

# Central Brittany

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*Journal*

October  
2005

1€

ISSUE 16



**The  
Social  
Contract  
- What's Gone Wrong?**

2 Seasonal Recipes: Rosti

# Seasonal Recipes

Ways to use produce from the garden

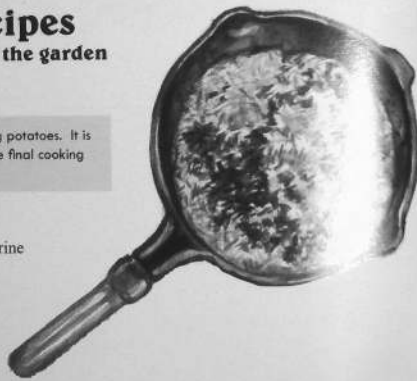
## Rösti

Rösti is a traditional Swiss way of cooking potatoes. It is very simple, yet requires a little skill in the final cooking process.

- Ingredients:**
- 2 lb (1 kg) potatoes
  - 3 tablespoons melted butter or margarine
  - 1 teaspoon thyme
  - 3 tablespoons parsley
  - 1 teaspoon salt
  - freshly ground black pepper
  - vegetable oil for frying

**Method:**

1. Wash and peel the potatoes, then coarsely grate them into a large bowl or pan.
2. Melt the butter or margarine in a small saucepan and pour it over the grated potato. This should be done as speedily as possible, as the raw grated potato turns brown quickly.
3. Chop up the thyme and parsley, and add to the potato mixture, together with 1 teaspoon of salt and plenty of pepper. Mix together well.
4. In a large frying pan, heat about 2 tablespoons of oil. Add the grated potato mixture, smoothing it out so that it covers the pan evenly. Turn down to medium heat, and cook for 7-10 minutes.
5. When the potato looks brown around the edges, try to loosen it from the pan, carefully running a spatula around the edges of the pan, and underneath (if possible). Turn off the heat and, placing a baking tray over the pan, quickly tip the pan upside-down. The rosti should come out of the pan onto the tray – any potato that may be left in the pan can be scraped out and put back on the rosti.
6. Put the pan back on the heat and add another tablespoon of oil. When it has heated, gently slide the rosti off the baking tray and into the pan, and cook the other side for a further 10 minutes, over a medium heat.



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# Meet the Locals

Newcomers to the region may not be familiar with some of the local inhabitants:



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*Mettioptera Saussuriana (dectiscelle des alpages)* is a common grasshopper on the alpine grasslands - above the tree line and 2000 metres above sea level. It is a mystery why there should be a colony of them living around the Forêt de Québécois. There is a similar isolated colony in an area of Normandy.



© Michel Le Billan

The Quimper snail (*Elona Quimperiana*) is sometimes known as the Breton snail as its distribution in France more or less coincides with the Breton-speaking areas. It can be found in woods and in the banks that surround fields.



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*Pavonia pavonia*, caterpillar of the 'Paan de Nuit'. The moth is quite common in Brittany, but you will rarely see the caterpillar. It lives on heather and drops to the ground when it senses the approach of anything as large as a human being.



© Michel Le Billan

*Drosera intermedia*. This carnivorous plant can be seen growing on peat land. It lives in part by catching and digesting small insects.



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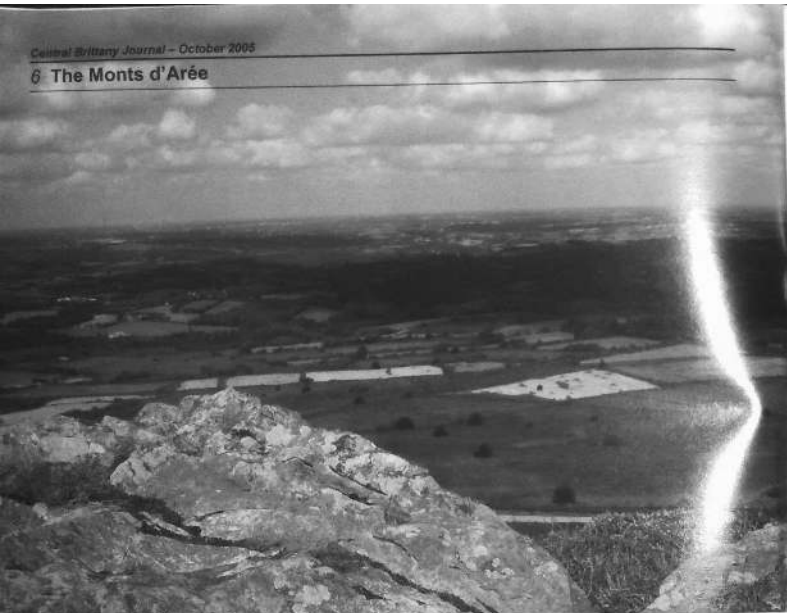
*Coleoptere minotaure*. This dung beetle lives only on the droppings of rabbits and sheep; it is therefore only found in those places where these animals graze.

## Bretagne Vivante

Bretagne Vivante is an association dedicated to the protection of nature in the five original departments of Brittany. It was founded in 1958 and now looks after 75 nature reserves scattered throughout the region. The association has played a pioneering role in nature conservation in France, its members realising before most that even though this is a vast country, much of it far from centres of industry, its wildlife is still threatened by many aspects of modern living and land management. The association produces two magazines - Bretagne Vivante and Penn ar Bed - and currently has three thousand members. New members are always welcome.

For more info: Bretagne Vivante - SEPNB 186, rue Anatole France, BP 32, 292276 Brest Cedex  
Tel: 02 98 49 07 18 E-mail: [bretagne-vivante@bretagne-vivante.asso.fr](mailto:bretagne-vivante@bretagne-vivante.asso.fr)

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October is one of the best times of year to explore the peat bogs of the Monts d'Arée. Some of the most spectacular scenery is to be found at the western edge of the range, north west of Huelgoat. *Plants of Monts d'Arée page 36 - Jacques Cambry in the 'montagnes d'Arès' page 12*



*l-spy* in October: Fly Agaric. This highly-poisonous, brightly-coloured toadstool can be seen in birch and pine woods from August to November.

**New Saddlery in Morbihan**

Chad O'Brien was a National Hunt Jockey for 15 years and then worked as assistant trainer to a racing stables in Newmarket. He is a qualified saddler and, with his wife Carla, now runs the Stangala Stables and Saddlery in Le Saint, Morbihan: 02 97 23 68 54



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*Editorial*

Welcome to the October issue of the Journal. For me, Autumn has always been the season in which Brittany is at its most beautiful: I have never lived anywhere where there is such a spectacular display of autumn colours: the dazzling reds and browns that one sees wherever one goes gives a sense of the enormous wealth of trees that we still have here - and makes one wonder what one can do to help preserve this priceless heritage.

Social issues feature large in the journal this month; my contribution to the debate is the article on the Social Contract. It is a question that first grasped my attention when I was a teacher in the UK: I rather naively entered the profession imagining that if I was "nice" then the children would like me, and could not understand why I, and all the other teachers, were the subject of such intense animosity. Eventually I realised that it did not matter how nice or kind I was, the children basically did not want to be at school; they wanted to be at home with their parents. Since starting the Journal, I have seen the other side of the equation, and the distress that having to pay such huge social charges causes to small businesses. Somehow, it seems easier for big business to prosper in the current environment than the smaller, independent, locally-based businesses that the Journal seeks to support.

The page size of the Journal has increased slightly this month. The previous A5 format dated back to when we printed the journal at home on our office printers, the bigger format makes better use of a commercial press. At the time of writing this editorial, I have not had a chance to see the finished journal in its new shape, and I am simply hoping that it proves to be as popular as the original. Publishing can be quite a nerve-racking business at times!

GL

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**NEWS**

**Animal Sanctuary In Central Brittany?**

The Federation Nationale Contre le Martyre des Animaux is investigating the possibility of opening an animal sanctuary in Central Brittany. The society has links with the RSPCA in the UK and shares its goals - to prevent cruelty to animals and to ensure that laws relating to animal welfare are obeyed by everyone who has animals in their care. It is, however, a much smaller organisation than its UK counterpart. The Federation is currently campaigning to improve the conditions of chickens kept in battery units. For further information, contact the president of the society:

Jacqueline Guillaume, 7 rue Saint Henri, 31000 Toulouse  
Tel: 05 61 81 15 81 / 02 97 34 86 21  
jacqueline.guillaume3@wanadoo.fr  
or Mme Boulbin (who runs a refuge for cats and dogs near Moncontour) <http://perso.wanadoo.fr/spaduponthievre>  
02 96 42 01 13 maryspa@wanadoo.fr

**The Poher Investigates**

Readers of the Poher (Carhaix's weekly newspaper) will know that it has recently been investigating the career of Louis Giroud, a gentleman who apparently assisted people from the UK to buy properties in Central Brittany but then disappeared leaving many clients unhappy with the service that they received. Alison Wall from the Poher is forming an action group for distressed clients. More info: Poher Hebdo 02 98 99 15 14 poherhebdo@wanadoo.fr

**New Stockists**

The Leclerc supermarket in Loudéac has started to stock the Journal. If you have a local shop or supermarket that you think ought to stock the Journal, please let us know.

