New Flags for an Ancient Country
Bannieloù nevez evit ur vro gozh

Dr Philippe Rault

Vice-President of la Société Bretonne de Vexillologie (KVV/SBV)
Councillor of the Confederate States Vexillological Association (CSVA)

Introduction

The Breton Vexillological Society (SBV) celebrated five years of existence on 23 June 2001. The XIX International Congress of Vexillology will be the opportunity for us to display to our colleagues from the five continents the results of the efforts made by our society in the matter of vexillological innovations in Brittany.

According to its constitution of 23 June 1996, the SBV determined several objectives in its rules. Besides "assembling the most exhaustive compilation possible of the flags of the towns, countries, associations and institutions in Brittany, past and present" the SBV would devote itself above all to the object of

♦ proposing the creation of vexillographically acceptable flags to the municipalities and institutions of Brittany,
♦ striving with all our force against 'logomania', a true cancer in the vexillography of our country,
♦ to make our contribution to the safeguarding, development and promotion of the Breton national cultural heritage.

If the first of these objectives corresponds to an idea of Vexillology which may be described as passive or contemplative, the others conform to the notion of "vexillologie engagée" or "pro-active vexillology" following the term adopted by our friend and theoretician of our science, Dr Peter Orenski.

Brittany was effectively an independent state for more than a millennium. Victim of the military aggression by the Kingdom of France in 1488, conquered by blood and iron, pillaged and ruined, our country was forcibly annexed as an autonomous province of France in 1532. Then our autonomy itself was unilaterally and illegally abrogated by the revolutionary government in 1789, After more than five centuries of French domination, in spite of, or possibly because of the oppression of Breton nationality and culture under French domination, the last decade has seen a renaissance which can only be described as spectacular. It was in this context of the cultural renaissance of the Breton nation that the SBV was established.

Our objective was to show our compatriots that it was possible for them to provide our countries and communities with flags and emblems, inspired by our national cultural heritage, while also conforming to the graphic rules of Vexillology. We immediately insisted on the need to resist the idea of logos. These are not just harmless graphics. In this context they have the effect, for those in power and who are at best indifferent to. and at worst actively hostile towards. the Breton identity, due to cosmopolitanism and so-called "political correctness", to sever our people from their national roots and supplant their emblems and traditional symbolic foundations by replacing them with designs lacking soul and completely divorced from tradition.

To this we may add that in Brittany (following the example of France proper) 90% of the communities, and towns in particular, lack correct flags, and are more and more afflicted with the imposition of logo-monstrosities, printed on white bed-sheets and covered with illegible inscriptions. In the reverse case of their Spanish, Swiss and (luckiest of all!) Czech counterparts, who live in countries where each town already has a vexillologically perfect flag. Breton vexillologists can do no other than fling themselves, body and soul, into pro-active, militant Vexillology, in an attempt to remedy such an emblematically disastrous situation.

The practical aim of national, pro-active Vexillology on the part of the SBV, is to give Brittany an historically-rooted vexillological iconography. This is summarised in the battle-cry of our society: "Towards an ever-increasingly and better be-flagged Brittany!"

This XIX International Congress provides the occasion to present to you our first achievements in this field.

The Flag of the Bigouden Country

The first success in the matter of good quality vexillological innovation pre-dated the creation of the SBV. This was the design and launch of the flag of the Bigouden Country (*Bro-Vigoudenn*) by Bernard Le Brun, the highly talented vexillographer and heraldist, member of the heraldry commission of the General Council of Finistère and designer of the arms of some fifty communes of that département. It was only natural that at the foundation of the SBV, he assumed the presidency.

If the success of the Bigouden flag is not, strictly speaking, an achievement of the SBV, dating as it does to before our foundation, the fact that it was the work of our future president, and that this achievement is a perfect example of pro-active Vexillology as we conceive that to be, it is only natural to include it in this account,

in so far as, for our society, this episode constitutes the archetype of a well-realised project from which we continually draw inspiration.

The Bigouden Country is part of the province of Cornouaille (*Kernev*). In essence it is a purely cultural unit, defined by a form of traditional dress, characterised by shimmering yellow and orange embroideries on black costumes. It comprises twenty communes, six of which are fishing ports and six holiday resorts. This area has Pont-l'Abbé (*Pont an Abad*) as its capital, and derives its name from the traditional headdress of the women. It has a population of 50,000 strong-minded and enterprising people.

To symbolise this country, at the end of the 1980s, the Association for the Promotion of the Bigouden Country (APPB – an official association of elected local people) chose a disastrous logo-monstrosity (Fig. 1). This was a white background, charged with a sketch of a ship in blue, rigged orange, accompanied by the inscription "PAYS BIGOUDEN" in red. Oddly enough, the sketch of the ship showed it travelling in the direction opposite from that indicated by the billow of the sail. Even among members of the APPB, this design, which appeared on stickers and as a flag, was heavily criticised. In an article entitled "Nil Points for the Bigouden Country Logo", Mr Michel le Roy, member of the cultural commission of the APPB, expressed himself in these terms:

"This Bigouden logo might as well represent Grande Motte (a port on the Mediterranean coast of France). Is the intention to extirpate any reference to Brittany in this sketch? In bowing to modernity, everything resembles everything else. Why single out only the sea as the symbol for the region? No regard is shown for the inland areas, nor for any offence which may be given to them. Who decided on this new emblem?"
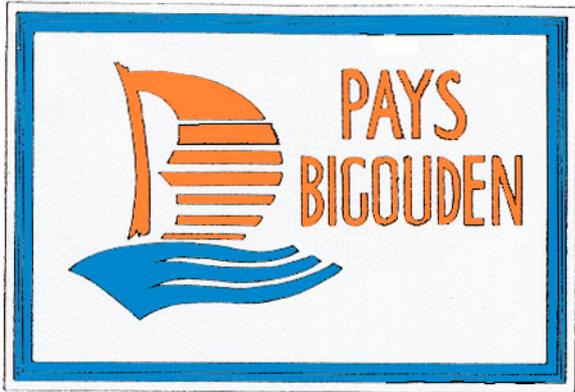

1. First Bigouden Flag

Following on this declaration, Mr Bernard Le Brun was approached by officials of the APPB, to invite him to investigate the creation of a proper flag for the Bigouden Country.

In choosing the colours for the new flag, Bernard Le Brun referred to the livery colours of the arms of Pont l'Abbé (*or a lion gules armed and langued azure*), hence yellow and red. Then he sought the best way of portraying the twenty communes, divided among three cantons.

