sup>94</sup> Henaff (Lainé), *Biographie*, p. 47.
- <sup>95</sup> Writing in *Stur*, July 1937. Quoted in S. & C. Gras, *La Révolte des régions d'Europe occidentale de 1916 à nos jours*, (Paris: Presses Universitaires de France, 1982), p. 159.
- <sup>96</sup> Mordrel, *Breiz Atao*, p. 278.
- <sup>97</sup> The PNB issued a pamphlet in 1942 entitled *L'exemple de l'Irlande* (The Example of Ireland). See Eamon Ó Ciosáin, "La Bretagne et l'Irlande pendant l'entre-deux guerres (première partie)", *Dalc'homp Soñj!* 22 (Spring 1988), pp. 29-35; p. 29.
- <sup>98</sup> Quoted in Hervé Le Boterf, *La Bretagne dans la Guerre*, Vol. II 1941, (Paris: Éditions France-Empire, 1970), pp. 82-3.
- <sup>99</sup> Déniel, *Mouvement breton*, p. 427.
- <sup>100</sup> Hervé Le Boterf, *La Bretagne sous le gouvernement de Vichy*, (Paris: Éditions France-Empire, 1982), p. 113.
- <sup>101</sup> Lainé was proud of duping the Germans in this manner, according to Ellis [*Re: Neven Henaff*, p. 5]. Richard Doody, however, claims the Germans deliberately "looked the other way" at the "token" weapons handover. See "Brittany from the Great War to the Liberation", *The World At War*, <http://worldatwar.net/article/brittany/>; accessed 30 June 2003.
- <sup>102</sup> *Ibid.*
- <sup>103</sup> "Henaff said his idea was to start a backlash in Brittany by the French which would rouse Bretons from the submissive position they had taken and start to fight back." Ellis, *Re: Neven Henaff*, p. 3.
- <sup>104</sup> Hamon, *Bezen Perrot 1944*, p. 86.
- <sup>105</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 23.
- <sup>106</sup> Mordrel, *Breiz Atao*, p. 370.
- <sup>107</sup> Bothorel, *Un terroriste breton*, p. 48.
- <sup>108</sup> Mordrel, *Breiz Atao*, p. 365.
- <sup>109</sup> Reece, *Bretons Against France*, p. 156. There was considerable tension between the Church hierarchy, who supported Vichy, and local parish priests who were more supportive of regionalism and nationalism.
- <sup>110</sup> Mordrel, *Breiz Atao*, pp. 365-6.

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- <sup>111</sup> Hamon, *Nationalistes bretons*, p. 184.
- <sup>112</sup> Mordrel, *Breiz Atao*, p. 367.
- <sup>113</sup> Delaporte and Fouéré considered sending a Breton emissary to North Africa in the wake of the Allied landings of 'Operation Torch' in November 1942. See Caerléon, *Complots*, p. 288 plate.
- <sup>114</sup> Baudot, *Libération*, p. 52.
- <sup>115</sup> Mordrel, *Breiz Atao*, p. 377.
- <sup>116</sup> Gilles Foix 'Eskob' of the *Bezen* quoted in Caerléon, *Rêve fou*, p. 147.
- <sup>117</sup> See *Ibid.*, p. 202.
- <sup>118</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 172.
- <sup>119</sup> Hamon, *Nationalistes bretons*, p. 27.
- <sup>120</sup> Aziz, *Livre noir*, p. 200.
- <sup>121</sup> Feutren, interview.
- <sup>122</sup> Bríd Heussaff (widow of Alan), interview with author, Spiddal, Co. Galway, Ireland, 19 June 2005.
- <sup>123</sup> Hamon, *Bezen Perrot*, p. 69.
- <sup>124</sup> Feutren, interview.
- <sup>125</sup> Jean le Dû cited in Broderick, "The Breton Movement", p. 16.
- <sup>126</sup> Son of a Breton exile (name withheld), interview with author, Ireland, 18 June 2005.
- <sup>127</sup> Feutren (describing Alan Heussaff), interview.
- <sup>128</sup> Peter Berresford Ellis, e-mail communication with author, 13th Sept. 2003.
- <sup>129</sup> Broderick, "The Breton Movement", p. 6.
- <sup>130</sup> Feutren, interview, 8 June 2005. The army of the duchy of Brittany was defeated by the French at St.-Aubin-du-Cormier in 1488. This was the highwater mark of Breton independence, beginning a process of incorporation into the kingdom of France that culminated in Franco-Breton union in 1532.
- <sup>131</sup> *Ibid.*
- <sup>132</sup> Mordrel, *Breiz Atao*, p. 378.
- <sup>133</sup> Feutren, interview, 8 June 2005. 'Cadoudal' of the *Bezen* likewise stated to his interrogators that the documents he signed specified he was enlisting only for operations in Brittany for the duration of the war.

