

## Legendary Places: Oral History and Folk Geography in Nineteenth-Century Brittany

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### Folklore and "local colour"

There is a story that when Alexandre Dumas' play *Christine* was banned, shortly before the 1830 Revolution, Dumas went to plead his case to the *académicien* and censor Charles Brifaut. Brifaut suggested what seemed to him minor alterations, such as the sex of the protagonist, and mentioned that under the First Empire he had been obliged to do much the same. A play of his set in Spain was considered too inflammatory given the Emperor's difficulties in that country, so he changed some names and locations, and transformed it into *Ninus II*, an acceptable drama of ancient Babylon. Dumas exclaimed: "But really, Monsieur Brifaut, the local colour!" Brifaut smiled and replied "Monsieur, in our time, for us, local colour had not yet been invented." [1]

Brifaut's cynicism is echoed by many contemporary historians. Dumas was shocked because Brifaut had, in his opinion, sacrificed the authenticity of the work: what was true of Spain could not also be true of Babylon. But for post-modern historians, trained to unpick "invented traditions" and "imagined communities", the Romantics' yearning for authenticity has itself become suspect. [2] The whole nineteenth-century enterprise of defining cultural difference through nation-building, imperial exploration and social investigation, can be seen in retrospect as a fabrication in which the self-serving taxonomies of elites were

imposed on suspect data. The academic subjects built on this concern for explaining difference \_ history, sociology, and anthropology \_ have likewise had their credentials as social sciences severely weakened. [3] But the subject which has suffered most by the retreat into “reflexivity” is folklore. Pioneer sociologists and anthropologists may have been keen to collect and classify, but from the start folklorists saw themselves in a more active role, reviving threatened traditions. The issue of authenticity was always, therefore, of greater significance to folklore. [4]

For romantics like Dumas, an enthusiastic reader and translator of the Grimms, folklore was all about local colour. The subject had been born out of an assertion of cultural difference, in reaction to the universalist ambitions of the Enlightenment. Johann Gottfried Herder (1744-1803) put its case most clearly: what was true and good for France was alien to Germany, for each nation had, over centuries, developed its own unique traditions, ideally suited to the character of its people. The essence of this unique culture, what Herder called the “folk-soul”, was expressed in language and in particular in folk-song and tale. No one person could claim authorship of ballads, they were the communal, almost unconscious creation of the nation as a whole. Every singer was connected to the collective body of the nation, and simultaneously to their ancestors, from whom they had inherited this traditional lore. [5]

This is a well-known story, but there is one point that I would like to emphasise. Herder believed that the origins of cultural difference lay in the environment: “Nature has sketched with the mountain ranges she formed and with the rivers she made flow from them the rough but definite outline of the entire history of man... Oceans, mountain chains, and rivers are the most natural boundaries not only of lands, but also of peoples, customs, languages, and empires.” [6] The customs of each nation had been shaped by the landscape in which they lived. Folklore was not just the expression of a people and its history, but of the land itself. Thus the Grimms were able to describe the tales collected from their principal informants, Dorothea Viehmann (the so-called *Märchenfrau* of Niederzwehren) and “Old Marie”, as “authentically Hessian” and “originally Hessian”. [7] Emile Souvestre (1806-1854), a romantic poet and one of the earliest imitators of the Grimms in France, expressed this connection between story and geography in an environmental cliché when introducing his 1844 collection *Le Foyer breton*: “we have only published those [folktales] which exhale that smell of the land which cannot be imitated.” [8] More than a hundred years later, the compiler of the French folktale index, Paul Delarue, echoed this sentiment: “in France as in the other countries [folktales] have through the course of the centuries been subjected to the influence of the physical and human environment, of the particular genius of the race; and they have acquired characteristics that are unique.” [9]

These unique characteristics might be obvious to collectors, able to compare and contrast the narrative tradition of many communities, but it is questionable whether they could have been identified by the narrators of folktales. Folklorists seldom asked their informants where they thought their stories originated but Ariane de Félice, who conducted fieldwork in the

marshland of the Loire estuary after the Second World War, was the exception. She was told “They must have been more intelligent than most, the guys who invented this... You won’t find that here. They come perhaps from the depths of England, or I don’t know where.” [10] Their exotic quality was indeed part of the tales’ attraction. None of her narrators, who all came from the one village, suggested that there was anything particularly Breton about their tales, and yet Félice’s book was entitled *Contes de Haute-Bretagne*. To this day it is almost impossible to find a folktale collection which does not claim to be in some way expressive of a region or nation. The primacy of collective identities, be they ethnic, cultural or geographic, is the legacy bequeathed by romantic nationalism to folklore.

Folk wisdom, however, recognised the ease with which songs and stories were diffused around the globe, and this has been understood at a scholarly level also. Delarue catalogued the French folktales according to the international index of tale-types. The tale of Cinderella is tale-type 510, and one can go to the folktale catalogue of any country from China to the Caribbean and find examples of tales that fit this typology. [11] The story was popular in France, but not specific to France. The same is true of other genres of folklore: whether we are talking of riddles, proverbs, legends, or folksongs, it is difficult to find examples limited to just one region or one nation. They all have analogues in other countries. Delarue knew this, his argument was that the way Cinderella was told in France was characteristically French. For example, it lacked the cruelty and overt moralising that he associated with German tales. [12] And it is true that while Cinderella was more or less universally known, the tale was never told exactly the same way in different places. But was this variation a reflection of national or regional cultural difference, or did it have more to do with the sex of the narrators, their occupations and personalities, or the personalities of the collectors?