Bernard had already designed two projects. The first (Fig. 2) was a simple checked field of twenty squares in yellow and red, representing the twenty communes of the area. The other (Fig. 3) was a yellow flag, charged with the red lion of Pont lAbbé towards the hoist, with above and below two red bands each charged with ten spots of yellow counter-ermine. These projects served him as a starting point for further research.
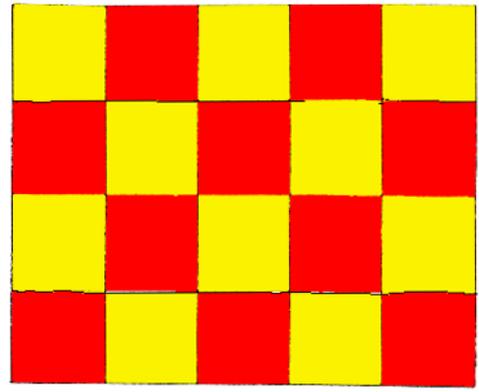
2. Initial Bigouden Idea
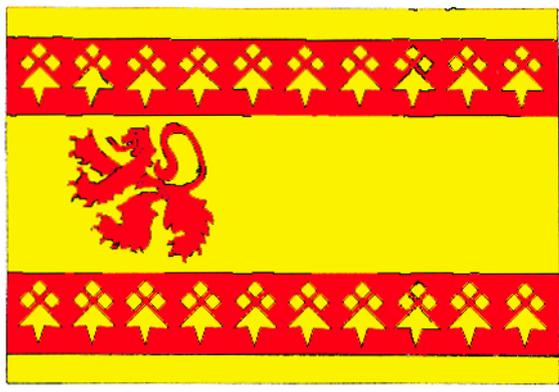
3. Initial Bigouden Idea

In April 1992, three sketches were submitted to the cultural commission of the APPB. The first (Fig. 4) consisted of a yellow flag with three red horizontal stripes, the centre one being broken near the hoist by a red lion passant, girdled by twenty ermine spots also red, arranged in quincunx formation on two circles. The second (Fig. 5) was a yellow flag charged with a red lion girdled by twenty red ermine spots, the entire emblem encircled by three red rings representing the three cantons of the Bigouden Country. The final design (Fig. 6) was a yellow flag in the ratio of 2:3, the hoist third charged with twenty red ermine spots in quincunx, arranged in eight rows of three and two, the remaining two thirds being divided into five horizontal stripes alternately red and yellow. The three red stripes represented the three cantons of the country and the two yellow the two "communities of communes".

4. APPB Submission
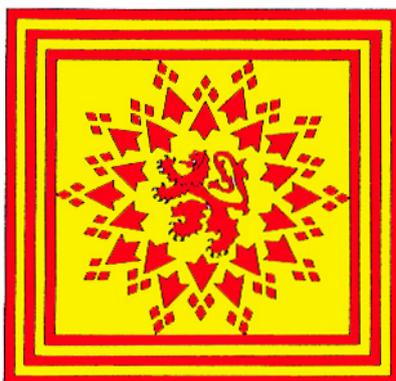
5. APPB Submission
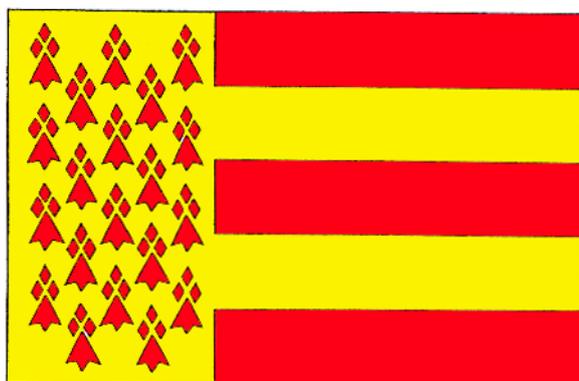
6. APPB Submission

At the end of October 1992, the APPB accepted this final suggestion, but some of the elected members made known their wish to show twenty-three ermine spots. This would have annexed the communes of Guiler, Plonéïs and Gourlizon which, though lacking the Bigouden culture, belonged to the canton of Plogastel Saint Germain, 90% of the territory of which was in the Bigouden Country. The president of the APPB having declared There will be twenty-three ermine spots or there will be no flag, this rapidly became the accepted view. In the general hubbub, other members of the APPB succeeded in demanding that the colour red, which appeared on the arms of Pont lAbbé, be replaced on the flag by orange, taken from the famous embroideries on traditional Bigouden costume.

From this moment there developed a full-scale controversy between the partisans of red and those supporting orange. We should also note that all these happenings were occurring without any consultation with Bernard Le Brun. Nor was he invited to the official conference of November 1992, where the new flag was unfurled and adopted.

This first Bigouden flag (Fig. 7) was produced in 250 copies measuring 1.20 x 1.80m and at first won great success with the local population. Often in company with the Gwenn-ha-Du, the modern Breton national flag, it took part in all the festivals and fairs, flew in front of town halls and many Bigouden businesses, accompanied local folklore groups across France and the wider world, and won its labour credentials on the barricades of the Breton fishermen during the riots of 4 February 1994 in Rennes, where it covered itself with glory. Filmed by the cameras of the world television services on this occasion, it challenged the vexillologists who saw it on their screens. It was mentioned in Flagmaster; it became accepted as something new in Breton vexillology.
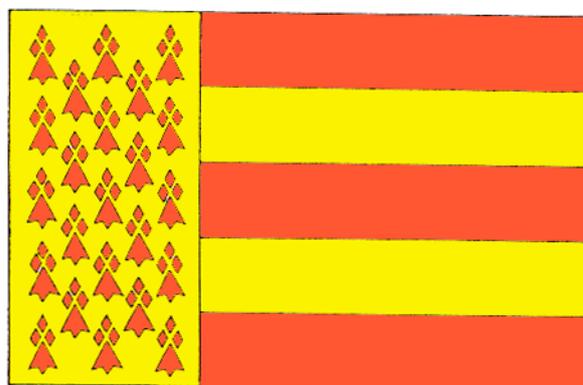

7. November 1992 Flag

Meanwhile, Bernard Le Brun had taken steps regarding the directors of the APPB, to have certain of the decisions revised. On 24 June 1996 (the day after the foundation of the SBV), a meeting of officials of the APPB with Bernard Le Brun, newly invested with the weight of his position as President of the SBV, provided agreement on several points for the development of a second version of the Bigouden flag (Fig. 8).

♦ The red, used in heraldry, would replace the orange, inspired by clothing. Besides it had become evident after two years' experience that the juxtaposition of the orange and yellow provided poor contrast and that this combination was not successful in resisting the ravages of sun and rain.
♦ The unnecessary vertical stroke which divided the field of the flag arbitrarily into two portions 1/3 and 2/3 was removed.
♦ The number of ermine spots would be decided by agreement after consultations with the non-Bigouden communes within the canton of Plogastel, as to whether they wished to be represented on the flag.

Thus was born the present flag of Bigouden (Fig. 8), which has the ratio of 2:3 and is yellow and red. The first third from the hoist is charged with twenty-two ermine spots (the commune of Plonéïs having declined to be represented on the flag) which are arranged in quincunx, in eight rows of alternate numbers of spots, two and three. The remaining two thirds of the field are occupied by five equal horizontal stripes alternating red and yellow.
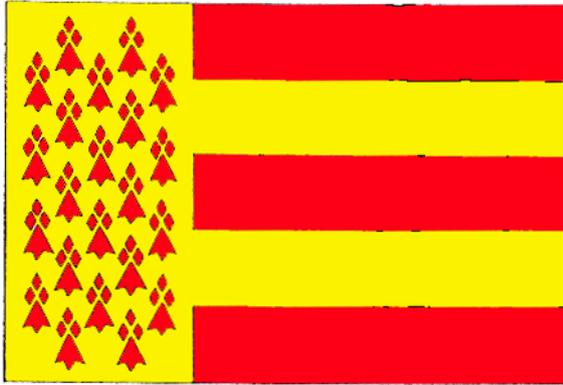
8. The Flag of the Bigouden Country

We may note for the purpose of this short history, the use at one local festival of a flag simply halved in yellow and red, by an individual who no doubt had been unable to procure a Bigouden flag, due to their having been sold out.