**Shopping Etiquette**

Local shopkeepers have asked us to explain the etiquette that most people follow when entering a shop. Until recently all shopkeepers lived above their shops and going into a shop was akin to going into someone's home. It was therefore customary to greet the shopkeeper with a friendly 'bonjour' on entering and to say 'au revoir' on leaving. This custom has continued to the present time; it adds a little humanity to the hustle and bustle of modern life - engaging the shopkeeper in conversation does not create an obligation to buy anything.

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**Christmas Market**

Plans for this year's Christmas market in Klegereg on 27th November are progressing well. There are already 50 tables booked - including favourites from last year, such as Christmas puddings, cakes, jams, and chutneys - but there is still space for a few more stall holders. Contact Sarah 02 97 38 10 03 or Belinda 06 08 72 12 53 for more information.

**Speed Limit & the CBJ Forum**

A recent contributor to the forum on the CBJ website ([www.thecbj.com](http://www.thecbj.com)) provided a reminder about speed limits. The village sign - a white sign with a red border - not only lets you know the name of the village but also signifies that you must reduce your speed to a maximum of 50 kph until you pass through a similar sign at the other end of the village which has a red diagonal bar through the village name.

**Fish and Chips**

Mobile chip vans have never up until now been a feature of life in Brittany. This omission has been corrected by Anne McCurrach, who sells traditional fish and chips on the D769 close to Carhaix, in Maël Carhaix, and in Huelgoat. She sells cod & haddock, (the batter is made using an old recipe which includes beer), mushy peas, curry sauce, and chips (made from real potatoes). For details of times, see advert on facing page.

**The Language of Shakespeare**

"For beauty, wit, high birth,  
vigour of bone, desert in service,  
Love, friendship, charity, are  
subjects all,  
To envious and calumniating  
Time.  
One touch of nature makes the  
whole world kin."

*Troilus & Cressida Act III, Scene III*

**Letters**

Please send letters to: [info@thebj.com](mailto:info@thebj.com) or by post to CBJ, BP4, 22160 Callac

**Contradictions**

I've read the magazine for over a year now, as an early subscriber. I enjoy reading it, and so does my partner. I particularly like the fact that a lot of intellectual curiosity seems to fuel the articles. There is also something versatile that is charming. I gathered that nature and even nature protection was one of your concerns. To me this is not consistent with the seemingly (or overt) pro-deregulation stance that you advocate when you refer to the economy. There is a contradiction between economic development (all the more so when it's deregulated) and nature protection. But let me come back to the idea of curiosity. Maybe you're already familiar with the magazine Silence (available in Biocoop shops), which deals with environmental issues. It is a very good read, a magazine that rural individual home owners should have heard about I think. The last issue is about contradictions, precisely. Maybe one day the CBJ will have its own "décroissance" page!

Yours sincerely,  
Sylvain Penven, Rennes

**Delivery Times**

My latest Journal arrived on September 14 but it was postmarked 29 October at Callac. I wonder on which side of the waters the delay was introduced?

Regards  
Brian Halsall  
*Journals sent to the UK go at a special 'international brochure rate'. They are supposed to be delivered within 10 days - we have enquired, but, so far, no one has been able to say what happens to them during those ten days.*  
GL

**Pet Hotel**

I would like to say a very big thank you to all those who have visited The Pet Hotel kennels and cattery in Callac since we opened in December 2004. The venture has been very successful and I have enjoyed it very much. I have made so many very good friends, of the human, canine and feline variety! My son and I are shortly returning to England as I have been given a place at college to study a nursing degree. I shall be sad to leave Brittany as I truly do love it here, but I will be back regularly to visit as my family are here. The kennels and cattery are remaining open in the very capable hands of my sister Debbie! Thanks again to every body, it has been a real pleasure to care for your animals and if we can be of further assistance please contact Debbie on the same number 02 96 45 93 13. Bye for now,  
Nicky Burton.

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Cost per person 96.50€ (for the course plus two individual meetings with the trainer).

**ADSL Problems**

Some of your readers may be experiencing difficulty with ADSL (Asymmetric Digital Subscribers Line) - particularly those in mid Morbihan. May I put my views forward?  
ADSL is a broadband connection technology which utilises existing copper wired telephone networks. ADSL uses a wide range of frequencies over an existing telephone line to deliver much higher speeds than the standard 56k modem (between 10 and 140 times faster). It is also possible to use your phone while online.

Wanadoo subscribers may know that there are a number of problems emerging with this facility. These problems invariably are manifested by the blinking of the ADSL light on the modern French Telecom provide (regardless of make). Often it is a case (so I understand) of resynchronising the equipment that generates the carrier at the local France Telecom Service de Technic office. However, if, like me, you can only site the computer at the point nearest the telegraph pole (and not upstairs where I would like it) - using no splitter boxes other than the one to your phone; then the problem seem to become 'plus tard' and 'très difficile'. I believe, in this case, a bigger feeder cable is required. This problem becomes exacerbated as more users come on-line with ADSL; as the signal becomes progressively weaker.

There is now a direct help desk (if your French is good enough!) through the 1015 service and they do react to the complaints - however its very much a 'manyana/demain' service and you are left to fume until they fix it!

Jim Kennedy  
St Nicolas Des Eaux

**Jokes**

I send you herewith a few humorous items that I have found in crackers, they may interest some of your young readers.

Yours sincerely,  
Janine Castel

- Q. Why didn't the skeleton go to the New Year's Eve party?  
A. He had no body to go with.
- Q. Where should a dressmaker build her house?  
A. On the outskirts.
- Q. What did the beaver say to the tree?  
A. Nice gnawing you.

*letters continued overleaf*

**Erratum: Cheap Calls from the UK**

The correct contact details for Martin Stephenson, whose letter in the Sept CBJ explained an offer for a 0870 number that can be redirected to a French number. (Fee £5) are: [martin@solwise.co.uk](mailto:martin@solwise.co.uk)  
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### Montagnes d'Arès

The inhabitants of the 'montagnes d'Arès' sow hemp, which they use without exporting it. They are dressed in canvas or 'berlinge', a sort of stuff made with hemp thread and wool: they use it to make vests, clothes, breeches and stockings, and all wear the same dress, of the same brownish-yellow colour. The women use the same stuff: there is nothing remarkable in their dress save for a sort of tail, a span across, which falls as low as their skirts.

... Crêpes, gruel, rye bread, milk and butter, and bacon on high days and holidays, is the food of these mountain dwellers.

... The water is good and the air of these mountains very healthy; it is common to see men and women of a hundred years old. The people are of a medium height, and very hardy, strengthened by their frequent travelling, and the bitterness of their climate.

... As one nears the chapel [of Saint Michel, one of the highest points of the monts d'Arrée] the ground becomes denuded of trees and bushes...; its only covering is heather and rocks, split by the storms, or broken down by time. Everything takes on a wild appearance; it looks like a vast desert. The last villages, and the last fields, form separate islands, surrounded by stones and a type of peat made from black, swampy earth, resulting from spoil moorland, and built up over centuries. Everything is made of slate in this country; the houses are covered with it; the fields are surrounded by it; the bridges are made from it; and every courtyard is closed in by long, wide pieces of this stone, which gives the villages an extraordinary appearance.

Jacques Cambry *Voyage dans le Finistère.*

Letters continued

#### Registered Builders

Re: Guiseppe Di Bello's letter in CBJ of August 2005 (Issue 14). In order to register with the Chambre de Métiers you have to show/prove relevant qualifications and/or experience. These must be qualifications recognised in France and officially translated by a traducteur assermenté. Having been accepted he will then have to do a 6-day course in elementary business management. However, as in all things, qualifications do not necessarily guarantee quality of workmanship. The best way of ensuring this, is going to see what your proposed artisan has done in the past or getting a recommendation from friends or neighbours. Oh, and being prepared to pay the going rate. As the saying goes "if you pay peanuts you get monkeys". Do you realise that approximately 50% of net profits go in social charges? That's before the Hôtel des Impôts get a look in.

ALL building work in France MUST be covered by a 10 year insurance (Décennal) and Public Liability (Responsabilité Civil) for which your builder (artisan maçon) pays upwards of 3,000 euros a year. To get this insurance an artisan will have to prove he is a member of the Chambre de Métiers.

Another word of caution - don't be bamboozled by a Siret Number. This can be got by simply registering with the authorities as a business. This does not mean they are qualified or insured. If

your artisan is with the Chambre de Métiers he will have a certificate which he will be only too happy to show you.