This last is the most serious charge for it threatens not only to deny folklore’s claims to reveal specific cultures, but to undermine the entire collecting project. What if folklorists, as collectors and editors, shaped the final work to fit ideological agendas of their own? This is indeed the accusation levelled at Emile Souvestre, and even more so at his contemporary, Théodore Hersart de la Villemarqué (1815-1895). The publication in 1839 of Villemarqué’s *Barzaz-Breiz* \_ Breton Ballads \_ had an impact in France akin to MacPherson’s *Ossian*. Unfortunately there were other parallels. Villemarqué was a Breton patriot who wanted to endow his homeland with an epic literature to rival that of any nation. He was also an aristocrat, a conservative and a Catholic, and the Breton nation he envisioned was pious, deferential, and static, preserved by its language and traditions from the taint of revolutionary modernity. The ballads he “discovered” suited all these purposes admirably. Although he styled himself as the “collector and translator” of the Breton ballads, the suspicion arose that he was in fact their author. [13] The *Querelle* over the authenticity of the *Barzaz-Breiz*, which irrupted in 1867, continues to rumble on, but a prevailing, albeit erroneous, judgement in academic circles is that Villemarqué’s ballads, like MacPherson’s fragments, were forgeries. [14]

Villemarqué is not the only nineteenth-century folklorist to fall under the critical spot-light

not least because many French folklorists were likewise aligned with the Catholic, Royalist right. Their desire to establish a connection between the land and its people through its folklore has been seen as a defensive ploy by traditional elites, landowners and clerics, in the face of rural depopulation, social mobility and radical political upheaval. It is not just that folklorists were local patriots with regionalist or autonomist objectives, though many were, but it is also a question of the kind of country or region they were patriotic about. Why in France, for example, did practically every folklorist reject the administrative boundaries created by the Revolution, \_ the departments \_ in favour of collecting the folklore of the Old Regime provinces, such as Lorraine, Franche-Comté, Normandy...? The implicit or explicit explanation is that the provinces represented genuine cultural units, but there is sometimes at least the hint of counter-revolutionary nostalgia. [15] Folklorists at the end of the nineteenth century claimed that theirs was an objective science with its own vigorous methodology. But the suspicion among academics today is that folklore was less the creation of the “folk” than the imposition derived from political and aesthetic movements among *déraciné* intellectuals.

The implications of such revisionism are not limited to folklore. With the development of social history since the 1960s, historians have mined folklore collections to uncover the hidden lives of the popular classes, developing such explanatory schemas as popular religion, popular medicine, and popular culture. [16] Yet recently all these categories have been dismissed as constructions derived from the discourses of nineteenth-century elites. Even the very concept of “peasant” has been called into question. [17] What, for the last quarter of a century, has been the most influential approach to nineteenth-century rural France \_ Eugen Weber’s history of the acculturation of regional and traditional societies in the process of transforming *Peasants into Frenchmen* \_ crumbles, if the very categories of peasant, tradition and region were nothing more than the ideological projections of nation-builders. [18] As a consequence the peasants who seemed to speak to us from the pages of folklore collections have been once more condemned to historical marginality, for their voices will always be hidden behind the discourses of the dominant.

I am unwilling to accept this conclusion, and the remainder of this paper will attempt to show that nineteenth-century folklorists were basically correct in proposing a connection between cultural traditions and a particular community, and that the relationship between the land and the lore was suggested to them by their informants, rather than imposed on them. This does not mean that I think folklorists always correctly identified what that connection was, and in the case of France the largely unreflecting use of pre-revolutionary provincial titles is unhelpful. But mislabelling should not prevent us realising what folklorists intuitively grasped, that there was a link between the stories they heard and the landscapes in which they were told. To demonstrate this I will call on the collection made by Paul Sébillot (1843-1918) between 1879 and 1885 in and around the village of Saint-Cast, near to Saint-Malo on the north Breton coast.

## Paul Sébillot and the storytellers of Saint-Cast

Although Paul Sébillot was the dominant figure in French folklore studies at the end the nineteenth century, he did not conform to the stereotype of the Breton traditionalist. He was certainly no pious aristocrat like Villemarqué, and it is worth mentioning that, despite the supposed inherent conservatism of folklorists, in Brittany at least it was as much an enthusiasm of the left. Emile Souvestre had stood as a Republican candidate in 1849, while leading contemporaries of Sébillot included François-Marie Luzel and Adolphe Orain, both editors of Republican newspapers. [19] Sébillot was born at Matignon (Côtes-du-Nord) in 1843, the son of a doctor and a Republican activist. [20] He inherited his father's politics, writing a popular pamphlet in 1875 entitled *La République, c'est la tranquillité*, which Luzel translated into Breton. [21] He married the sister of the economist and Republican politician Yves Guyot, who as editor of *Le Siècle* was a well-known advocate of radical causes from Dreyfus to feminism. Yet despite his Republican and anticlerical affiliations, in other ways Sébillot was true to the folklorist type. He was a member of a well-educated and well connected bourgeois family; a rival folklorist would later accuse him of abusing his position as "châtelain" to make his collections. [22] He was also a *déraciné*, having settled in Paris, first as a law student, and then as an artist and writer. Folklore, at least initially, had been the exiled Sébillot's tribute to his homeland. His local patriotism had been fired by a borrowed copy of Souvestre's *Le Foyer breton* while a homesick schoolboy in 1860. In his memoirs Sébillot recalled that "the idea came to me to discover... if there were in my native land, marvellous or fantastic stories worthy of inclusion in a *Gallo Hearth*." [23] But what attracted Sébillot most about Souvestre's book were the illustrations, for he was already nursing artistic ambitions. From 1867 to 1880 he pursued a career as a painter. As the art critic for various Republican journals in the 1870s, and a visitor to Pont-Aven, Sébillot presumably knew of the impressionists, but he did not follow their lead. Nor, despite his interest in the "marvellous" is there anything fey, let alone symbolist, about his paintings. Sébillot's artistic allegiances were with the realism of Amédée Guérard and Alexandre Antigna. [24] He specialised in landscapes of the Breton coast, and in particular the strange scenery of low tide (his first salon piece in 1870 was entitled *Rocks at Low Tide*). This is not a minor genre along Brittany's *côte d'éméraude* where the sea-level falls several metres daily, revealing the rocks that made this coast so dangerous for shipping. [25]

There is an unexplored connection between the practice of landscape painting and folklore collecting in the nineteenth century. Souvestre had been a painter before he turned to writing, while artists like Jules Bastien-Lepage occasionally dabbled in folklore. [26] In Sébillot's case the meticulousness and commitment to accuracy apparent in his paintings would also resurface in his work as a folklorist, for although he acknowledged a debt to predecessors like Villemarqué he considered himself the leader of a new generation of scientific investigators. Sébillot's conversion from brush to pen was particularly fruitful. In 1877 the artist Léonce Petit asked Sébillot if he could contribute some stories to a book of fairy-tales that his friend hoped to illustrate. Sébillot promised to see what he could unearth the following summer while on a painting trip to Brittany. But the weather that year was

dismal, and while sheltering with peasant families, Sébillot asked his hosts if they knew any tales. The more than six hundred narratives he collected over the following years were the basis for Sébillot's brilliant career as a folklorist. [27] They provided the matter for more than a dozen major publications, starting in 1880 with the first volume of *Contes populaires de la Haute-Bretagne*. [28]

The title implied that these were characteristically Breton tales. Sébillot, like other folklorists, placed his collection within the framework of a geographically specific culture (a trend he would help propagate as editor of the major collection *Les Littératures populaires de toutes les nations*). But Sébillot was ahead of his time in recognising that his informants' occupations were as significant to the kind of stories they told as the places they lived. More than half the tales were collected in and around the fishing village of Saint-Cast, not far from his hometown of Matignon. Hence the third volume of the *Contes populaires de la Haute-Bretagne* was subtitled *Contes des marins*. Sébillot had come to Saint-Cast in 1879 to paint, but the storytelling talent of his landlady Rose Renault set him on a different tack. Her house became the centre of Sébillot's collecting activities as her visitors were invited to contribute a tale. Among them was the story in the appendix, told in 1880 by an elderly widow named Jeanne le Hérisse. It concerns one of those watery rock formations Sébillot painted so often – the Bourdineaux.