The Flag of Trégor

The creation of flags for the nine traditional Breton countries or bishoprics, none of which possessed one, constituted a major vexillological event, and was the first wide-ranging task to which the young Breton Vexillological Society committed itself at the moment of its foundation.

These nine traditional bishoprics which comprise historic Brittany, constituted provincial divisions, in a country where the life of the inhabitants was centred upon the church: parish, diaconate, archdiaconate, bishopric.

This grand idea took root at the beginning of 1996, in the fertile mind of Yoran Delacour, sales manager of the publisher Coop Breizh in Spézet (*Speied*) Cornouaille. In order to bring back into popularity the idea of the traditional Breton province, as opposed to the French revolutionary *départments*, which were the arbitrary, colonial impositions of an occupying power, Yoran had decided to produce table-top flags, 12 x 18cm of those provinces, and to make them available for sale to the public. They did not exist? So what? Nature abhors a vacuum, as does vexillology. So he invented them!

However, five of these new flags were vexillologically questionable, because they were in fact the heraldic banners of the capitals of the provinces (St Brieuc, St Malo, Vannes, Nantes and Rennes) which really repre-

sented only those towns, rather than the whole of the province. The flag suggested for Trégor (Fig. 9) was just a simplified version of the flag of St Yves (Fig. 10), the armorial banner of the national saint of Brittany, where the engrailed cross had been replaced by a straight-armed cross. St Yves being the patron of all of Brittany, he could not be limited to represent only Trégor, whose patron saint was St Tudwal.
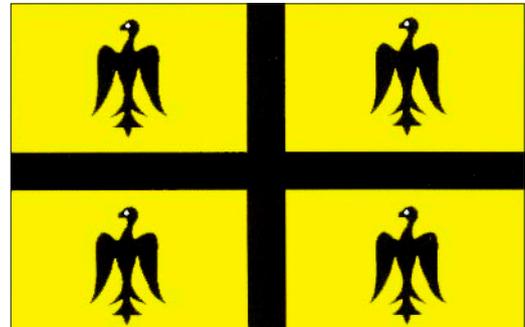

9. Suggested Trégor Flag
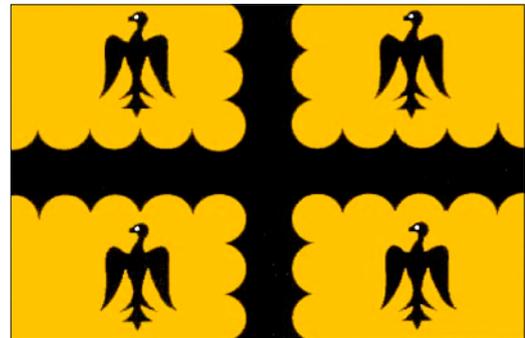
10. Flag of St Yves

The SBV twice assembled a vexillographic commission which, with the collaboration of Yoran Delacour, provided each of the Breton provinces with its own special new flag on 12 January 1997[1]. They would next be produced as table-top flags by Coop Breizh. To the present time, only the flags of Trégor and Léon have been manufactured full-size 1 x 1.50m, the latter by an initiative separate from the SBV. Here we shall present the history of the flag of Trégor.

The suggestion by Yoran Delacour (Fig. 9) was rejected as an inappropriate variation on the flag of St Yves, which is a purely religious flag.

Bernard Le Brun had made an original suggestion (Fig. 11), inspired by the flag of St Yves, very popular in Trégor. He added a charge of a black triple papal cross, with four black ermine spots in the canton. In fact Tudwal, whose surname was Pabu had been called the Holy Father or "*le Pape*" (the Pope) by his flock, hence the papal cross.
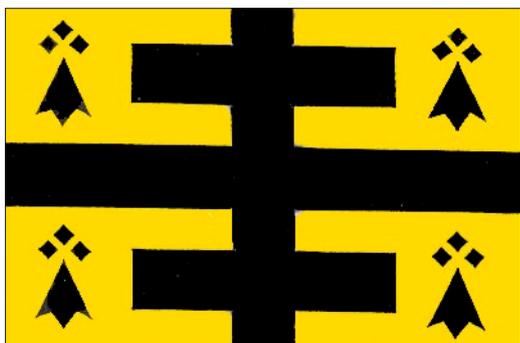
11. Le Brun's Suggestion

The SBV preferred another of the suggestions (Fig. 12). This flag was yellow, charged with a black centred cross, with a red wyvern placed overall. The yellow and the black cross were taken from the flag of St Yves, who was a native of Trégor, and the red wyvern was the emblem of St Tudwal, Trégors patron. Later on the design of the red wyvern was revised by the great artist Jakez Derouët, which in turn gave birth to the definitive flag of Trégor (Fig. 13).

12. SBV's Preference

13. Jakez Derouët's Wyvern

Very soon our Trégor-based colleagues in the SBV undertook the mission to produce Trégor flags in 1 x 1.50m size, and to make them available to the public, an indispensable condition if the new emblem were not to be stillborn. At the time of the first Congress of the SBV in Dinard, November 1997, a subscription was initiated, then relayed to the local press and the *Mouvement Breton*. When the number of subscribers was sufficient, a first run of 50 flags was produced.

The inauguration of the new flag was organised under the auspices of the SBV, and forms a perfect example of propaganda for forward-thinking, militant, pro-active Vexillology. A meeting was held in the Festival Hall of Trézélan (Trégor) on 21 March 1998. This was the greatest crowd-drawer of all the SBVs demonstrations. More than 60 participants crowded into the hall, decorated with dozens of flags. The new flag of Trégor was presented to the local press and television. The following day the event was front-page news, complete with colour photograph in the weekly newspaper *Le Trégor*. At midday, the flag was solemnly hoisted on a flagpole 6 metres tall, outside the hall and in public, to the sound of the Breton pipes playing *Hymn to the Flag of Trégor* for the occasion.

This excellent launch certainly contributed to the success which this flag has had among the public of Trégor. The Trégor flag is now well-known and rooted in Breton cultural life.

The burgee of the Yacht Club of Tréguier/Landreger, the capital of Trégor is based on the design of the Trégor flag (Fig. 13a). It consists of a white triangular pennant with a black cross, recalling the ancient Breton marine ensign, with a yellow canton charged with the red wyvern of St Tudwal. This too was a great success with the public. It measures 30 x 50cm.