The Chambre de Métiers in Côtes d'Armor has a website [www.artsans-22.com](http://www.artsans-22.com) which lists registered artisans. Other departments may have a similar listing. Another website is [www.artisan-anglais.com](http://www.artisan-anglais.com).

Charles Haigh

#### UK Credit/Debit Cards

Does anyone else have problems with UK credit/debit cards? We have been coming here for more years than we care to remember and, until last year, used the cash machines in the Bégard Branch of CMB, (where we have an account). Last year they changed their computer programmes so that only the machine inside the branch accepted UK cards. A later change denied access to all their machines: our cards were termed 'non valide'.

Protests drew assurances that it was a slight problem that would be resolved in weeks ... that was last year. Calls to Nationwide and Visa revealed that they had no contact with CMB and that these decisions were made locally. Be interested in any comments from other readers.

Mac

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# The Social Contract

*Pensions for the old, care for the sick, and education for the young. It seems such a good idea, so how could it have gone so wrong?*



*A mother and child: the original social contract?*

The system of government in Europe in the seventeen hundreds is not noted for having been particularly good: the continent was divided into separate countries, each of which was presided over by a monarch (a tyrant in modern parlance) who, together with the aristocracy, took a large proportion of what people earned, without, apparently, giving much in return.



*At one time each village was a world unto itself.*

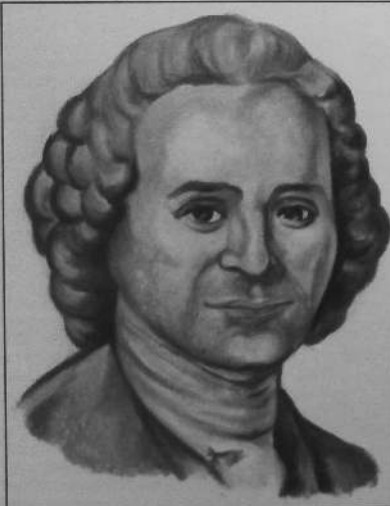
France was perhaps the country in which the injustice of this system was most apparent: its rich farmland and favourable climate makes it one of the wealthiest countries in Europe but little of this wealth stayed in the hands of the workers who produced it; while the aristocracy were building themselves chateaux of unparalleled splendour, ordinary people were living close to the breadline, weighed down by a level of taxation which was barely supportable in good years, and ruinous in years when the harvest was poor.

In this atmosphere, it is not surprising that the thinkers of the day should wonder how the situation could be improved, and this is the origin of the 'Social Contract'. Credited to Jean-Jacques Rousseau and taken up by other contributors to the 'Encyclopédie' (a publication widely read by the middle classes, and much talked about in every section of society, that put

forward, amongst other things, suggestions for reform of the state) the idea of the social contract is very simple: to use money raised through taxation to provide pensions for the old, care for the sick, and education for the young i.e. that there should be a social contract between the government and the people, in which the people could expect to be cared for and looked after by their government.

The circulation of these ideas is believed to have been a contributory factor to the outbreak of revolution in 1789. They raised people's aspirations as to what they could expect from government, and increased the sense of injustice felt by poor people when they were confronted by the excesses of the upper classes.

Even so, social justice was not at the top of the agenda during the early days of the Revolution: it was only when its initial, bourgeois leaders had been pushed aside to



Jean-Jacques Rousseau (1712-1778) was widely respected during his lifetime for his knowledge and his humane views on social issues. He was a friend of Denis Diderot and contributed articles to the Encyclopédie, on the subject of music. His political views forced him to leave France in 1762, the same year as the first copy of his book, 'The Social Contract' appeared. For a while he lived in England, but returned to France in 1768 under an assumed name. Even in his lifetime, it was suggested that, if put into practice, his ideas would lead to a form of totalitarianism, because he appears to have believed that the state should have the right to force people to comply with its social policies, even when they did not agree with them.

be replaced by 'the Jacobins' that it became a matter of public policy. Robespierre was the leader of this faction and it is he who was the first to introduce measures that are now regarded to be the hallmarks of a civilised society: financial assistance for the poor, the sick and the old, and education for the young.

There is a paradox in this because Robespierre himself is almost universally disparaged; he appears to have had few personal characteristics that endeared him to others and it was during his term of office, and largely under his instigation that the 'Reign of Terror' was launched. So convinced was he that he was in the right, that he thought it justifiable to execute anyone who disagreed with him - and anyone whom he suspected might disagree with him in the future.

Even when Robespierre was removed from office the idea of the Social Con-



Traditionally, old people have always been honoured and revered by younger members of the community.

The thinkers who put forward the concept of the Social Contract are regarded today as philosophers but it is not likely that their ideas would have found favour with the original Philosophers of the ancient world, as is demonstrated by this extract from *The Discourses*, in which Epictetus speaks to a student who plans to provide for old age by building up a store of wealth:

"How have you contrived to make yourself so useless and good for nothing that nobody is willing to take you into his house, and take care of you? When an unbroken and serviceable pot has been thrown out, whoever finds it will pick it up, and count it as a gain, yet will nobody pick you up, but everyone count you a loss? Why then do you wish to live any longer, if that is the kind of person you are? Does any good man fear that food may fail him? It does not fail the blind, it does not fail the lame. Shall it fail a good man? A good soldier will not be short of someone to pay him, or a labourer, or a shoemaker, so shall a good man find none? Is the Creator so negligent of his own creatures whom he makes use of as examples to the un-instructed both that he is and that he governs the universe well, and does not neglect human affairs, and that no evil happens to a good man, either living or dead? What, then, if he no longer provides food? Surely that could only mean that, like a good general, he has given me the signal to withdraw? For I came when it seemed good to him, and again, when it seems good to him, I depart; and in life it was my business to sing the praises of god, both to myself, to each particular person, and to the world. Trust not in reputation, or riches, or office, but in your own strength to make judgements about what is in your power and what is not. For these judgements alone are what make us free, make us immune from hindrance, raise the head of the humiliated, and make them look into the faces of the rich with unaverted eyes, and into the faces of tyrants."

To Those Who are Afraid of Want, *The Discourses of Epictetus*



tract remained strong in people's minds. Thus, when Napoleon Bonaparte eventually came to power and his armies conquered most of Western Europe, they brought with them the idea that governments ought to serve the people rather than exploit them, and were often welcomed by people who were tired of being the subjects of corrupt regimes.

Napoleon was eventually defeated and his empire broken up, but the citizens of Europe were unwilling to return to their previous condition of near slavery: expectations had been raised and governments had no choice but to establish at least some form of social contract with their citizens if they wanted to avoid violent revolution.

The history of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries is, at least in part, a story of governments having to take more interest in the welfare of ordinary people and of providing them with an increasing level of social services. This was a process that proceeded at a different rate in different countries but, gradually, every European country introduced state funded primary schools, some form of pension for elderly people, and some form of assistance for people who could not find work. The two World Wars accelerated this process, and after the second World War even countries such as the UK, which had held back on some of these programmes, introduced a National Health Service, free secondary education, an old age pension, and unemployment benefits. France, Germany, the Netherlands and Scandinavian countries, which all had a longer tradition of providing benefits, went even further, with the state taking an interest in almost every area of people's lives.

Sixty years after these measures were introduced, the social contract still has its

*In the past, men worked in or around the village, and were able to play a full role in family life.*

passionate supporters, but no one now regards it as an unqualified success, none of its objectives have been fully fulfilled, and, in many quarters, there is a suspicion that it is causing more problems than it is solving.

One of the groups that the Social Contract was supposed to benefit most was the elderly: the architects of the European pensions systems assumed that the money that the state paid to old people would supplement the care that they received from their families and friends, not replace it. But this seems to be what has happened and far from improving the lot of elderly people, pensions have contributed to life becoming more difficult for them than ever before, as



they become increasingly segregated from the rest of society.

Similarly, when the state originally provided primary schooling and nursery care for young children, no one imagined that these institutions would take over much of the role normally assigned to parents and that, as a result, many children would become alienated from their families and local communities.

Many people still have difficulty in believing that a system of pensions, schools, and health care, which is so well-intentioned, could itself be implicated in the social problems that we now face, and are convinced that the problems do not arise from the Social Contract itself but from its not having been embraced with sufficient enthusiasm. On balance, this is the view that has prevailed in France over recent years, and successive governments have increased spending on health care, pensions, education, benefits, and job creation - no politician wanting to be accused of being the one that broke faith with the Social Contract and being the cause of its demise.

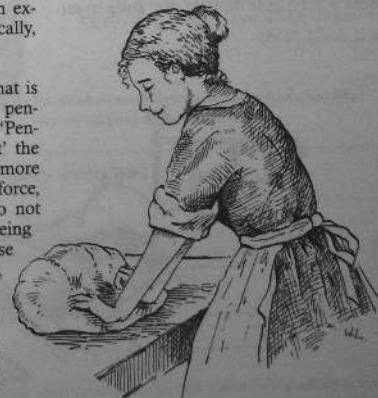
This has led to France having the biggest per capita public debt of any country in the world and a public expenditure far in excess of income: a situation which, logically, cannot continue.