### Oral history and folk geography

The Bourdineaux (or Bourdinots as they now appear on maps) are a group of rocks off the tip of the Saint-Cast peninsular, close to the spot marked 29 on Sébillot's map of the legendary geography of the area. [29] For fishermen, the virtue of these offshore rocks was that they were a haven for marine wild-life, and, in the case of the Bourdineaux, for skate in particular. Le Hérisse's story tells of a battle for control of the rocks between the Câtins of Saint-Cast and the Jaguens of the rival fishing village of Saint-Jacut which faced them across the Arguenon estuary. There are numerous stories about conflicts between these two villages, several of which focus on this same group of rocks. For example, in another tale the Jaguens drop a dead donkey in the sea in order to claim all the land it touched, but unfortunately for them it by-passed the Bourdineaux. [30]

The donkey story was probably intended as a joke, but the Jeanne le Hérisse told her tale as a matter of history. She had learnt it from her grandfather, and according to him the battle had taken place two centuries before. It is quite likely that the story has some basis in history. Ownership, or use rights, over land was a dominant issue in village politics throughout France from the Middle Ages onwards. Most communities were, at one time or another, engaged in protracted conflicts with their neighbours about their precise boundaries, access to water, the use of the woods and pastures between them. These kinds of resources were either communal property or at least considered as communal property, and so any dispute would involve the community as a whole. The court records of both old regime and post-revolutionary France abound in such cases, but conflict was not restricted to legal argument,



it was carried into the fields. [31]. Conscription rallies, fairs and even Breton *pardons* were all occasions for collective violence, because at these events rival villagers were bound to meet, and therefore argue with one another. In some parts of France, even in the nineteenth-century, such riots frequently led to fatalities. [32] These village wars tended to have a history. Even if boundaries were finally agreed, the vendetta between them left legacies of triumphs to be boasted, humiliations to be avenged, events to be memorised and retold at communal gatherings. The economic issue might be settled, but the conflict was perpetuated through the village's oral culture, which enshrined its code of honour.

Although the Bourdineaux were at sea, their case was not essentially different from any landlocked dispute. They were a collective economic resource to which two communities laid claim. Looking at the map it would seem as if the Câtins were in the right. There were, as they say in story, fishing right in front of their homes. And yet other tales, even those told in Saint-Cast, acknowledged some historic relationship between the Jaguens and the Bourdineaux. [33] There are two possible explanations for this. Firstly, the Jaguens specialised in the fishing of skate. This is still apparent in the architecture of the village, which is arranged in house-rows with a south-facing façade where the skate were hung to dry. The smell was, to judge by the frequent comments in the tales, appalling. [34] As the Bourdineaux abounded in skate the Jaguens may have felt a proprietorial interest in them. Secondly, fishing rights in the estuary of the Arguenon river had been the seigneurial property of the Abbey of Saint-Jacut, so fish caught in these waters had to be landed at Saint-Jacut. At a pinch the Bourdineaux might be included within this seigneurial domain, although they were at boundary of the open sea. [35] As a consequence there were, in the sixteenth century, numerous stands-off between the fishing fleets of the two villages, leading to insults and even injuries. From the seventeenth-century onwards the men of both communities found employment in deep-sea fishing, in-shore fishing declined and with it the economic importance of the Bourdineaux. But the dispute was not forgotten, and references to it were sure to enliven encounters between the inhabitants of the two peninsulas. Indeed the history was still being related in the 1970s, according to Hervé Collet, who audio-taped the same tale as told an old sailor of Saint-Jacut. Unfortunately this Jaguen version of events probably owes more to a Sébillot reprint than to any autochthon tradition, even though there are telling differences between the two. [36]

However, it was not to history that each group appealed during their confrontation, but to legend, in particular to divergent legends of Gargantua. The story also alludes to several other religious, comic and aetiological legends which would help listeners make sense of their local geography. Nineteenth-century folklorists were more interested in the text than the context, and seldom asked themselves why particular stories were being told at particular moments. But in Le Hérissé's tale it is clear that legends were not just amusing pastimes, they had a function: it is this functional aspect that provides the link between a particular landscape and the stories told within it. Legends were mobilized as charters of ownership by the communities that told them. According to the Jaguens the Bourdineaux belonged to them because the rocks were thrown from their village by the giant Gargantua. The Câtins agreed

that Gargantua deposited the rocks, but not for the Jaguens, rather in disgust at them.

There is a whole cycle of Gargantua legends concerning this coastline, often associated with particular features such as Gargantua's tooth near Saint-Suliac, or his finger at Fort La Latte (both prehistoric standing stones). Sébillot collected several Gargantua legends in Saint-Cast. [37] They did not concur in every detail, but it is nonetheless possible to compile an outline biography for the giant that might have been recognised by Câtins. To summarize, Gargantua was born at Plévenon. He liked to travel, and visited Dinan, Saint-Malo, Paris and Jersey. In each place he terrorised the inhabitants with his enormous appetite and marked the landscape in some permanent way. His leap from Fort La Latte to Saint-Malo (or, in another version, to Jersey), for instance, is commemorated by the indent of the giant's shoe on the cliff-top. Practically all the rocks off the coast were ascribed to Gargantua's actions. According to François Marquer, the Câtin cabinboy who was Sébillot's most forthcoming informant, the Becrond (or Bec rond, s it now appears on maps), where the Câtin fleet waited to attack the Jaguens, was the result of a Gargantuan bout of diarrhoea. The Bourdineaux were created shortly after by the giant's attempts to kill a barnacle goose flying out to sea by throwing stones taken from the headland. [38] Presumably the Jaguens were referring to a similar story, localised in their own village, during their confrontation on the Bourdineaux.