13a Yacht Club of Tréguier/Landreger

Another interesting initiative by the SBV was to have produced in flags of 1 x 1.50 m the armorial banner of Brittany, the Simple Ermine (Fig. 14) which until then had been unavailable, and which also enjoyed great success. This historic flag, the personal banner of our Dukes is used to render them homage on many occasions, for example to commemorate in flags the birthday of our glorious Duchess Anne (25 January 1476).
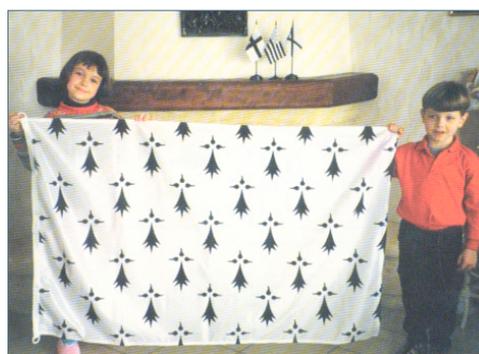
14. Simple Ermine

Notes:

1   For the detail on the working out of the nine flags of the Breton provinces, see the article by this author devoted to this subject in *Ar Banniel*, No 2, Spring 1997.

The Flag of the Town of Dinard

Dinard "Pearl of the Emerald Coast", "the most beautiful coastal site in Europe" was in origin simply the port outlet for the parish of Saint-Enogat, situated in the Country of St Malo on the left bank of the estuary of the river Rance. This particularly enchanting place, blessed by the Gulf Stream with a micro-climate of sub-tropical type, was noted during the Second Empire for several wealthy business-men, who built sumptuous, Victorian-style villas there. Within a few decades a great spa, famous internationally, had been built. Until 1914, this was the most celebrated (and the most expensive!) seaside resort in Europe, well before Deauville and St Tropez became famous.

It was in 1996 that my friend, Dr Marius Mallet, mayor of Dinard, asked for a meeting with our Society, to launch a new flag for his town. The only requirement was that the flag must include a bear, commemorating King Arthur, who was the origin of the town's name: The Fort of the Bear (*Dinarthù*) which came to be in Breton successively *Dinarth* and *Dinarzh* and then in French *Dinart*, transformed alas in the XIX century into *Dinard*.

The work of the SBV developed in three phases. The Society first presented the municipality with an initial series of nine suggestions. True to his reputation as the premier vexillographer of Brittany, our President, Bernard Le Brun submitted seven of them.

The first two had been designed before M. Mallet made his request, and did not include a bear. The first (Fig. 15) reproduced the armorial banner of the Priory of Dinard, green with a cross ermine and with a yellow castle in the canton, representing the Din Arthù. The other (Fig. 16), a simple variant on the first, placed the yellow castle in the centre of the cross.
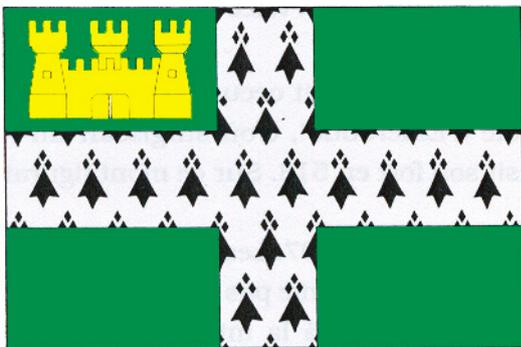
15. Initial Idea
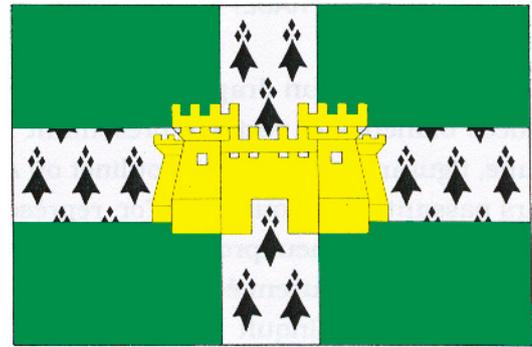
16. Initial Idea

The third suggestion (Fig. 17) charged the same armorial banner with a black bear rampant, having yellow claws and surmounted by a yellow mural crown. The crowned bear represented King Arthur. Placing the black bear on the ermine cross was an unfortunate choice, as it visually mingled with the black ermine spots. Changing its colour to ochre was considered.


17. Initial Idea

The next suggestion (Fig. 18) reversed the arms of the Priory of Dinard into an ermine flag with a green cross. More precisely, it consisted of a white flag with a green cross and charged with five black ermine spots in each quarter, the cross in turn charged with a yellow bear rampant surmounted by a yellow mural crown.


18. Initial Idea

The fifth offering (Fig. 19) returned to the traditional armorial banner, with the addition of a gold bear rampant in the first quarter, and a gold castle in each of the other three, evoking the three crowns on the attributed arms of Arthur. These were blue with three gold crowns, because he was king of the "Three Britains" – "Lesser Britain" (Brittany), Great Britain and Scotland.
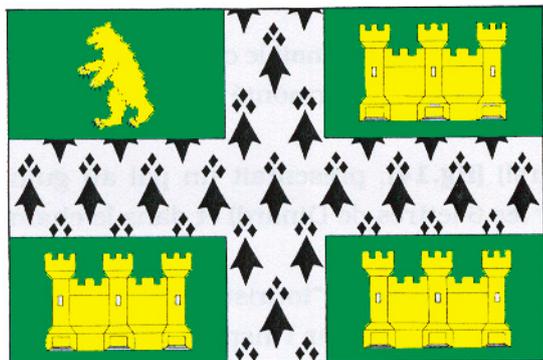
19. Initial Idea

Bernard Le Brun's last two suggestions (Figs 20 and 21) offered a modernised version of Dinard's armorial banner. This was a green flag with a white cross off-centred to both hoist and upper edge and bearing nine black ermine spots, with a yellow castle in the second quarter and a bear in the fourth. As the polar bear in Fig 20 was incompatible with the subtropical climate of Dinard, a preferable alternative was in Fig 21, with the bear made yellow , and passant in the style of the bear of the Canton of Berne.
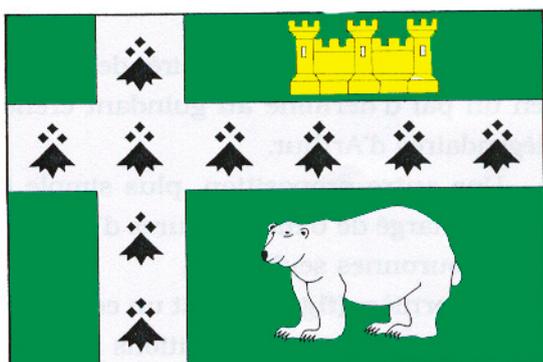