The aspect of the social contract that is causing the most difficulty is that of pensions. Known euphemistically as the 'Pensions Crisis' or the 'Pensions Deficit' the problem is that even though more and more people are being drawn into the work force, their social security contributions do not even cover the pension payments being made to today's pensioners. All these workers are making their payments,

however, in the expectation that they will themselves receive a pension in the future - an eventuality that current figures do not allow to be possible, i.e. there is a pensions 'deficit'.

It is a problem common to all European Countries but is particularly acute in France where people have voted themselves such generous pensions that working people have to part with a quarter of their earnings every month in order to try to cover the state's pension commitments.

This has had an inhibitory effect on enterprise: people have come to prefer either to take a salaried job or to live on benefits rather than take the risk of starting a business which is likely to fail due to the high level of social charges. Less enterprise leads to less income for the government, which means that it has to borrow money or increase taxes. Taxes have now reached such a point that when they are increased the result is an overall loss of income, due to people spending less, businesses closing or laying off staff, and more people claiming benefit; increasing the state debt is becoming more difficult as lenders expect to see a long term strategy for repaying the loan



*The home maker used to be the most important member of society, about whom everything else revolved.*

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or at least being able to pay the interest without the need for further borrowing, a strategy that does not exist in France at the moment.

A consciousness of all these problems is becoming more widespread, and is giving rise to emotions ranging from bewilderment on the part of civil servants, to anger and frustration on the part of people running small businesses, and from a sense of exclusion on the part of young people to a sense of anxiety on the part of people who previously believed that they had secure jobs. In order to understand what is happening, perhaps it is worthwhile to re-examining the origins of the Social Contract itself.

One question that people have never been able to agree upon is what level of taxation is fair, and at what point taxation becomes onerous. Two hundred and fifty years ago there was a sense both that taxation was too high and that the money collected was being misappropriated. An assumption was made that the injustice and poverty present in society could be solved by the government spending its tax revenue more wisely; little thought was given to set-

ting a limit beyond which taxation should not be allowed to go.

With the benefit of hindsight we can see that the problems present in society were not really to do with money, and that therefore spending money upon them could not solve them.

Built into the natural order of things there are mechanisms for caring for vulnerable members of society: families traditionally care for their own children and old folk and, in cases where individuals find themselves in difficulty, it is natural for people in their community to be moved by a spirit of generosity to help them.

It seems that this spirit of human fellowship was breaking down in the seventeen hundreds: society had become divided into the rich and the poor, and, in general, the rich no longer seem to have regarded generosity as being their overriding duty. In such circumstances, it is understandable that the idea of forcibly extracting money through taxation and using it to provide social services could have arisen.

The instigators of this scheme failed to take into account, however, that an act done out of generosity is a joy, but that the same act done for money becomes a chore:



There is no amount of money that can adequately repay the care that someone gives to the sick or to those in need.

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so that, now, people being paid to care for the sick, look after the elderly, or even to look after children, are demanding higher and higher wages, better conditions of work, paid holidays, a car, and, of course, a pension. Meanwhile, the people who are organising them to do these jobs - and throughout Europe there are now millions of such people - consider that the managerial nature of their work is such that they deserve to be paid even more than the people whom they are supervising.

Although on the face of it the Social Contract was a very altruistic idea, underlying it there were, perhaps, baser emotions. Poor people could see that the aristocracy did not care for the sick themselves, they did

not look after their aged parents, and they did not stay up at night with their young children, but, instead, paid other people to do these jobs. No doubt this excited envy. When the State started to provide for the poor and the needy, people took the opportunity to start mimicking the behaviour of the rich which they had previously affected to despise, and they themselves started to neglect those who were nearest and dearest to them.

Many people across Europe, and especially in France, are in a state of near despair about the current state of affairs, but the solution may be simpler than anyone realises. If we all started to care for those we love instead of expecting the state to do it for us, the burden on the government could be reduced, taxes could be cut, and communities could regain their equilibrium. In the process, we might discover that life is far more enjoyable when kindness and care for others becomes the principle upon which we base our daily lives - a return to a Social Contract, far older, far better tested, and far more effective than its more recent counterpart.

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### Choosing a Builder

Many people who move to Brittany find themselves having to employ a builder, perhaps for the first time in their lives. Choosing a builder is not something that should be done without a great deal of reflection: after all, a builder is someone whom you are not only inviting into your home, but someone who you are actually inviting to help build your home.

Thus the most important quality that your prospective builder must possess is a degree of empathy with the way that you do things yourself: they must be someone that you get on with. If you find yourself getting annoyed with a prospective builder over issues such as estimates or making appointments to assess the work, then it is best to terminate matters straight away, as things are bound to get worse once work begins.

Once you have established a good rapport with a builder, you have to establish whether they are competent to do the work that you need doing, and whether they have time to do it, within the time frame that you have in mind. You also need to know whether they intend to sub-contract any of the work out, and, if so, to decide if you are happy to have the proposed sub-contractors in your home.

The next thing is to make sure that the builder knows exactly what you want doing: initially, of course, you may not know what you want doing - a good builder should be able to advise you about the different options available to you for the renovation or refurbishment of your property - but at some point you have to make a decision about the work you want done. Nothing is as likely to cause a breakdown in the relationship between builder and client as the client changing their mind half way through the job.

Once you are clear about what the job entails, then you can clarify the price. It is not always a good idea to get the job done as cheaply as possible: a lower quote may involve using poorer quality materials - which you have to live with long after the builder has gone - or the site not being prepared as thoroughly as might be desirable. However, it is important not to have grey areas when it comes to the subject of price: if you agree to pay a fixed sum per day, you are laying yourself open to having to pay an unspecified sum by the time that the job is finished. If you hold the builder to a fixed quote,

you have to give him the option to amend it if he comes across unexpected difficulties in the course of the job.

Equally important as price is agreeing when money is to be paid. It is not advisable to pay for building work before it has been completed, but you may have to make part payments to cover materials and ongoing costs in the case of large jobs.

If you are not able to be present when building work is in progress, or if you do not feel competent to negotiate with a builder, then it makes sense to employ someone to manage the project for you: this may involve extra cost (but not necessarily), but any extra outlay is well worthwhile if it prevents the possibility of the job going wrong.

People like to imagine that it is possible to get reparation if building work goes wrong, but this is one of those areas of life in which there is very little margin for error. A builder with whom you have a good relationship will always come back and fix any small problems, but if your builder really does do a bad job, then it is your home which has been ruined - and there is no compensation that can make up for that.

Furthermore, compensation schemes tend not to work in favour of small clients: there are two sides to the story of every building job, and when both sides are aired in court it is surprising how often a decision goes in favour of the builder rather than the client. The compensation schemes primarily protect financial institutions who lend money for building or renovation work - they have the financial resources to pursue claims and are not particularly worried if it takes a few years for them to be settled.

This is not all a picture of gloom and doom, however. A lot more building jobs go well than go badly, and people only manage to stay in business as builders because they are good at what they do and because they have satisfied clients.

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### What's On

**October**

Open days: Sats & Suns 1<sup>st</sup> & 2<sup>nd</sup>; 8<sup>th</sup> & 9<sup>th</sup>; 29<sup>th</sup> & 30<sup>th</sup>, and Suns 16<sup>th</sup> & 23<sup>rd</sup> October. Exhibition of 3 artists in the old school Gallery in Locquirec (back of the pharmacy). Crisil Molard, Franco-American Paper artist - mobiles, sculptures & mirrors; Yvonne Bolez - Breton naïf-style painter; Tomy Sunara - Croatian painter. Free entry. The artists will be present during these days.