The Câtins' response was that Gargantua felt too much disgust for the Jaguens to provide for them in this way. The story, as told in Saint-Cast, was that Gargantua had been coming home to Plévenon when he came across a Jaguen boat loaded with skate caught on the Bourdineaux. He gobbled down the boat, crew and catch, but as his journey took him past Saint-Jacut, the smell of rotting fish made him throw up his meal. The ballast stones from the boat were projected out to sea and formed various islands towards Saint-Briac and Saint-Lunaire (in the opposite direction to Saint-Cast, and therefore undisputed territory as far as Câtins were concerned). [39] In other stories Gargantua did not eat the Jaguen boat, simply the smell of its cargo was enough to make him vomit up various rocks and islands. In some tales Gargantua then quit the country with the words "I don't want to see the Jaguens any more; they will kill me with their obnoxiousness"; in others he really was overcome with disgust and died. [40]

Câtins and Jaguens told two contradictory legends about Gargantua and the Bourdineaux, but to what extent were either believed? Belief used to be the test that folklorists applied to distinguish a folktale from a legend, the former being told as a fiction, and the latter as a true account. [41] However, it is difficult to see how anyone could countenance that a handful of ballast stones provided the basis for several islands. All we can say is that the story (just like *Le Hérissé's*) was told as if it might be true, and so could be cited as fact in disputes between the two villages. But belief was not as essential as agreement among the community as to which was the right story (or rather, which was the right story for a particular occasion). Which story you knew, and told, about Gargantua, the Bourdineaux and the Jaguens, would indicate where your loyalties lay. Thus the shared story became the basis for communal solidarity.



Le Hérissé's tale draws on many other distinctions between the two villages. The two fleets even arrive on the scene in different kinds of boat: those of the Jaguens are called simply "boats", but the Câtins had "dinghies". *Canot*, or dinghy, was the term used for the small, stubby, but manoeuvrable boats that fishermen of both villages adopted during the nineteenth century. [42] The implication of the story, however, is that the Câtins had them first, they were therefore more up-to-date and civilised than their neighbours.

This claim to cultural superiority was confirmed whenever the Jaguens opened their mouths. By-and-large Sébillot's fishermen-storytellers spoke good French when telling tales, and were proud of it. Patois was, for them, the language of peasants who had never learnt anything of the world. [43] Yet, according to Sébillot, whenever one of his storytellers adopted the voice of a Jaguen, he or she would put on a distinct accent, and lace their speech with characteristic swearing – "Dieu me danse" or "Dieu me gagne", a change Sébillot indicated on the written page with italics. He went on to point out, however, that the level of education (and therefore presumably correct French usage) was higher in Saint-Jacut than in nearby villages. [44] But for the storyteller it was not necessary that Jaguens actually spoke like this, but that her audience (and the other inhabitants of the region generally) understood that this was how Jaguens were supposed to speak. Storytellers from all over France used similar tactics to denigrate their despised neighbours. [45]

A further distinction between the villages is offered by the collective nicknames, the *blason populaire*, exchanged between the fishermen. The Câtins, apparently because of the colour of their water-proofs, were called "petits Jaunes" by the Jaguens, while the latter were termed "Houohaous". According to Sébillot most Câtins thought this was an insult, implying that the Jaguens howled like dogs, but it may have derived from Saint Houohaou, the name given by the fishermen to a rock at the end of the Saint-Jacut peninsular. As they passed the rock Jaguens would offer up a prayer "Saint Houohaou, give us mackerel". [46] Every village in France seems to have had at least one such collective sobriquet, picking up on some distinguishing aspect of dress, economic activity, character or history. [47] However, the *blason* was not used by the villagers themselves, only by their neighbours who were also their enemies. They were commonly exchanged during disputes over territories. The origins of many nicknames are obscure, but where they can be traced they often relate to places or events on these disputed frontiers. The rock of Saint Houohaou, for example, is at the edge of the commune of Saint-Jacut and the open sea. It is, in a sense, a boundary marker. Geography and cultural identity are once more brought together.

The people of Saint-Cast held the Jaguens in low esteem: "Daft as a Jaguen" went the local proverb. [48] This reputation was widely known on the coast. Sébillot collected stories about Jaguens at Dinard, Matignon, and even one from an inhabitant of Saint-Jacut. At Dinan stories about idiots, whatever their origin, were termed a "Jaguensétés". [49] An example of such a tale is the "Jaguens' Journey". Because they were so backward and had never left their village before, they mistook a field of flax for the sea, and a partridge for a feathered fish. [50] On another occasion they thought a lobster was the devil. [51] Similar, if less maritime,

stories were told about dozens of other villages in France and further afield, such as the famous “Wise Men of Gotham” in Nottinghamshire, just one of at least forty-five places in England described as the “village of fools”. [52] “Numskull-tales”, as these kind of tales are listed in the international type index, prove once more that folklore knows no boundaries. One can find nearly identical stories in the literature of ancient India, Turkey and China. [53] But while they were known all over the world, they were not told as universally valid, but rather only as true for particular villages. It was not the folklorist who located them in the landscape, it was the narrators.

We get a hint of the Jaguens’ reputation near the beginning of this story, when they demand that no guns be used, as no one in Saint-Jacut knew how to fire one. But the full depth of their stupidity is saved until the end, when, disgusted at Jesus for not helping them, even though they had taken the trouble to bring him along on his cross, they drag the crucifix through the streets and finally burn it. Despite (or more probably because of) the presence of an abbey in the village, several Jaguen tales turn on their misunderstanding of, or contempt for, both the symbols of the Church and its personnel. Hence the proverbial phrase, “It’s like the old Jaguens, who no more believed in God than in his saints”. [54] Câtins could also be anticlerical, even sceptical on occasions, and yet still look down on their neighbours, not so much for their lack of belief but because they did not know how to behave. Given Sébillor’s politics he probably rather enjoyed these stories, although he got into a bit of trouble with local Catholics when he published the story of the “Le Bon Dieu de Saint-Jacut” in a local newspaper. [55] In this story the Jaguens realise they are the only village without such an asset, which may account for a series of poor barley harvests. But even when they have erected their own crucifix, the harvest are no better, so they beat and even shoot the figure of Jesus. (This may be a deliberately ironic counter-comment to the common legend of Breton piety in which a peasant refuses to strike a crucifix despite threats from Republican troops, and dies a martyr’s death.) [56] The Jaguens finally decide to kill their God, but unsure how this might be done safely, they carry him over to the Isle Agot in the bay and leave him there. [57] Le Hérissé’s tale picks up on both the Jaguens’ anticlerical reputation and their mistreatment of the crucifix. It is also has aetiological aspects because the crucifix has since disappeared from the Isle Agot, yet one can still see the base where it stood.