20. Le Brun's Final Ideas
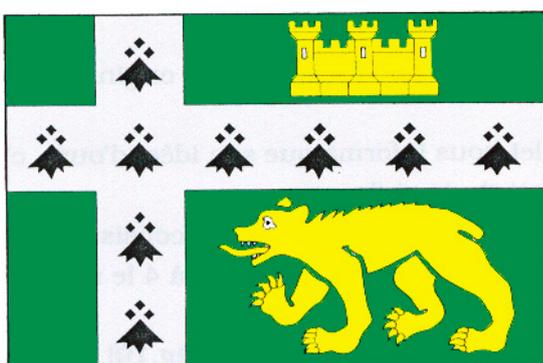
21. Le Brun's Final Ideas

Yet another suggestion was offered (Fig. 22). This had no bear, but rather the constellation of "The Great Bear", also known as "Arthur's Chariot". This is what Arthur used to cross the sea and come to Dinard, which he liberated from the Freisian pirates in the spring of AD 513. The stars were made into ermine spots, the figure of seven referring also to the seven letters in the name "Dinarzh," and the six waves representing the six letters

of "Dinard". More prosaically, the Great Bear symbolised the north (in this case the north of Brittany) and the waves showed the sea, the pride of Dinard. The yellow and blue colours recalled the assigned arms of Arthur.
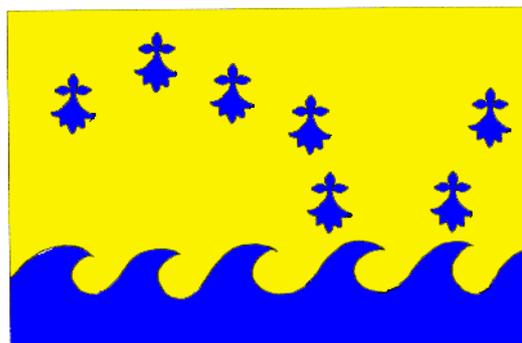
22. Arthur's Chariot Design

I offered a personal suggestion (Fig. 23) which attempted to symbolise the etymology of Dinard. This was a sky-blue flag, the lower third of which consisted of four wavy horizontal lines in white and green, symbolising the sea and the "Emerald Coast", from which arose a yellow mountain, representing the Point du Moulinet where Arthur built his fort in AD 513. On this mountain appeared an ochre bear *passant*, symbolising Arthur.

23. Author's Design

I submitted these nine suggestions to the mayor of Dinard in the spring of 1997. The seven suggestions of Bernard Le Brun were set aside with the comment: "At any rate, I do not like green." Divi Kervella's offering did not convince M. Mallet, who still preferred his bear. As for mine, he summed it up with the remark, "This one is a flag for a carnival!" At the end of this first phase, we were right back where we had started.

Later, two new ideas occurred to me. The first, which I called the "tourist inspiration" was to give Dinard a flag of blue and white stripes, in the style of the beach tents, sunshades and awnings of the town. In an attempt to create uniformity, since his arrival in the post of Mayor in 1989, Marius Mallet had made the blue and white stripes which appeared on all these textile items the new colours of the town. Blue and yellow were the (admittedly legendary) colours of Arthur, so a crowned black bear rampant should appear at the hoist on a yellow field. As

the number of blue and white stripes had no meaning, I chose an even number, to avoid any suggestion that they were a specific number, and framed them with two dark stripes. A striped field of ten seemed to me the most aesthetic, otherwise the stripes would be too fine. The striped field also symbolised the sea, while the yellow hoist section stood for the magnificent sandy beaches at Dinard, and also the sun which gilds them in summer. For the sake of originality, I suggested a wavy line to separate the yellow hoist and the stripes of the fly (Fig. 24) as an additional reference to the sea. Alternatively the separation could be arched (Fig. 25).

24. Author's Design

25. Author's Design

The other idea, which I called the "historic inspiration" came to me in considering the flag of the town of Dinan, which is red with a yellow castle and an ermine chief (upper horizontal stripe). I thought of a blue flag charged with a crowned yellow bear passant, and an ermine chief "embattled" (Fig. 26). The embattling recalled the legend of Din Arthù.
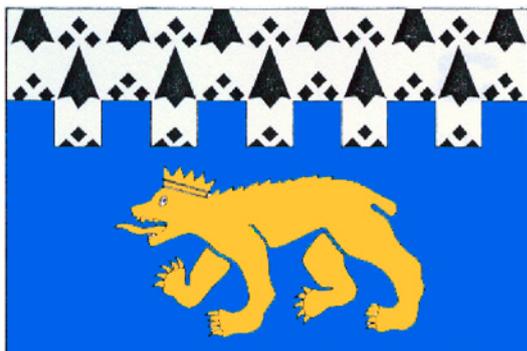
26. Author's Design

Bernard Le Brun, who had been kind enough to draw all these suggestions, added three more to them. The first, (Fig. 27), inspired by my last suggestion, changed the ermine chief embattled into an ermine pale at the staff, with a crenellated edge; the bear was crowned with three legendary crowns of Arthur.
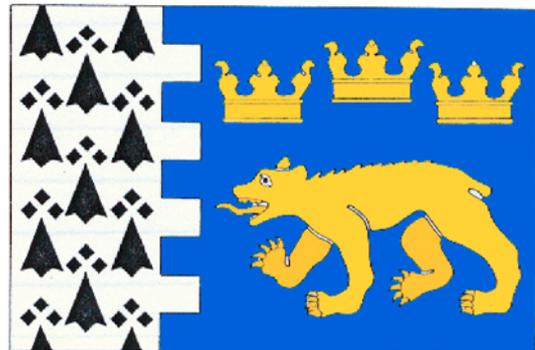
27. Bernard Le Brun's Design

Another suggestion, simpler but without the bear (Fig. 28), offered a white pale at the hoist charged with six black ermine spots (for the six letters of "Dinard"), and with the field bearing only the three crowns. The last suggestion (Fig. 29), was a compromise between the "tourist" and "historic" inspirations.
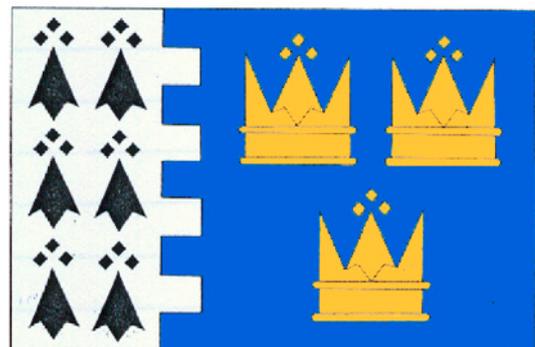
28. Bernard Le Brun's Design

29. Bernard Le Brun's Design

I offered these suggestions to M. Mallet in the summer of 1997 and he chose the "tourist inspiration", to be precise, Fig 24. He asked that the separation between the yellow field and the striped fly be straight, that the crown be placed above the head of the bear, rather than directly upon it, and that the bear itself be redrawn. The upshot of this phase was that the SBV had succeeded in

selling an acceptable design to the mayoralty of Dinard.

The third phase, which consisted in the restatement of the details of the bear, was entrusted to our colleague and friend, Jakez Derouët, a professional stylist. His first bear (Fig. 30) had the advantage of being unique, dynamic, thoroughbred and original, but it was judged as too frightening and aggressive. It had to be made a bit more "smoothed out" (Fig. 31) but M. Mallet told us that his ideal bear was that of the city of Berlin. We would have to delete its "virile" attributes. Thus, inspired by the Berlin bear (designed by Dr Ottfried Neubecker)(Fig. 32) the final modifications consisted in giving the animal a less curved form, in eliminating the white lines and reducing the number of points on the crown from 5 to 4.

30. Jakez Derouët's First Bear

31. Smoother Bear

32. Final Bear

At this juncture, the town of Dinard found itself the possessor of a truly successful flag (Fig. 33), of which it could truly be proud. It was hoisted for the first time on the seafront on 8 July 1998 and received great popular acceptance thereafter. It thus replaced the old municipal flag (Fig. 34), derived from the armorial banner by the addition of four red pales in each quarter, which was un-heraldic and for which no-one could provide an explanation. Moreover the unfortunate ermine spots on the cross were weirdly halved black and white, giving the impression of "half-spots". The Celtic Circle of Dinard itself, used a true armorial banner (Fig. 35) or more precisely a green flag with a white cross charged with eleven black ermine spots.