**Sundays 2<sup>nd</sup>, 9<sup>th</sup> and 16<sup>th</sup> October**

Exhibition of bronze sculptures, photographs & paintings at the Château de Kerminaouët, 29910 Tregunc (nr Pont Aven). The teashop at the château will be open these Sundays, from 2 p.m. - 6 p.m. Tel: 02 98 50 19 68 / 06 09 48 66 86

**Sunday October 2<sup>nd</sup>**

Indoor car boot sale. Tables free but booking essential. Carolann's, Carnoët. (On left as you enter village.) Well marked, 10 a.m. - 1.30 p.m. Hot food available incl. fish & chips. 02 96 21 54 62

**Wednesday October 5<sup>th</sup>**

Château de Kerminaouët, 29910 Tregunc (nr Pont Aven). Open workshop for for painters, sculptors and photographers - 12.50€  
 Bring your lunch and something to drink.  
 Tel: 02 98 50 19 68 / 06 09 48 66 86

**Saturday October 8<sup>th</sup>**

Visit Lorient. Organised by AIKB, open to all. The day includes guided visit to the Submarine Base, a visit to Port Louis to explore the Vauban fortress, and a visit to the "La Compagnie des Indes" museum. 30 euros including lunch. Transport by your own means.  
 Booking essential: 02 96 24 87 90

**Sunday October 9<sup>th</sup>**

Used Book/Bric-a-Brac Sale. Hotel Henry IV, Rostrenen (on the by-pass), 10 a.m. - 1 p.m. Also 3-course meal. Booking essential. Plus 15 minute presentation: An Idiot's guide to trading in France. Information or booking: Ray/Yvonne. 02 96 45 79 11

**Wednesday 12<sup>th</sup> October.**

AIKB (Assn Integration Kreiz Breizh) Visit local businesses around Gouarec (22): a willow farm with demonstration; Goat farm with cheese demonstration & trout farm. 5 €. Info/booking: 02 96 24 87 90

**Mon 24<sup>th</sup> October**

AIKB Seminar on Building regulations with an adviser from the Prefecture. In English. RDV. Salle Polyvalente, Gouarec. 2.30 p.m. 5 €. 02 96 24 87 90

**Christ Church Brittany**

Sunday October 23<sup>rd</sup> 10.30 am  
 Harvest Thanksgiving service at Bonen Church near Rostrenen (22).  
 For further information phone 02 97 51 74 26  
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## F. A. Q. 13



**Q:** "I've been reading your column from the first time it appeared but your numbers seem to have got mixed up and I haven't kept the back copies of CBJ. How can I get previous copies of your articles?"

**A:** Thank you, "Mother", for your support. The reason that the numbers got out of sync, is that I didn't expect to write very many, so the early ones were not numbered. Our editor, like you, seems to think they are worth the space.

The proper answer should be "Shame on you for not keeping back issues, but you can get them from Lin, The Editor's 'Controller'." Failing that, I have kept copies of my scribbles - digitally, of course. There are now twelve before this one and I could send them to you. This raises a more interesting question. How best can one send a lot of, possibly large, files over the internet?

If one has Broadband this is not such a problem. Download times are fast and one doesn't have to pay for data transfer. For most people this is not the case so file size is critical. Whether it's text or images nobody likes having to wait ages for something to arrive especially if they pay for their time on-line. So, reduce the file size. I write using Microsoft Word, which, by default, produces files in .doc format. Each of my articles is about 20 kilobytes. (250kb for all of them). By saving the files in Rich Text Format (.rtf) each file is reduced to only 7kb (85kb for the lot) with the further advantage that they can be read in any word processor. Microsoft products are notorious for their incompatibility, even within their own offerings. Try opening an M\$Excel file in M\$Works and you'll see what I mean.

To save your work in Rich Text Format go to "File -> Save as" and you will find a drop-down menu at the bottom of the dialogue box. RTF

is usually last in the list. Anyone would think that Micro\$oft didn't really want you to use it!

Having reduced the file size what else can one do? Well, it is possible to cut the size further by compressing it using WinZip or the compression tool in M\$Windows XP. Any file can be reduced in this way but text files are more suitable than graphics, many of which are already compressed (.jpg for instance). By zipping my files into an Archive I was able to reduce the total file size to less than 40 kb; a sixth of the original size.

This practice of zipping files has another benefit. Any letters, notes or other documents that you keep for reference or posterity (who's Posterity?) should be zipped into archives for permanent storage. You're only keeping them "in case" so why let them take up more space than they need to?

To the gentleman who really asked the question: I have tried sending them but your email address bounces them back. Please get in touch. I mention this to show that real people do ask me questions and it isn't all in my beautiful mind.



**Any questions?**

[graxwarrior@wanadoo.fr](mailto:graxwarrior@wanadoo.fr)

or leave a message with the CBJ:

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## Website Workshop

Last month we looked at hosting your website, this month we shall be looking at email.

**Q - What is email?**

**A -** Electronic Mail; it's a lot like traditional postal mail, except that you can send it just about anywhere on the planet in seconds, at any time of the day or night - for free. Email is a great way of communicating in the business world where email accounts are as universal as fax machines - and it's a fun way to keep in touch with friends and family too.

**Q - What is there to know about email?**

**A -** The two most common types of email are Web-based and POP (Post Office Protocol). Web-based email is also known as Webmail or browser-based email because it uses your browser and the Internet to access your email account. Webmail possesses most of the functionality of POP and also allows access from anywhere in the world (provided you have Internet access). Webmail can be characterised by its mobility and ease of use because there is no configuration needed by you, the user. The downside of webmail is that you have to be connected to the Internet to read your emails - and with the free webmail services you have to endure banner or other advertising and pop-up windows. POP mail is normally used in conjunction with third party email software like Outlook, Outlook Express or Eudora on your own computer. To receive mail with a POP mail account you connect to a mail server and download all the new mail to your computer. There, the email software enables you to read, send and perform other functions with your email messages. Advantages are that once downloaded, you don't need to be online to read your emails and you can retrieve emails from several accounts at the same time.

**Q - My Internet Service Provider (ISP) has given me an email address, what type of email is that?**

**A -** Webmail. Unfortunately you don't have a great deal of choice about the name you can use on

webmail, especially if it's from a large provider like Wanadoo.

**Q - What gives me more choices?**

**A -** POP mail. One way to get POP mail is to register your own domain name (covered in a previous article). Once you own that domain name you can either have it hosted or just have an email-only account which allows you to use the domain name for your email without having to have a website. You are then free to choose whatever email name you like. If you have a small business, you could even have several email addresses at the same domain; e.g. [sales@yourdomain.com](mailto:sales@yourdomain.com), [enquiries@yourdomain.com](mailto:enquiries@yourdomain.com), etc. It will also look more professional if you use an email address from your domain name rather than your ISP ([yourcompany@wanadoo.fr](mailto:yourcompany@wanadoo.fr)).

Next month: Spam

[malcolm@practicalnet.co.uk](mailto:malcolm@practicalnet.co.uk)  
[www.practicalnet.co.uk](http://www.practicalnet.co.uk)

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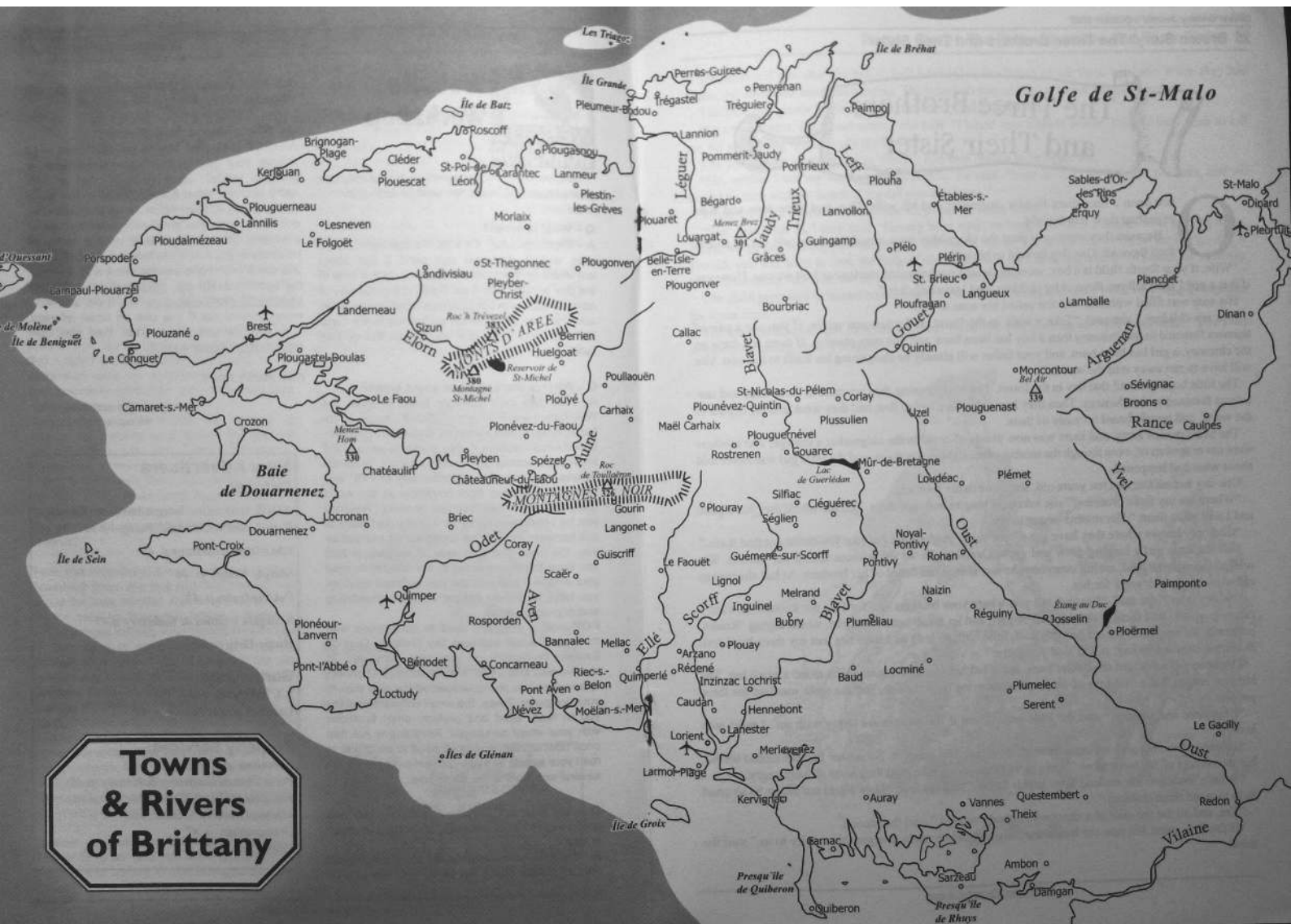
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**Towns  
& Rivers  
of Brittany**

## The Three Brothers and Their Sister

Once upon a time there lived a clogmaker and his wife. They had three sons and were expecting their fourth child.