What Freud called the “narcissism of minor differences” mattered a lot in these small, face-to-face communities. The untutored eye might have found little to separate the villages of Saint-Cast and Saint-Jacut at the end of the nineteenth-century, but Câtins would have been insulted by any such comparison. It would have sullied their reputation, and reputation was vital to their well-being. The advancement of credit, getting the best berths on ship, the chances to make a good marriage, all depended on the good name of one’s family and community. Yet reputation is a strange thing in that one can only increase one’s own by diminishing one’s rivals. Telling numskull stories emphasises the superior reputation of one’s own community by denigrating another’s, and this helps reunite one’s village in a sense of its own worth. Otherwise it was in danger of being torn apart by its own internal honour disputes between families and colleagues.

A fishing community like Saint-Cast may have had particular need of the balm of storytelling (which perhaps accounts for why Sébillot found it such a fertile source). Fishermen liked to create for themselves a persona of aggressive individualism, so unlike the servile peasants they despised. In folktales this persona took shape as the hero “Tribord Amures”, the sailor who gave way to no man. [58] Such attitudes helped the men to cope with the grinding misery of their work on the Newfoundland banks, and the ruthless competition fostered between them by the trawler captains. Much of Sébillot’s collection was told by boys \_ apprentice fishermen \_ whose tales evinced characteristics of devil-may-care heroism and a refusal ever to bow one’s head. Thus they demonstrated they had acquired the fishermen’s morality and were ready to enter the world of men. But fishermen also needed the community: their work was dangerous and they relied on warnings and help given by their colleagues; if they died at sea they needed to know that their loved ones would be cared for; and if they were denied access to their fishing grounds they needed the community to come to their support, as in the case of the Bourdineaux. Storytelling was one mechanism through which that community reconnected with itself.

This one story of the “Battle of the Bourdineaux” has led us on quite a tour of the region around Saint-Cast, from Plévenon to the Isle Agot. For a storyteller like Jeanne Le Hérissé the landscape oozed narratives. Stories endowed space with meanings. Guided by her tale, Le Hérissé’s audience could orientate themselves in the landscape: aetiological legends like that of Gargantua’s finger, and *lieux-dits* such as the Becrond, contained descriptions of landmarks which together formed a working map of the area. Legends were an informal education in significant geography: one learnt the boundaries of one’s community with one’s neighbours and, just as importantly, with the supernatural. Legends connected the vital history of the community to its environment. No Câtin fisherman could forget that his ancestors had fought and won their claim to the Bourdineaux, for the rocks themselves were a daily, visual mnemonic. During Rogationtide ceremonies in England, boys accompanying the procession around the perimeter of the parish would be beaten at each boundary marker, to help them more vividly their exact location. [59] Legends served a similar, if less painful function. They were the collective memory of the community.

Storytelling also gave Jeanne Le Hérissé a continuing role in the village. The Le Hérissé family had lived in Saint-Cast since at least the fifteenth century, and although they had lost their letters of nobility in 1670, Jeanne’s great-grandfather still styled himself “noble écuyer” when he built the manor of Sainte Blanche in 1775. But since the revolution the family’s social status and fortune had declined markedly. Jeanne’s grandfather had been a substantial landowner, but Jeanne had married a simple fisherman, Marc Renault. Like so many of his compatriots he had died at sea leaving her with at least five children to bring up. [60] A widow in her late fifties with three daughters still living at home, Jeanne was in danger of becoming a marginal figure even in a matriarchal community like Saint-Cast. Yet she retained some cultural capital: she knew things that might be important to future generations of Câtins, like why the Bourdineaux belonged to them. In her story both Câtins and Jaguens turn to their oldest inhabitants in this crisis because, as Jeanne puts it, “among

the old there is always one cleverer than the others". She was, in an oblique fashion, talking about herself. [61] The lessons she gave in folk geography staked her claim to full membership in the community.

## Appendix

### 'La Bataille des Bourdineaux'

From Paul Sébillot, *Contes Populaires de la Haute-Bretagne III: Contes des Marins*, (Paris, 1883).

Au temps jadis, les Jaguens s'étaient mis dans l'idée que le rocher des Bourdineaux leur appartenait et qu'eux seuls avaient le droit d'y pêcher.

Un jour, trois bateaux jaguens arrivèrent près des Bourdineaux, et deux canots de Saint-Cast qui vinrent ensuite mouillèrent trop près des Jaguens, presque dans leur affaire.

*\_Dieu me danse, mon fu, s'écrièrent les Jaguens, rehole vitemment ton aussière; tu viens mouiller dans nos lignes, et païcher su' not' terrain.*

*\_Est-ce que vous voudriez nous engarder de pêcher devant sez nous? répondirent les Câtins.*

*\_Le rochier est à ma, riposta le patron des Jaguens, entends-tu, petit Jaune?*

*\_Non fait, Ouohau, i n'est pas à ta.*

*\_Si fait, c'est un rocher que Gargantua nous a volé; il l'a prins sez nous et l'a jeté ici en passant.*

*\_N'est pas pour ta que Gargantua l'a jeté ici, répondirent les Câtins, 'était pour nous; il avait trop dangier des Jaguens pour voulaï le lous donner.*

Voilà la bataille qui commence; les Jaguens jetèrent des cailloux aux Câtins qui ripostèrent, et finirent par sauter à l'abordage des bateaux ennemis: il y eut deux Jaguens qui furent très maltraités ce jour-là, et leur patron dit aux Câtins:

*\_Dieu me danse, mon fu, fau'ra mettre la partie a demain; j'amenerons do nous tous les chefs des bas, et v'amenez les vôtres; les p'us forts aront les Bourdiniaux. Mais n'fau'ra point s' batt'e à coups de fusi', mon petit fu, n'y en a pas iun dans Saint-Jégu qui saïge tirer; je nous battons do des sabres et do des baïonnettes, do des pierres et do des bâtons.*

*\_C'est bien, répondirent les Câtins, demain j'amènerons nos patrons et vous les vôtres.*

Voilà les Câtins et les Jaguens partis chacun de son côté pour se préparer à la bataille du lendemain.