33. The Flag of Dinard
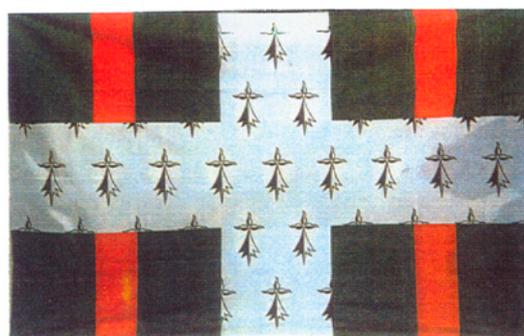
34. The Old Flag of Dinard
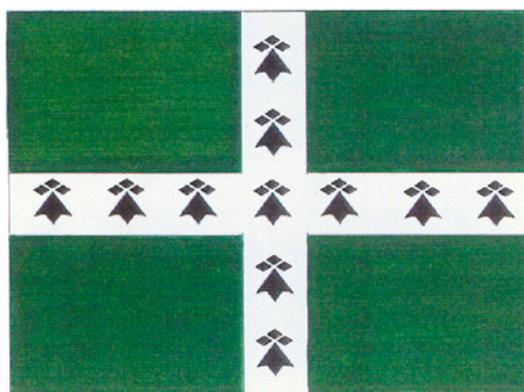
35. Celtic Circle of Dinard

The concept and the creation of the flag of Dinard was the first great victory of the SBV in its attempt to endow the Breton collectivities with identity-giving flags, as opposed to the logo-monstrosities then in fashion.

The Flag of Breton Youth

On 8 June 1997, some of our colleagues who were participating at Bains sur Oust in the commemoration of the battle of Ballon[2] were struck by the presence at the time of a hand-made flag, reproducing the Flag of

Breton Youth (*Banniel Yaouankiz Breizh*), of the old Breton National Party (Fig. 36). This flag, painted on cloth, was nevertheless incorrect, in terms of the black cross being placed centrally and the left-hand rotation of the triskell[5]. The idea occurred to some of us to revive this flag, fallen into oblivion, yet which remains one of the most attractive successes of Breton vexillography.

36. Hand-made Breton Youth Flag

It was in 1941 that the Breton National Party (PNB) created a youth movement, which would function at the behest of the party. It was named *Bagadoù Stourm* (BS – Combat Units). They were under the command of Yann Goulet, a fine-arts student and future well-known sculptor, who in the 1970s in Ireland, would become the spokesman for the Breton Liberation Front (FLB).

The flag of the *Bagadoù Stourm* (Fig. 37) was an off-centred black cross, in the centre of which appeared a right-hand rotating triskell in yellow-orange, placed on a black, white-bordered disc. The black cross was cotised with a narrow yellow-orange line (at least that is how we thought of it originally). The entire design was placed on a white field. Yann Goulet and Célestin Laine, who designed this flag, may have been inspired by the *Reichskriegsflagge* of the *Wehrmacht*, hence the off-centred cross.
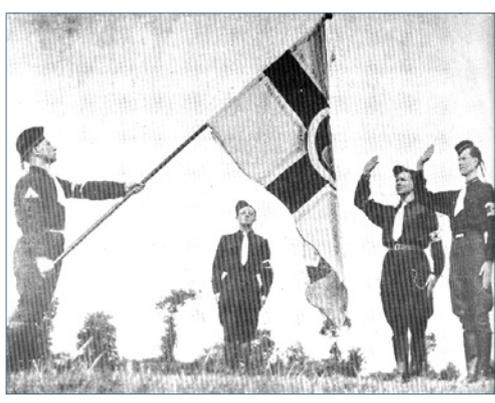
37. *Bagadoù Stourm*

This "Flag of Youth" was officially adopted and presented on 7 September 1941 at the time of the Congress of the activists of the PNB. Contemporary photographs show the home-made character of these flags, which were certainly painted. The size of the cross arms, the discs and the triskells differ from one flag to the next. In addition in the depiction of the triskell, the branches spiral to a greater or lesser extent. The yellow-orange colour on these flags, original to Breton Vexillology, could have been inspired by some Breton Costumes, notably those of Bigouden.

The central disc on the flag, bearing the triskell, was in fact an exact reproduction of the reverse of the badge of the PNB (Fig. 38). This badge was 15cm in diameter.

38. Triskell

As was the custom among most of the political parties in Europe in the 1930s and 1940s (and not only among the fascist-style parties) the *Bagadoù Stourm* wore a complete uniform also designed by Goulet and Lainé. Despite appearances, neither the PNB nor the BS was a fascist group. Throughout the war, the PNB tried to walk the line of neutrality between the German Army and the French Resistance.

Before proceeding to the resurrection of the flag, so aesthetic in form and so charged with emotion for many Breton Nationalists, it was necessary to redefine the design, a difficult task which was entrusted to a talented professional designer. Taking as a starting point the contemporary photographs, the exact proportions of the flag were re-created. The details of the triskell were derived from the badge of the PNB. The result more than matched our hopes (Fig. 39). Regarding the shade of yellow on the triskell and the cotising of the cross, some sources referred to "yellow" and others to "orange", so it was decided to strike the happy medium and accept "yellow-orange", Pantone PMS 123.
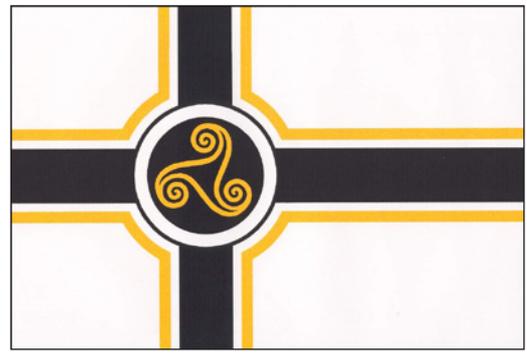
39. Redesign Breton Youth Flag

More recently a doubt has intruded regarding the exact shade of colour of the cotises. We first thought that it should be identical with that of the triskell, basing this on the colour plate published by Bernard Frelaut in his book *The Breton Nationalists 1939-1945* (1985), and also on more indirect pieces of evidence. In his recent work *The Breton Nationalists Under the Occupation* (January 2001), Kristian Hamon quotes an article from the PNB weekly journal *L'Heure Bretonne* (Brittany Today), published on 13 September 1941, which reported on the presentation of this flag during the Congress which had occurred six days previously. It states: The *Bagadoù Stourm* now have their own flag, besides the already popular *Gwenn-ha-Du*. This flag of our youth, with a black cross, a yellow triskell and blue stripes is eye-catching." So finally, was the cotising yellow-orange or blue. An historic investigation is now in progress, the result of which will be published in a future issue of *Ar Banniel*.