Because they were very poor the clogmaker grew afraid that he would not be able to feed them all. One day he said to his wife:

"Wife, if your fourth child is a boy, we shall tighten our belts, and manage as best we can. However, if it is a girl I shall kill our three elder children, and leave only her."

His wife was filled with fear and she called her sons to her.

"Go my children," she said. "Take a walk in the forest, and when you return, if you see a pair of trousers fastened to the chimney then a boy has been born, and you may come in. If there is a dress on the chimney, a girl has been born, and your father will already be sharpening his knife to kill you. You will have to run away into the woods."

The little boys spent all that day in the forest. The next morning they returned to their home and saw a dress fastened to the chimney. Then they knew that they had to flee, and they went into the depths of the wood, and people heard no more of them.

The years passed away, and there was now plenty of bread in the clogmaker's cottage. The brothers were never spoken of, even though the mother often sighed over them, and the little girl was never told about what had happened.

One day before she was ten years old, she came to her mother.

"Where are my three brothers?" she asked. "I long to embrace them. Tell me where they have gone and I will go to them." Her mother began to cry.

"God only knows where they have gone," she said. "And a little girl like you could not find them."

Still the little girl's longing grew and grew. One day she set off without telling her parents. She walked through the land, asking everyone she met if they had heard of her brothers. At last she met an old woman who felt sorry for her.

"No my dear," she said. "I cannot tell you where your brothers are, for I do not know. However, I can help you to find them. Take this ball of yarn and let it roll out before you, whilst saying 'Roulet, pellennig, ke ne gavein me zri brérig' (Roll, little ball, so long as I have not met my three brothers). Wherever they are hiding, it will lead you there."

The little girl rolled out the ball of yarn, and it led her to a clearing in which stood a small hut. The hut was empty, but a cauldron of soup was simmering over the fire, and the table was laid for three people.

"I am tired and hungry," said the little girl. "Even if the owners are angry with me, I must stop here."

She entered the hut and, seeing a chest in the corner, hid inside it. No sooner had she closed the lid, but the owners of the hut returned. They were three young men, and they were all very angry.

"What a wretched life we lead here, in this forest," said the first. "How could our father be so cruel as to turn out three children?"

"Yes, and all for the sake of a sister who nobody wanted," said the second.

"If the little minx fell into our hands our father would be made to regret his cruelty to us," said the third.

The little girl saw that she had indeed been led to the house of her three brothers. When they had eaten, the elder two went out hunting. The youngest stayed behind to put things in order.

The little girl gently lifted the lid of the chest, and jumped out.

"Dearest brother, I am your sister," she said. "I heard your unkind words. Do you truly wish to kill me for something which is not my fault?"

The young man stared at her in wonder, and then rushed to embrace her.

"No, neither I nor my brothers will kill you," he said. "Your love for us brought you here, and we would be men without hearts if we did you any harm."

When the other brothers came home they said the same thing.

"Stay here with us," they said. "Having been apart so long, will only make us love you the more. While we go out hunting you can prepare our meals. All we ask is that you never let the fire go out. If you do, you will have to seek the help of our neighbour, the Caragine, who lives across the clearing. He will certainly slay you, for he loves to eat human beings."

The child promised to remember their words, and the brothers and sister lived very happily together for some time.

The maiden never forgot the Caragine, and while she was cooking she often muttered: "You shalt not have me today, cruel Caragine."



One day she stayed in the wood for a long time, listening to the song of a bird. When she returned home the fire was out. Filled with sorrow she went to the home of the Caragine. He lived in a deep cave, and the door was made of iron. As soon as she knocked upon the door, it opened. The Caragine had black hair and glowing eyes. When he saw the maiden he seized her by the arm.

"I have been hungry a long while," he said. "Come into my palace and I will have a fine meal."

"I cannot protect myself from you," said the maiden. "But if you kill me, my three brothers are not afraid of you and they will be revenged."

"Do you mean the three hunters in the forest?"

"Yes, I am their sister." The Caragine looked afraid.

"What do you want me to do for you?" he asked.

"My fire has gone out; I want you to help me relight it."

"That is easy enough," said the Caragine. "But I do not give something for nothing. There is nothing I like so well as human blood. If I help you, you must give me a drop of yours every day."

The maiden agreed and returned home with an ember with which to relight her fire. Henceforward she went every day to the Caragine. She passed her little finger through the keyhole in the iron door, and the Caragine drank his drop of blood. After a month she grew so pale that her brothers asked her if she was ill. She told them what had happened and they swore to be revenged.

"Tell the Caragine that you are too weak to go to him, and that he must come here," they said. "You can leave the rest up to us."

The next day the Caragine arrived at the hut. He thought that the young men were from home but they were hiding behind a door, with an axe. When he stepped over the threshold, they felled him to the ground.

With the death of the Caragine the brothers and their sister had no more to fear, and several more years passed happily away.

One day word reached them that the King was preparing to go to war. He was calling together all the young men in his kingdom to go and fight. The three brothers would have to obey, and the poor little sister would be left all alone.

"Dear God," she said. "I cannot live in this wild forest without my brothers. I would rather they became sheep, and I could watch over them, as they grazed on the heath."

Her wish came true immediately, and the young men were changed into sheep. One day, as they were grazing on the heath, the King's son rode by. He stopped in surprise to see someone so lovely in such a place.

"In all my father's court there is no one so beautiful as that shepherdess," he said. "Tell me, will you be my wife?"

"I will," said the young girl. "All I ask is that I can bring my three sheep with me to live in the court."

The King's son agreed and the marriage was celebrated. A year later the maiden gave birth to a son. The King's son began to look amongst the neighbouring kings for a godfather, but his wife said, "I will have the oldest sheep, and no other."

It was a strange request but no one had the heart to refuse her.

Soon the King's son received a second surprise. No sooner was the baby christened but the three sheep changed into handsome young men.

Now instead of the animals in his stables, he had three valiant companions. Although they had refused to fight for him, he made them his chief ministers and put them in command of his army, and they all lived together in great happiness for many years.

*The Three Brothers and Their Sister is a traditional Breton story, retold and illustrated by Bethan Lewis*

## The Language of Molière

French writers often refer to English as "the language of Shakespeare"; it is a graceful turn of phrase that pays tribute to the most famous writer in the English language – even though the English of today is very different from that used by Shakespeare. In the same way Spanish is referred to as "the language of Cervantes", and French itself is called the "language of Molière".

### Who was Molière?

Molière is often considered as being France's most famous writer. He wrote many plays describing the people and customs of his time, and his characters are so lifelike that they continue to appeal to audiences and readers of today. He valued simplicity and integrity, and many of his plays attack the hypocrisy of society and its institutions.

### Molière's Life

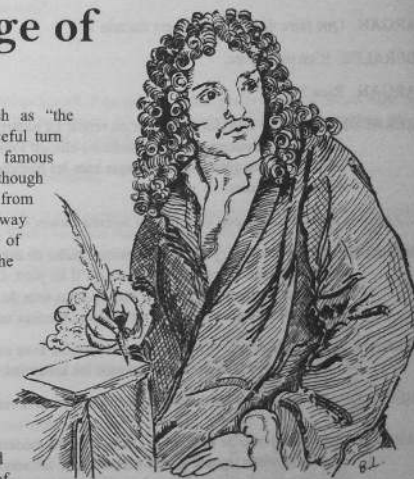
Molière was born in 1622, and was given the name Jean-Baptiste Poquelin. His father was an upholsterer, and held a post at the court of Louis XIV. Early in life, the young Jean-Baptiste felt a fascination for the stage, and at twenty-one he formed his own company, and assumed the stage-name of Molière. The little group of actors were unsuccessful in Paris, so Molière suggested that they tour the more rural parts of the country. Here, they met with success, and Molière began to write plays for himself and the other actors to perform. In 1658 they returned to Paris, and performed before the King. Such was their popularity that Louis XIV gave them an apartment in the "Salle du Palais Royal" at Versailles, and Molière and his family continued to stage plays there for the rest of his life.