Quand les gens de Saint-Cast furent de retour, ils racontèrent aux autres pêcheurs la dispute et le rendez-vous pour le lendemain. Les anciens s'assemblèrent, et comme parmi les vieux, il y en a toujours qui sont plus rusés que les autres, l'un des anciens dit:

*\_Il faudra laisser les Jaguens mouiller les premiers, puis vous vous mettez du bord du vent pour leur envoyer de la poussière dans les yeux. Dites aux femmes et aux enfants de prendre des sacs et de les remplir avec la poussière des routes et la cendre des foyers; ce seront les munitions dont vous chargerez vos bateaux.*

Aussitôt les femmes et les enfants se mirent à balayer les routes et à ramasser la poussière

dans les sacs et les vieilles femmes y mettaient la cendre de leur foyer.

Le lendemain dès le matin, on vit sortir tous les bateaux de Saint-Jacut. Les Jaguens avaient chargé leurs embarcations avec des cailloux, et ils s'étaient armés de sabres, de baïonnettes et de bâtons. Ils amenaient avec eux, pour juger la bataille, le plus ancien homme de la paroisse, le bonhomme Mateur, qui avait cent treize ans.

Quand ils furent à moitié route, ils se dirent:

*\_Mon petit fu, quand j'arons battu les petits Jaunes, fau'ra qu'i's lèvent la main et promègent de ne jamais retourner ès Bourdiniaux.*

*\_Vère, mais devant qui qu'i's lèveront la main?*

*\_Faut aller queri'un bon Dieu.*

Deux bateaux virèrent de bord et allèrent à Saint-Jacut: ils déplantèrent une grande croix et la mirent sur un des 'carrés' pour faire jurer les petits Jaunes.

Les Câtins étaient mouillés à Becrond, et ils attendaient pour lever l'ancre que la flotte des Jaguens fût arrivée aux Bourdineaux. Alors ils mirent à la voile, et passèrent au vent des Jaguens. Ils voyaient un des carrés qui avait un calvaire attaché à son mât, et le bonhomme Mateur qui se tenait au pied.

*\_Vaïci l'bon Dieu, dirent les Jaguens, v'allez jurer devant li et l'bonhomme Mateur qu'a cent treize ans, de ne p'us retourner ès Bourdiniaux, ou bien le combat va commencer.*

*\_Quand vous voudrez, répondirent les Câtins.*

Et ils se mirent à affarer et à tendre leurs lignes.

*\_Le rochier-là est à nous, dirent les Jaguens, faut lever l'ancre, j'allons compter di qu'à tras, et si vêtes cor mouillés, j'allons nous battre: au p'us fort la pouche.*

Voilà les Jaguens qui commencent à jeter des cailloux sur leurs ennemis; mais les Câtins, qui étaient au vent, délièrent leurs sacs, et la brise qui était fraîche envoyait la poussière et la cendre sur les Jaguens qui en recevaient sur les yeux, sur le nez, dans la bouche, dans les oreilles, et ne savaient où se fourrer. On les entendait éternuer comme s'ils avaient eu du tabac plein le nez. Les Câtins, en continuant à lancer de la poussière, sautèrent à l'abordage, et furent bientôt vainqueurs; ce jour-là il y eut deux Jaguens qui furent blessés, et un Câtin perdit l'oeil d'un coup de pierre. Alors les Jaguens abattirent le calvaire, et le bonhomme Mateur leur dit:

*\_Par ma fa, mon fu, faut abandonner les Bourdiniaux, les petits Jaunes sont les p'us forts.*

Les Jaguens levèrent l'ancre; comme ils s'en allaient on les entendait qui se disputaient entre eux, et ils faisaient des reproches au bon Dieu.

*\_Je l'avions amené do nous, disaient-ils, pour nous servi' d'avocat, i' n'a ren dit: 'est le bon Dieu sans pitié, i' n'a pas tant sieurement fait tourner le vent.*

Et en débarquant à Saint-Jacut, ils attachèrent une corde à la croix, la traînèrent par les chemins et allèrent ensuite la brûler.

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[1] "Mais cependant, monsieur Briffaut [sic], la couleur locale!" M. Briffaut sourit, de ce charmant sourire

moitié protecteur moitié dédaigneux, et qui n'appartient qu'à des lèvres académiques: "Monsieur, dit-il, de notre temps, à nous autres, la couleur locale n'était pas encore inventée." This story is told, to make much the same point, in Patrice Bousset, *Veillées du pays normand*, Paris, 1970, p.7. Dumas recalled his conversations with Brifaut at some length in his memoirs, but according to his recollection what shocked him was Brifaut's casual attitude to historical accuracy, rather than local colour.

[2] Eric Hobsbawm and Terence Ranger (eds.), *The Invention of Tradition*, Cambridge, 1983; Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism*, London, 1983. These two works have been very influential on historical scholarship. Both concepts, at least in common usage among historians, concern the mobilisation of collective identities supposedly based on historical continuities, but which have in fact been constructed by elites (or would-be elites) to meet the needs of current political ideologies.

[3] Anthropology, in particular, has been forced onto the defensive. While preparing this paper I chanced on this pithy challenge: "almost every generation of anthropologists has condemned previous researchers for faulty studies, imperialistic or colonialist arrogance, or plain doctoring of the material. The idea of the participant observer has little credibility in academic circles, and the standing of much ethnographic research is these days roughly on a par with reality TV." Jenny Diski, review of David Gilmour *Misogyny: The Male Malady* in *London Review of Books*, 6 September, 2001. I do not associate myself with these remarks, I quote them merely to demonstrate that such attitudes have become part of the academic mainstream.

[4] Regina Bendix, *In Search of Authenticity: The Formation of Folklore Studies*, Madison WI, 1997, pp.45-67.

[5] Peter Burke, *Popular Culture in Early Modern Europe*, Aldershot, 1978, pp.3-22.

[6] Herder quoted in William A. Wilson, "Herder, Folklore and Romantic Nationalism", *Journal of Popular Culture*, 6, 1972-3, pp.821-2.

[7] John M. Ellis, *One Fairy Story too Many: The Brothers Grimm and their Tales*, Chicago, 1983, p.25; Hermann Rebel, "Why not 'Old Marie'... or someone very much like her? A Reassessment of the question about the Grimms' contributors from a social historical perspective", *Social History*, 13, 1988, p.1.

[8] "nous nous sommes borné à publier... ceux desquels s'exhalait cette senteur du pays qui ne peut tromper." Emile Souvestre, *Le Foyer breton: Contes et récits populaires*, Paris, n.d. (first edition 1844), p.18.