Be that as it may, a subscription was launched to produce a first issue of 140, in June 1999. This flag is today enjoying a second youth, especially among the militants of the Right-wing Breton nationalist party Adsav! (Rebirth). At least the flags of the Breton Youth now seen at the commemoration of Ballon (Fig. 40) are historically and vexillographically accurate (at least so we hope, while awaiting more complete evidence).

40. Commemoration of Ballon

Notes:

2   Ballon - the great victory of the Breton King Nevenoù over the Frankish army of Charles the Bald in June 845 AD, which established the independence of Brittany for seven centuries.

3   Cf the article "Aerial views of Ballon" in *Ar Banniel* No 4, page 8.

The Flag of the Commune of Le Juch

Wanting to give its centenary a degree of pageantry, the little commune (600 inhabitants) of Le Juch/*Ar Yeuc'h* in western Cornouaille, near Douarnenez, decided to organise a series of festivities, over seven days, the starting point of which would be Sunday, 4 April 1999, the first day of this memorial week. The high water mark of these festivities would be the presentation and consecration of a flag representing Le Juch. But this flag had yet to be created.

The idea originated with M Yves L'abbé, municipal councillor of Le Juch and director of the prestigious Breton cultural review *Ar Men* (The Rock). He telephoned me to my home to ask me to create a flag for his commune. I at once put him in contact with Bernard Le Brun, and things progressed rapidly, thanks to the excellent cooperation which existed between these two citizens of Lower Cornouaille.

Le Juch, a very ancient and important barony had for long used the arms of its feudal lords, who had disappeared around the end of the 15th century. The arms were blue with a white lion rampant, with red claws and tongue. This heraldic animal was retained unchanged as the basis of the future emblem.

The first idea presented (Fig. 41) took the whole of the local arms, off-setting the lion towards the hoist. The second (Fig. 42) adopted the principal that if the lion rampant fitted the form of a shield, a lion couchant might better suit the horizontal format of a flag.
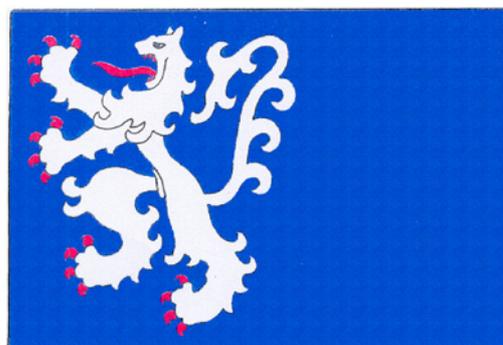

41. Initial Idea
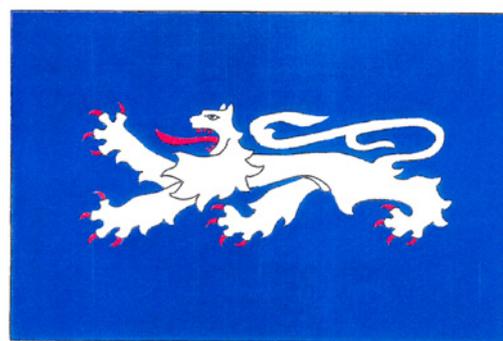
42. Initial Idea

The last two ideas (Figs 43 & 44) allowed themselves rather more imagination, in particular by the use of the cross and the introduction of black ermine spots, originally with no special meaning on the part of the designer.

43. Initial Idea
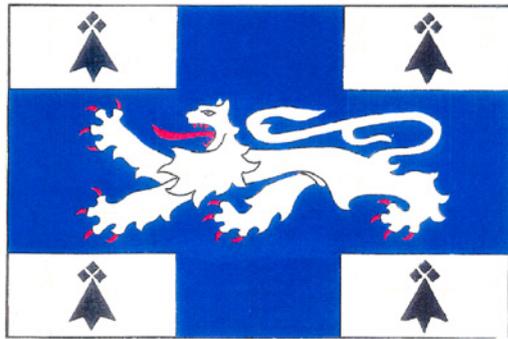
44. Initial Idea

Finally the municipal council, presided over by M. R. Cloarec, the mayor, chose the third suggestion which embodied, in their opinion the most local symbols. This was the commune's shield superimposed on a cross which evoked (the council considered) the participation of the Barons of Le Juch in the first Crusades The blue cross was blue, to conform with Le Juch belonging to the Glazik country (where the men wear a traditional costume of blue). The number of ermine spots which flanked the cross indicated the four quarters which comprised the commune. (That was lucky!)

We should mention here that, when Bernard Le Brun designed the future flag of Le Juch, he allowed himself to be guided solely by his artistic flair, without allotting specific symbolism to the various elements of the flag:- municipal shield in the centre (classic positioning), a cross (why not?) in blue (from the field of the arms) and four ermine spots (because there were four quarters to fill and the ermine spot is Bernard's graphic signature). What was remarkable was that afterwards the municipal council were able to find a local meaning for each of these elements.

The wish of a great number of the inhabitants to possess the communal emblem and to make it known, urged the municipality to request Bernard to provide the pattern for a vertical banner, 12 x 18cm, which could be used to decorate the interior of the cars of the inhabitants (Fig. 45). The first convincing result of this initiative was seen on the day of the flag's inauguration, when the streets of the town appeared beautifully decorated with garlands formed by these banners.

45. Vertical Banner

On the day of the inauguration, the new flag was the pivotal point and the star of the festivities. Solemnly carried by eight small children of the commune, it was borne through the streets of the town, before being hoisted in front of the Town Hall amid scenes of great emotion. The first output of these 1.20 x 1.80m flags was soon sold out, so successful was its reception by the population. The Le Juch flag also flies proudly before the Town Hall in the city of Périgord, France, which is twinned with Le Juch. We may hope that it will make the Périgordians jealous and give them some good ideas for a flag of their own.

The matter of the flag of Le Juch was a model of its type. There was perfect cooperation between the elected representatives (highly motivated!) with the experts, speed and quality of decision-making, an excellent introduction and the active involvement of the population. It was a most successful example of pro-active vexillology. It was a total success largely due to the presence of a patriot who was competent in the field right in the municipal council – the opposite of the flag of Winchester, Massachusetts, USA.[4].

Note:

4   See the article by Peter Orenski in No 200 of *Flag Bulletin* for the incredible story of the flag of this town where Dr Whitney Smith lives.

The Raga Breizh

In September 1996 a movement of young Bretons was established, with the name of *Breizh Positive*. Its ambition is to "raise high the colours of a Brittany which ultimately will be free, equal and fraternal" with a programme based on "defence of the language, federalism, interdependent economy, collective enterprise". One of its slogans was "Give colours to the *Gwenn-ha-Du*." This is why the members adopted as their emblem the *Raga Breizh*, also called *Breizh Liesliv* (Multicoloured Brittany), which had already been used since 1994 by the Breton student association *Dazont* (The Future).

It consisted of a *Gwenn-ha-Du* in which the five black stripes were replaced by bands of different colours. From top to bottom these were yellow, red, violet, blue and

green (although this order was variable). Yellow symbolised the richness of the Breton language and culture; red was for the struggles for social equality and solidarity; violet represented equality between the sexes; blue was for democracy and Europe; green symbolised ecology. This flag was inspired by that of the Basque party, *Herri Batasuna*, in which the original red and green of the Basque flag is replaced by the colours of the rainbow.