### Molière's Plays

Molière's most famous plays are often those which were most severely criticised in his lifetime. "Le Misanthrope" tells the story of a man who has become disenchanted with mankind and "Tartuffe" ridicules hypocritical preachers and philosophers. "Les Femmes Savantes" features a group of men and women who have become obsessed with language and "Le Malade Imaginaire" pokes fun at doctors and hypochondriacs. Other plays such as "Les Précieuses Ridicules" (the affected young ladies), "Le Bourgeois Gentilhomme" (the middle class gentleman), "L'Avare" (the miser) and "Les Fâcheres de Scapin" (Scapin's Tricks) are also enduringly popular.

### The Imaginary Invalid (Le Malade Imaginaire)

In the extract overleaf from one of Molière's most famous plays two characters – the imaginary invalid, Argan, and his brother, Béralde, discuss doctors, and then Molière himself. Béralde disbelieves in the power of men to cure men, and Argan, amazed, asks what should be done when one falls ill.



ARGAN : Que faire donc quand on est malade ?

BÉRALDE: Rien mon frère.

ARGAN : Rien ?

BÉRALDE: Rien. Il ne faut que demeurer en repos. La nature, d'elle-même, quand nous la laissons faire, se tire doucement du désordre où elle est tombée. C'est notre inquiétude, c'est notre impatience qui gâte tout, et presque tous les hommes meurent de leurs remèdes, et non pas de leurs maladies.

...(Argan is appalled and begins to defend his beloved doctors.)

BÉRALDE: Moi, mon frère, je ne prends point à tâche de combattre la médecine, et chacun, à ses périls et fortune, peut croire tout ce qu'il lui plaît. Ce que j'en dis n'est qu'entre nous, et j'aurais souhaité de pouvoir un peu vous tirer de l'erreur où vous êtes, et, pour vous divertir, vous mener voir, sur ce chapitre, quelqu'une des comédies de Molière.

ARGAN : C'est un bon impertinent que votre Molière avec ses comédies, et je le trouve bien plaisant d'aller jouer d'honnêtes gens comme les médecins.

BÉRALDE : Ce sont point les médecins qu'il joue, mais le ridicule de la médecine.

ARGAN : Par la mort non de diable ! si j'étais que des médecins, je me vengerais de son impertinence et, quand il sera malade, je le laisserais mourir sans secours. Il aurait beau faire et beau dire, je ne lui ordonnerais pas la moindre petite saignée, le moindre petit lavement, et je lui dirais : « Crève, crève, cela t'apprendra une autre fois à te jouer à la Faculté. »

BÉRALDE : Vous voilà bien en colère contre lui.

ARGAN : Oui, c'est un malavisé, et, si les médecins sont sages, ils feront ce que je dis.

BÉRALDE : Il sera encore plus sage que vos médecins, car il ne leur demandera point de secours.

ARGAN : Tant pis pour lui, s'il n'a point recours aux remèdes.

BÉRALDE : Il a ses raisons pour n'en point vouloir, et il soutient que cela n'est permis qu'aux gens vigoureux et robustes et qui ont des force de reste pour porter les remèdes avec la maladie ; mais que, pour lui, il n'a justement de la force que pour porter son mal.

**Ne vez ket kaset ur c'hazh da logota a daolou bazh,  
Nag ur c'hi da jiboas a daolou mien**  
Blows will not make a cat hunt mice,  
Nor will stones set a dog a-hunting

ARGAN: What then should be done when one is ill?

BÉRALDE: Nothing, brother.

ARGAN: Nothing?

BÉRALDE: Nothing. You only need to rest. Nature herself, if we only allow her, gently extricates herself from the disorder into which she has fallen. It is our anxiety, it is our impatience which spoils everything, and almost all men die of their remedies, and not of their diseases.

...(Argan is appalled and begins to defend his beloved doctors.)

BÉRALDE: As for me, brother, I do not undertake to fight against physic, and everyone, at his own risk and peril, may believe whatever he pleases. What I have said concerning it is only between ourselves: and I should have liked to do something to deliver you from the error into which you have fallen, and, to amuse you, take you to see one of Molière's plays on the subject.

ARGAN: Your Molière is a fine impertinent fellow with his plays, and I think it very amusing that he makes fun of such honest men as the doctors.

BÉRALDE: It is not the doctors whom he makes fun of, but the folly of medicine.

ARGAN: By God! If I were a physician I would be revenged for his impertinence, and when he is ill, I would let him die without aid. He could do and say what he liked, I would not prescribe the littlest bleeding, the littlest enema, and I would say to him, "Die, die, that will teach you next time to make fun of us doctors."

BÉRALDE: You are very angry with him.

ARGAN: Yes, he is a fool, and if the doctors are wise, they will do as I say.

BÉRALDE: He will be even wiser than your doctors, for he will not go and ask their help.

ARGAN: So much the worse for him, if he does not take any remedies.

BÉRALDE: He has his reasons for not wanting them, and he maintains that such things are only for strong, healthy folk, who have the strength to bear both the remedies and the disease; as for him, he has only just enough strength to bear his ailment.



Argan, the 'Malade Imaginaire'.

Act III Scene 3 Le Malade Imaginaire

**An hani' fall dezhañ ur jao disi  
a zo red dezhañ chomel heb hani**

He who wants a faultless horse,  
Will have to settle for no horse at all.



### Word Search:

Find the **65 European towns, plus 10 Central Breton ones** (which appear in bold in the list) hidden in the grid below. Words can run forwards, backwards, up, down, and diagonally.

T C L F O N E J O S S E L I N Z A G R E B C G  
 E A I L N R A L E S A B H U E L G O A T A A L  
 J L S O I E D V A N I C A A X U M U E H G R U  
 P L B R R T U B E L F A S T I E E T B E A H B  
 O A O E O S B G B R F A B T S L M E I H L A N  
 K C O N T E A A A B E I G I L I L B W G A I A  
 S T O C K H O L M R R Y R I S G K O O R M X T  
 N A P E N C E S L M P A E T R A G T T U T S S  
 I V I E N N A S I I P S T A S S L O A B R E I  
 M K P T I A I N S Z R T D I A E D O V N C G S  
 U O I S L M G N A A U E O L S O P B U I H C S  
 C A S V L H A N M R L N G U G L E A N D A B N  
 N M I L A N A S A A N O L E C R A B D E E A O  
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 S J A R E D E D P R S F R A N K F U R T S I E  
 L M E U I R U T O U L O U S E L L I V E S R E  
 E U G K D C Y S R N E I F T H E S S A B E U D  
 H G E A H E H S T H U Y V I T N O P O C L O S  
 H A M B U R G U O T D I R D A M I N S U S G E

- |            |                 |                |                |              |
|------------|-----------------|----------------|----------------|--------------|
| AMSTERDAM  | CALLAC          | JOSSELINE      | NICE           | STUTTGART    |
| ATHENS     | CARHAIX         | KIEV           | OSLO           | TALLINN      |
| BAKU       | COPENHAGEN      | LEEDS          | PARIS          | THESSALONIKI |
| BARCELONA  | DUBLIN          | LISBON         | <b>PONTIVY</b> | TIRANA       |
| BASEL      | EDINBURGH       | LJUBLJANA      | PORTO          | TORINO       |
| BELFAST    | FLORENCE        | LONDON         | PRAGUE         | TOULOUSE     |
| BELGRADE   | FRANKFURT       | <b>LOUDEAC</b> | REYKJAVIC      | VIENNA       |
| BERLIN     | GENEVA          | LUXEMBOURG     | RIGA           | YEREVAN      |
| BERN       | GENOA           | MADRID         | ROME           | ZAGREB       |
| BILBAO     | GLASGOW         | MALAGA         | ROTTERDAM      | ZARAGOZA     |
| BIRMINGHAM | <b>GOURIN</b>   | MANCHESTER     | <b>SCAER</b>   | ZURICH       |
| BONN       | GUEMENE         | MARSEILLE      | SEVILLE        |              |
| BORDEAUX   | HAMBURG         | MILAN          | SIZUN          |              |
| BRATISLAVA | HELINKI         | MINSK          | SKOPJE         |              |
| BRUSSELS   | <b>HUELGOAT</b> | NANTES         | SOFIA          |              |
| BUDAPEST   | ISTANBUL        | NAPLES         | STOCKHOLM      |              |

## October in the Garden

October and November are the months in which people tidy up their gardens ready for the winter: even if you have banks and hedgerows that you leave wild for most of the year it is advisable to cut them now, otherwise brambles become established and before you know what is happening, parts of your garden are likely to become an impenetrable mass of vegetation. Hedges can also be given a final cut and ditches cleared ready for the winter rains.

Even though most lawns have managed to stay green this year, they have not needed to be cut very often, due to the summer being unusually dry. If the autumn is wet and warm, as it often is, the grass may start growing again and will have to be cut once every couple of weeks if it is not to look untidy during the winter months.