[9] Paul Delarue, *The Borzoi Book of French Folktales*, New York, 1956, p.xvi.

[10] "Ils devaient être plus intelligents que bien d'autres, les gars qui ont inventé ça. C'était pas du monde de Mayun: c'est pas ici que vous trouverez ça. Ils venaient peut-être du fond de l'Angleterre, de je sais pas où...": Arien de Félice, *Contes de Haute-Bretagne*, Paris, 1954, p.xiv.

[11] Stith Thompson, *The Folktale*, New York, 1946, pp.126-9.



- [12] Paul Delarue, *Le Conte populaire français: catalogue raisonné*, Paris, 1957, vol.1 p.44.
- [13] The case against Villemarqué is made by Francis Gourvil, Théodore-Claude-Henri Hersart de la Villemarqué (1815-1895) et le “Barzaz-Breiz” (1839-1845-1867), Rennes, 1960. For a less harsh judgement see Mary-Ann Constantine, *Breton Ballads*, Aberystwyth, 1996, 10-16.
- [14] Malcolm Chapman, *The Celts: The Construction of a Myth*, Basingstoke, 1992, pp. 123-4, 138, 208. Donatien Laurent, who discovered and published the field notebooks in which Villemarqué recorded the ballads he heard, is justly annoyed that a quarter of century later even specialists in the field should still be repeating this calumny: “La Villemarqué et les premiers collecteurs en Bretagne”, in Fanch Postic (ed.), *La Bretagne et la littérature orale en Europe*, Brest, 1999, p.165.
- [15] David Hopkin, ‘Identity in a Divided Province: The Folklorists of Lorraine, 1860-1960’, *French Historical Studies* 23 (2000), 639-82.
- [16] Peter Burke, *Popular Culture in Early Modern Europe*, Aldershot, 1978, pp.270-86.
- [17] “‘The peasant’ as a type, whether stigmatized or idealized, was a creation of non-peasants”: Robert Tombs, *France, 1814-1914*, London, 1996, p. 289. Tombs uses Anderson’s phrase “imagined community” to describe the peasantry.
- [18] Eugen Weber, *Peasants into Frenchmen: The Modernization of Rural France, 1870-1914*, Stanford, 1976. For a view of the peasant influenced by post-modernism see James R. Lehning, *Peasant and French: Cultural Contact in Rural France during the Nineteenth Century*, Cambridge, 1995, pp.11-34.
- [19] Françoise Morvan, François-Marie Luzel, Rennes, 1999, pp.80, 114, 221-30.
- [20] For details of Sébillot’s family background see: Léon Séché, *Figures bretonnes et angevinnes: Paul Sébillot (notice biographique et bibliographique)*, Vannes, 1890.
- [21] Paul Sébillot, “Notes pour servir à l’histoire du folk-lore en France”, *Revue des traditions populaires* 28 (1913), p.56.
- [22] Henri Gaidoz, “Eugène Rolland et son oeuvre littéraire”, *Mélusine* 11 (1912), 417-40. The sarcastic comments Gaidoz made about Sébillot in this obituary for their mutual friend led to an extremely bitter row between the two men which overshadowed French folklore studies at the beginning of the twentieth century. See Richard Dorson’s foreword to Geneviève Massignon (ed.) *Folktales of France*, London, 1968, xiv-xxvii.
- [23] “l’idée me vint de rechercher, lors des prochaines vacances, s’il y avait dans mon pays natal des histoires merveilleuses ou fantastiques dignes de figurer dans un Foyer gallo.” Sébillot, “Notes pour servir...”, pp.51-2.
- [24] Denise Delouche, *Peintres de la Bretagne: Découverte d’une province*, Paris, 1977, pp.337-8.

[25] Some of Sébillot's paintings can be seen on an excellent website produced by the pupils of the Collège Paul Sébillot in Matignon. See: <http://www.bretagne-racines.ac-rennes.fr/>

[26] Adrien Oudin, 'La Basse-Bretagne conteuse et légendaire', *Revue britannique*, (1891), reprinted in *Contes et légendes de Basse-Bretagne*, Spézet, 1995, p.159. On their walking holidays in the Meuse Jules Bastien-Lepage and his friend the poet André Theuriot collected folklore which Theuriot contributed to Henri Labrousse, *Anciens us, coutumes, légendes, superstitions, préjugés, etc. du département de la Meuse, Bar-le-Duc 1903*. Bastien-Lepage's unfinished painting *L'Enterrement d'un jeune fille* is a pictorial representation of an event described by Labrousse. Two other important folklorists, Victor Smith and Achille Millien, were significant patrons of landscape artists.

[27] Sébillot, "Notes pour servir..." p.57.

[28] These include: *Contes populaires de la Haute-Bretagne: Contes merveilleux*, Paris, 1880; *La Littérature orale de la Haute-Bretagne*, Paris, 1881; *Contes populaires de la Haute-Bretagne: Contes des paysans et des pêcheurs*, Paris, 1881; *Contes populaires de la Haute-Bretagne: Contes des marins*, Paris, 1882; *Les Traditions et superstitions de la Haute-Bretagne*, Paris, 1882, 2 vols.; *Gargantua dans les traditions populaires*, Paris, 1883; *Contes de terre et de mer*, Paris, 1883 (a selection from the previous volumes illustrated by Léonce Petit, among others); *Coutumes populaires de la Haute-Bretagne*, Paris, 1886; *Légendes chrétiennes de la Haute-Bretagne*, Nantes, 1886-92, 2 vols.; *Petite légende dorée de la Haute-Bretagne*, Nantes, 1897; *Légendes locales de la Haute-Bretagne*, Nantes, 1899-1900, 2 vols.; *Contes des landes et des grèves*, Paris, 1900; *Les joyeuses histoires de Bretagne*, Paris, 1910. Sébillot was also author of numerous more general works on the folklore of the sea, of fishermen and various other occupations such as bakers, as well as studies of paganism, of mines and public works (a product of his connection to Guyot, who was Minister of Public Works), culminating in a four volume encyclopaedia of the *Folklore de France*, Paris, 1904-7. Most of these works have been republished, and the Presses universitaires de Rennes is currently engaged in bringing out an edited version of Sébillot's collection.

[29] "Carte de la géographie légendaire du canton de Matignon" in Paul Sébillot, "Petites légendes locales CCCCXXXIII: Géographie légendaire d'un canton", *Revue des traditions populaires*, 16, 1901, p.4.