(Hamon, *Bezen Perrot*, p. 81.)

<sup>134</sup> Cadiou, *L'Hermine*, p. 209.

<sup>135</sup> Maryon McDonald, *"We are not French!": Language, Culture and Identity in Brittany*, (London: Routledge, 1989), p. 134.

<sup>136</sup> Caerléon, *Complots*, p. 188.

<sup>137</sup> Hamon, *Bezen Perrot 1944*, p. 38.

<sup>138</sup> Hamon, *Nationalistes bretons*, p. 196.

<sup>139</sup> Hamon, *Bezen Perrot 1944*, p. 51.

<sup>140</sup> Yann Brekilien, *Histoire de la Bretagne*, (Paris: Éditions France-Empire, 1985), p. 338.

<sup>141</sup> Hamon, *Bezen Perrot*, p. 215.

<sup>142</sup> Mordrel, *Breiz Atao*, p. 367.

<sup>143</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 370.

<sup>144</sup> 'Eskob' in Caerléon, *Rêve fou*, p. 137.

<sup>145</sup> Fouéré, *Écartelée*, p. 107.

<sup>146</sup> Mordrel, *Breiz Atao*, p. 385.

<sup>147</sup> "The interrogations of all the ex-members of the *Bezen Perrot* dwell too long (*s'appesantissent*) on detailed descriptions of their SS uniforms." Luc Capdevila, *Les Bretons au lendemain de l'Occupation: Imaginaire et comportement d'une sortie de guerre 1944-1945*, (Rennes: Presses Universitaires de Rennes, 1999), p. 363.

<sup>148</sup> According to 'Eskob', one *gour* known as 'Valentin' preferred to desert the unit "rather than wear *Feldgrau*". (Caerléon, *Rêve fou*, p. 139).

<sup>149</sup> Mordrel, *Breiz Atao*, p. 326.

<sup>150</sup> Hamon, *Bezen Perrot*, p. 37.

<sup>151</sup> Caerléon, *Rêve fou*, p. 77.

<sup>152</sup> Louis Feutren, letter to author, 7th Feb. 2006.

<sup>153</sup> Hamon, *Bezen Perrot*, p. 55.

<sup>154</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 111.

<sup>155</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 101.

- <sup>156</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 102.
- <sup>157</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 93.
- <sup>158</sup> 'Eskob' in Caerléon, *Rêve fou*, p. 145. Exiled Spanish Republicans played a major role in the French Resistance.
- <sup>159</sup> Hamon, *Bezen Perrot*, pp. 115-6.
- <sup>160</sup> Alan Heusaff's unpublished memoirs in *Ibid.*, p. 128. The memoirs appear in Hamon's work without authorisation, as these were to be published first in Breton according to the late author's wishes (Per Denez, interview, 2 June 2005; Louis Feutren, interview, 8 June 2005).
- <sup>161</sup> Feutren, interview, 8 June 2005.
- <sup>162</sup> Hamon, *Bezen Perrot*, p. 131.
- <sup>163</sup> 'Eskob' in Caerléon, *Rêve fou*, p. 141.
- <sup>164</sup> Hamon, *Bezen Perrot*, p. 134.
- <sup>165</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 131.
- <sup>166</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 137.
- <sup>167</sup> Not to be confused with André Geffroy 'Ferrand' of the *Bezen Perrot*.
- <sup>168</sup> PF 600, 237/BIH 114a To Dublin, 24 Nov. 1944, KV2/303, NA.
- <sup>169</sup> Aziz, *Livre noir*, p. 230.
- <sup>170</sup> Fouéré, *Écartelée*, p. 105. These included placing branches of yew on the corpse, 'Celtic' goosestepping and the benediction of 'Celtic circles' rather than the sign of the cross.
- <sup>171</sup> Mordrel, *Breiz Atao*, p. 373.
- <sup>172</sup> *Ibid.*
- <sup>173</sup> 'Eskob' in Caerléon, *Rêve fou*, p. 172.
- <sup>174</sup> Mordrel, *Breiz Atao*, p. 384.
- <sup>175</sup> *Ibid.*
- <sup>176</sup> The *Bezen* leader had even managed at the height of the political chaos that was 1943 to have a study of the Gaulish calendar of Coligny published in the respected German *Zeitschrift für keltische Philologie*, under the name 'Lainé-Kerjean'. The article is appraised in Garrett Olmsted, *The Gaulish Calendar* (Bonn: Dr. Rudolf Habelt GmbH, 1992), pp. 44-7. While Lainé's construction of intercalary months is considered "comparatively accurate", certain other reasoning is "flawed".