**Mulching:** Now is the time to start thinking seriously about mulching. Some weeds, such as couch grass, do not stop growing in the winter and, if allowed to do so, will take over vegetable beds and herbaceous borders over the next few months. The easiest way to prevent this happening is by mulching. Cover any bare earth with a thick layer of organic material or well-rotted compost. Grass cuttings make a good mulch, as does bracken. Your best quality mulch - i.e. mulch that contains no weed seeds - should be used on areas such as herbaceous borders that have to be hand-weeded; material that does contain weed seeds can be used on areas that you are planning to use for growing potatoes next year - weed seedlings are not a problem amongst the potato crop, providing the potatoes are hoed regularly and earthed up a couple of times, early in the year.

The proper use of mulch makes a no-dig method of vegetable gardening possible - which is not only good for one's back, but is also good for the soil. The mulch replicates conditions on the forest floor: it protects the surface of the soil and provides nutrients for soil organisms living close to the surface. In the spring, the mulch simply has to be raked off and the soil lightly hoed and raked, and it should be ready for planting.

### Chicory

**Month by Month: October**  
 You do not need to do anything to the chicory this month - it can be left to grow a little longer.

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**Nend eus ket a greù**  
**D'ar fall lezeù**  
 It is impossible to get  
 rid of weeds

## Eating Sweet Chestnuts

Sweet Chestnuts are some of the largest most delicious wild foods that the hedgerows have to offer us. After a windy night hundreds can be found beneath a good tree, and each case will hold at least one good chestnut, and maybe as many as six! The spiny cases can easily be prised open with your feet, and the nuts taken out without pricking your fingers.

### Roasted Chestnuts

There are many delicious recipes for sweet chestnuts, but perhaps the simplest, most traditional way to cook them is roasted in their shells. This can be done in the hot embers of a fire, or on a tray in the oven. Before roasting, pierce each one with a knife so as to prevent them exploding whilst cooking. Even when pierced, the occasional one will explode, and when you hear a loud thud (and the inside of your oven becomes covered with chestnut!) you will know that the others are ready to eat, for they only explode when cooked.

They should take about twenty minutes, depending on the size of the nuts. If you like them crispy and golden, you can leave them in longer, and this way they will be easier to shell whole.

### Chou Rouge aux Marrons

The following recipe is from southern France; the tastes of the chestnuts and red cabbage blend particularly well.

#### Ingredients:

1 large red cabbage	1 teaspoon salt
Up to 1 lb (450 g) of shelled, roasted chestnuts	2 fl oz (60 ml) red wine
2 tablespoons olive oil	4 fl oz (120 ml) water

#### Method:

1. Halve the red cabbage, remove the white core, and slice each half thinly. Rinse in a colander and drain.
2. Roughly blend the chestnuts - if they broke up when you were getting them out of their shells, this won't be necessary.
3. Add the oil to a large, oven-proof, casserole dish and heat for a few minutes. Tip in the cabbage, stir, and cover with a lid.
4. Cook for five minutes. Remove the lid and add the salt, chestnuts, red wine, and water. Stir again, and replace the lid.
5. Cook it in the oven at Gas Mark 5, 190°C (375°F) for about thirty minutes, until the red cabbage is soft. Season to taste.

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## Sweet Chestnut French: *Châtaignier* Breton: *Kistin*

October is the month for sweet chestnuts. The nuts can be collected in great quantities from the ground, where they have fallen from the trees upon becoming ripe. The soft chestnut, once cooked and peeled of its shiny shell, is delicious, and can be eaten in many ways.

It is thought that we have the Romans to thank for the presence of the chestnut tree in Northern Europe; in Brittany, country folk supporting themselves from the land realized that they could live off the nuts of the chestnut tree for several months of the year, and planted it enthusiastically all over the country. A sure testimony to the popularity of the chestnut, is the large number of chestnut trees which remain for us today, even after the destruction of much of the natural countryside in recent years. Countless splendid trees are still to be found throughout Brittany, continuing to freely give plenteous nuts to anyone who is prepared to take the time to collect them.



female flower;  
small beginnings  
of a chestnut can  
be detected

leaf, and  
male  
catkin



chestnut in  
its spiny case



a ripe, fresh chestnut

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## Aesop's Fables

**Faster than me? Just look at my legs!**

**You'll Win! Then a race we will have! Tomorrow we will run the length of the hill and I will show you how fast a hare can be.**

**Yes, but once I start, I never stop. If we had a race I believe I would win.**

**The next day...**

**Hee, hee, hee! A race with a tortoise! I hardly need hurry. Fancy him challenging me!**

**Trusting in his natural speed, the hare lay down to sleep.**

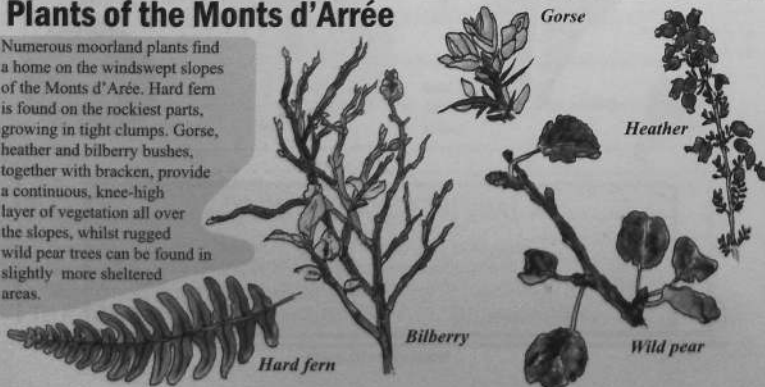
**But the tortoise didn't stop...**

**Hmmm... Now I have overtaken the hare.**

**And now I have reached the end.**

### Plants of the Monts d'Arrée

Numerous moorland plants find a home on the windswept slopes of the Monts d'Arrée. Hard fern is found on the rockiest parts, growing in tight clumps. Gorse, heather and bilberry bushes, together with bracken, provide a continuous, knee-high layer of vegetation all over the slopes, whilst rugged wild pear trees can be found in slightly more sheltered areas.



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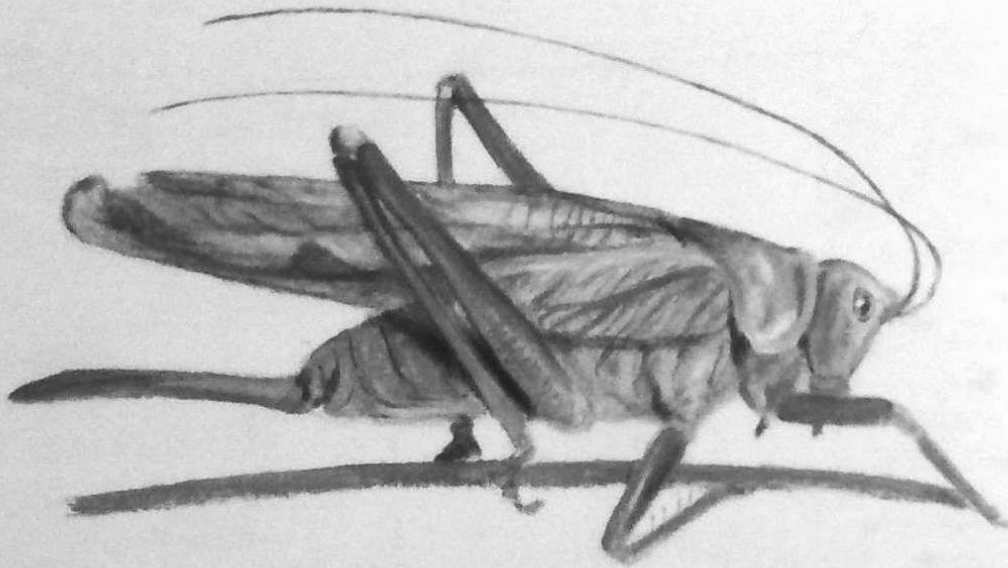
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# Great Green Bush-Cricket

(*Tettigonia viridissima*) French: *Grande Sauterelle Verte* Breton: *Karwig-Raden Glaz*



If you ever see one of these enormous crickets, you are unlikely to forget it. With its body measuring up to 5 cm, and its antennae even longer, they are one of the largest insects to be found in Europe.

Even if you haven't seen a great green bush cricket, you have probably heard one. During the afternoon, and well into the night, their loud chirping can be heard, as they sit on the branches of trees or shrubs, and rub their wings together to make their 'song'. To trace the sound and find the cricket is not so easy; the noise is deceptive and the crickets camouflage well with foliage. Their head, body, legs and wings are all the same shade of vivid green and it is quite likely that you still won't be able to see the cricket when you are just inches away!

Their preferred habitat is brambles, thistles and bracken. If you want to encourage them in your garden, you can leave a bank, field, or hedgerow, cutting it back from time to time, and thereby creating a perfect home for one of these unusual insects.

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