[30] "L'âne des Jaguens", told by Françoise Guinel of Saint-Cast: Paul Sébillot, *Contes populaires de la Haute-Bretagne III: Contes des marins*, Rennes, 2000, pp.281-2. The Jaguens' donkey turns up in other tales.

[31] Inter-village rivalries, and the violence that accompanied them, have been studied by several historians. See, among others: Robert Muchembled, *La Violence au village (XVe-XVIIe siècle)*, Turnhout, 1989, pp.86-105; Peter Sahlin, "The Nation in the Village: State Building and Communal Struggles in the Catalan Borderland during the 18th and 19th Centuries", *Journal of Modern History* 60, 1988, 234-63; Stephen Wilson, *Feuding, Conflict and Banditry in Nineteenth-Century Corsica*, Cambridge, 1988, pp.158-76.

[32] François Ploux, "Rixes intervillageoises en Quercy (1815-1850)", *Ethnologie française* 21, 1991, 269-75.

[33] For example, "Le Minard du Jaguen" told by Françoise Guinel of Saint-Cast in 1882: Paul Sébillot,

Contes des landes et grèves, Rennes, 1997, pp.207-12; and “Gargantua et les Jaguens”, told by François Marquer, cabin-boy of Saint-Cast, in 1882: Paul Sébillot, *Gargantua dans les traditions populaires*, Paris, 1883, p.71. Guinel, a forty-three year old fisherman’s wife, specialised in Jaguen stories, or “couyonades” as they were known in Saint-Cast. Nine out of the ten stories she told Sébillot concerned their antics.

[34] Paul Sébillot, *Contes comiques des Bretons*, [reprint of the *Joyeuses histoires de Bretagne*] Paris, 1983, p.16.

[35] J.-C. Menes, “Les Pêcheries et l’abbaye”, *Les Amis du vieux Saint-Jacut, sauvegarde du patrimoine archéologique et historique du pays jaguen*, 27, 1995, pp, 24-30.

[36] Hervé Collet, ‘La bataille des Bourdineaux’, *Les Amis du vieux Saint Jacut* 1 (1982), pp. 16-26.

[37] Sébillot, *Gargantua*, pp.19-91. This collection also includes the tale of “Le dent de Gargantua”, collected by Elvire de Cerny, at Saint-Suliac.

[38] “Gargantua filleul des fées”, told by François Marquer: Sébillot, *Gargantua*, pp. 40-1.

[39] “Gargantua et les Jaguens”: Sébillot, *Gargantua*, p.72.

[40] “Je ne veux plus voir les Jaguens; ils me feraient mourir de donger”: Sébillot, *Gargantua*, pp.32, 72.

[41] Linda Dégh and Andrew Vázsonyi, “Legend and Belief”, in Dan Ben-Amos, *Folklore Genres*, Austin TX, 1976, pp.93-123.

[42] Pierre Amiot, *Histoire de Saint-Cast-Le Guildo*, Carrien, 1990, p.560.

[43] Folktale narrators in most parts of France often preferred to tell their tales in French (or what they understood to be French), even if their daily language of communication was patois. The use of French emphasised the artistic nature of the act of storytelling. See, for example, Ariane de Félice, *Contes de Haute-Bretagne*, Paris, 1954, p.xii.

[44] Sébillot, *Contes comiques*, p.17. Not only Saint-Jacut but all their surrounding villages had distinctive ways of speaking, according to Sébillot’s Catin informants: *Blason Populaire de la Haute-Bretagne*, Paris, 1888, (extract from *Revue de Linguistique*), p.12.

[45] Charles and Alice Joisten, *Contes populaires de Savoie*, Grenoble, 1999, pp.139-91.

[46] “Saint Houohaou, Donnez-nous du maquériau”: Sébillot, *Contes comiques*, 48-9.

[47] In the days before their falling out Sébillot and Henri Gaidoz had worked together on a guide to *Le Blason populaire de la France*, Paris, 1884. For a more recent study see Jean Vartier, *Le Blason populaire de France*, Paris, 1992.

[48] “Bête comme un Jaguen”: Sébillot, *Contes comiques*, p.56.

[49] Sébillot, Contes comiques, p.16.

[50] This was a particularly popular story, told to Sébillot by at least five people Contes comiques, pp.18, 27, 50, 56.

[51] Sébillot, Contes comiques, p.60.

[52] Including Austwick, Bolliton, Borrowdale, Coggeshall, Darlaston, Folkstone, Pevensey, and Yabberton.

[53] Thompson, The Folktale, pp.190-6. Not all folktale fools come from “villages of idiots”, but any numskull tale can be readily adapted to fit the needs of village rivalries.

[54] “C’est comme les vieux Jaguens, Qui n’croient pas p’us dans l’bon Dieu qu’dans les saints”: Sébillot, Contes comiques, p.41.

[55] Sébillot, Contes comiques, p.11.

[56] Musée départemental breton, L’Imagerie populaire bretonne, Quimper, 1992, p.159.

[57] “Le Bon Dieu de Saint-Jacut”, told by Françoise Guinel of Saint-Cast: Paul Sébillot, Contes populaires de la Haute-Bretagne III: Contes des marins, Rennes, 2000, pp.259-63.

[58] “Tribord Amures”, told by Auguste Macé in 1880, eighteen-year-old sailor of Saint-Cast: Sébillot, Contes des marins, pp.62-66; “Tribord Amures”, told by François Marquer in 1880: Paul Sébillot ‘Contes de marins recueillis en Haute-Bretagne’, Archivio per le studio delle tradizioni popolari, 10, 1891, pp.109-11. “Tribord Amures” is an nautical term meaning that a ship is on starboard tack. All other vessels are supposed to give way, hence the phrase “Tribord Amures, roi des mers”.

[59] Adam Fox, Oral and Literate Culture in England 1500-1700, Oxford, 2000. pp.268-71.

[60] Genealogical details are taken from François Le Hérissé, Histoire généalogique de la famille Le Hérissé de la Mare (Hénon [Côtes-du-Nord]), Saint-Cast, 1988. In the Etat Civil and other documents, such as the Inscription maritime, Marc Renault’s wife’s name is given as Françoise Hérissé rather than Jeanne. However, as the only Le Hérissé married to Renault living in Saint-Cast there can be no doubt as to her identity.

[61] Jacqueline Simpson, “Beyond Etiology: Interpreting Local Legends”, Fabula 24, 1983, pp. 227-8.