<sup>177</sup> Feutren, interview, 8 June 2005.

<sup>178</sup> 'Eskob' in Caerléon, *Rêve fou*, p. 151.

<sup>179</sup> Hamon, *Bezen Perrot*, p. 154.

<sup>180</sup> Alternatively Guiomarc'h, Guiomard or Guyomard.

<sup>181</sup> Hamon, *Bezen Perrot*, p. 155.

<sup>182</sup> 'Eskob' in Caerléon, *Rêve fou*, p. 151.

<sup>183</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 160.

<sup>184</sup> Feutren, interview.

<sup>185</sup> Hamon, *Bezen Perrot*, p. 64.

<sup>186</sup> 'Eskob' in Caerléon, *Rêve fou*, pp. 227, 157.

<sup>187</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 181.

<sup>188</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 228.

<sup>189</sup> Hamon, *Bezen Perrot*, p. 157.

<sup>190</sup> 'Eskob' in Caerléon, *Rêve fou*, p. 177.

<sup>191</sup> Capdevila, *Les Bretons*, p. 108; 'Eskob' in Caerléon, *Rêve fou*, p. 173 fn.

<sup>192</sup> Perry Biddiscombe, "The Last White Terror: The Maquis Blanc and Its Impact in Liberated France, 1944-1945," *Journal of Modern History*, 73 (4) December 2001: pp. 811-861; pp. 835, 815-7.

<sup>193</sup> 'Eskob' in Caerléon, *Rêve fou*, p. 177.

<sup>194</sup> Feutren, interview, 8 June 2005.

<sup>195</sup> Hamon confuses this *gour* with his cousin, Job Hirgair 'Skav' (*Bezen Perrot*, p. 164). He also wrongly identifies them as brothers.

<sup>196</sup> Mordrel, *Breiz Atao*, pp. 399-400.

<sup>197</sup> Both Hielscher and von Tevenar also worked for this organisation, Feutren claims (Interview, 8 June 2005).

<sup>198</sup> Hamon, *Bezen Perrot*, p. 159.

<sup>199</sup> Mordrel, *Breiz Atao*, p. 400. Even so, 'Eskob' still evinces great respect for 'Le Grand Druide' Lainé. See Caerléon, *Rêve fou*, pp. 227-8.



- <sup>200</sup> Feutren, interview, 8 June 2005.
- <sup>201</sup> Ange Péresse quoted in Mordrel, *Breiz Atao*, p. 400.
- <sup>202</sup> *Ibid.*
- <sup>203</sup> Hamon, *Bezen Perrot*, p. 161.
- <sup>204</sup> Doody, "Brittany from the Great War".
- <sup>205</sup> Mordrel, *Breiz Atao*, p. 375.
- <sup>206</sup> David Maynard, *Ideology, Collective Action and Cultural Identity in the Breton Movement, Western France*, (Ann Arbor, MI: UMI, 1992), p. 51.
- <sup>207</sup> In the view of Jean Bothorel, an FLB militant in the 1960s, the "best gift" the old exiles could give Brittany would be to "retire from combat". See *Un terroriste breton*, p. 101.
- <sup>208</sup> Lionel Henry and Annick Legadec, *FLB-ARB: L'histoire 1966-2005*, (Fouesnant: Yoran Embanner, 2006), pp. 238-9.
- <sup>209</sup> Peter Berresford Ellis, e-mail to author, 15 Sept. 2003.
- <sup>210</sup> Jakez Bernard quoted in Erwan Chartier and Alain Cabon, *Le dossier FLB: Plongée chez les clandestins bretons*, (Spézet: Coop Breizh, 2006), p. 111.
- <sup>211</sup> "In time, one will see that I was right," Lainé assured Ronan Caerléon in Dublin in 1970 (*Rêve fou*, p. 52).
- <sup>212</sup> Ellis, *Re: Neven Henaff*, p. 2.
- <sup>213</sup> Quoted in Broderick, 'The Breton Movement', p. 17.
- <sup>214</sup> Ellis, *Re: Neven Henaff*, p. 2.
- <sup>215</sup> Quoted in Hamon, *Bezen Perrot*, p. 170.