To the present, this flag exists only on stamps and as home-made flags, rough and ready, painted onto cloth (Fig. 46). There is one exception, a giant *Raga Breizh* of 6 x 9m, used in demonstrations (Fig. 47).

46. Example *Raga Breizh*

47. Giant *Raga Breizh*

During its 3rd Congress held at Dinard in October 1999, the SBV launched the idea of a small subscription for the making of sewn flags. The creation of eleven flags 1.20 x 1.80m was entrusted to our friend Robin Ashburner, owner of Flagmakers of Abertawe, Wales, who was present at Dinard with a delegation from the Flag Institute. Breton flag-makers seem not to stock violet material. This allows me to show a flag which is vexillographically successful and which deserves its success (Fig. 48).

48. The *Raga Breizh*

The Flag of Poher

Le Poher/*Poc'hêr* or Upper Cornouaille is an ancient subdivision of the former bishopric of Quimper. It has had no legal existence since 1789 and its territory is divided among three *départements*.

Bernard Le Brun originated the idea for a flag of Le Poher, three months before the SBV was even founded. Shortly after the great success of the launch of the flag of the Bigouden Country, he had the idea to repeat the exploit in favour of Le Poher, situated in the centre-west of Brittany.

On 15 March 1996 he sent a letter to M. Jean-Pierre Jeudy, former mayor of Carhaix, the historic capital of Le Poher. In this, taking the example of the success of the Bigouden flag, he considered "that it would be a good thing, helping to re-group all the local energies, if the entire region, at the time suffering difficulties, were to group around a flag of Le Poher." With this he offered two designs, which he explained in these terms:

"In these two sketches, the starting-point of the designs is the arms of the lordship of Le Poher, endowed by the Kings and Counts of Cornouaille, blazoned red, with two gold lions passant having red claws and tongues. The remainder of the design elements conform to the colours of the arms, and affirm the unity of this region with the whole of Brittany.

"Suggestion 1 (Fig. 49): lions *passant* of Le Poher occupy the field of a red flag, augmented at the hoist with a yellow triangle, the height being half the base, charged with an elongated ermine spot. Symbolism: two lions, one country.

49. Suggestion 1

"Suggestion 2 (Fig. 50): on a yellow field, three rows of six red ermine spots are partly overlain by a red triangle, the base of which is the hoist and which extends to the centre of the fly, charged with two gold lions *passant*. Symbolism: Le Poher is a region set in the centre of Brittany."

50. Suggestion 2

Despite a polite answer from M. Jeudy, this suggestion was shelved, as with so many others offered to our elected representatives.

Shortly after the establishment of the SBV, Bernard presented me with his numerous and talented vexillographic projects and, as a native and resident of Le Poher, the idea of a flag for my region attracted me. For me this was not simply a vexillological exercise, with the idea of creating a new flag to further enrich Breton symbology, but also, and above all, an act of militant Breton culture, so as to participate in the renewal of a 15-century-old country, abolished de jure by the French state since 1789 and chopped up between three *départements*, which had not been without negative impact on local life. We wanted to join in the rebirth of our true identity as citizens of Le Poher and as Bretons, and also to oppose the idea of the '*département*', a French-imposed arbitrary, colonial division, and an unnecessary subdivision, obsolete and incompatible with the development of the European structure.

The name Le Poher derives from the old Pou Caer, or "Country of the Fortress"; the fortress being Carhaix/Karaez. It was an ancient possession of the Counts of Cornouaille, a former archdiaconate of the bishopric of Quimper, and so has a rich history. Le Poher was for long the vital, prosperous and active centre of Breton culture. The area has also been faced with a whole series of quite specific problems, the solutions to which can only be found in the recognition of a local identity. These have included rural desertification, the threat of loss of employment and others. Reason enough to see the flags of Le Poher flying in all the aspects of this ancient country, to crystallise this renewed identity and to give it a strong emblem.

Of Bernard's two offerings, the second (Fig. 50) was for me a case of love at first sight. It was more original and of more appropriate symbolism than the first, which I thought too banal and looking far too much like the Norman armorial banner of two gold leopards on red. Coop Breizh had already produced table-top flags of Le Poher in 1997. It remained to launch the flag in full-size so as to endow it with a more realistic existence. During the III Congress of the SBV, we decided to organise a subscription to enable the production of the flag in 1 x 1.50m size. I was the chief organiser of the whole operation, and found inspiration in the success of the launch of the flag of Trégor.

My first step was to organise a press conference at the Tourist Information Bureau in Carhaix, to present the project and to find subscribers. Held in the presence of Bernard on 25 November 1999, this presentation had excellent coverage in the local press. Despite the tens of thousands of readers of these newspapers and a report on local radio, the net catch of the operation was only three subscribers. With a great deal of difficulty, the target of 50 subscribers was reached at the end of January 2000, and we decided to have 100 flags made. The colours chosen were PMS 032 red and PMS 116 yellow.

On Sunday, 19 March 2000, the official launch of the flag of Le Poher took place in Rostrenen (Fig. 51). The new flag was hoisted in the central square on a seven-metre flagpole, erected in front of the press office, with the permission of the owner. Facing a score of SBV militants, I delivered a speech in Breton, in which I recalled the import of this initiative. The speech was broadcast the following day on Radio Kreiz Breizh in the course of a full report on the event.


51. Launch in Rostrenen

Despite all this media exposure, the take-off of the new flag was decidedly slow. Local societies did not see fit to associate themselves with the idea, which was a pity. This resulted in a very modest start for this new emblem, among a population which had largely forgotten its history and which as yet did not see the interest and usefulness of this initiative.

*"Nothing great has a great beginning"* – William of Orange

The *Melen-ha-Gwer* & *Gwenn-ha-Ruz*

The great advantage of the modern striped Breton flag called *Gwenn-ha-Du* is that, while retaining the essential form but employing different colours, it is possible to create a whole series of new flags representing specific causes and bearing precise messages. One such example is the *Raga Breizh*. There is also a Breton flag in the colours of the European Union, yellow ermine spots on a blue canton and nine stripes alternating blue and yellow, thus showing a clear message (Fig. 52).
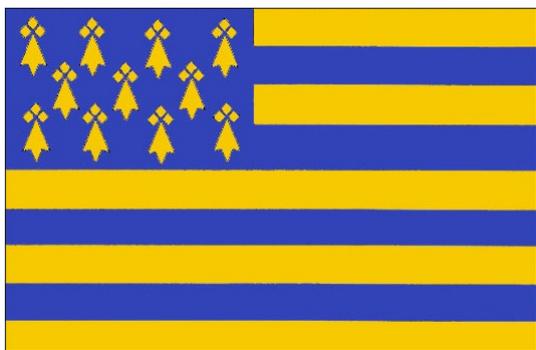
52. European Breton Flag

The *Melen-ha-Gwer* (yellow and green) (Fig. 53) was invented some years ago by a group of supporters of the Football Club of Nantes, whose colours are yellow and green, and whose football shirts have vertical yellow and green stripes. This flag existed only on stamps. Not only was this perfect as an emblem for the supporters of FC Nantes, but it served also as a battle flag for the return of the city of Nantes to the Region of Brittany.
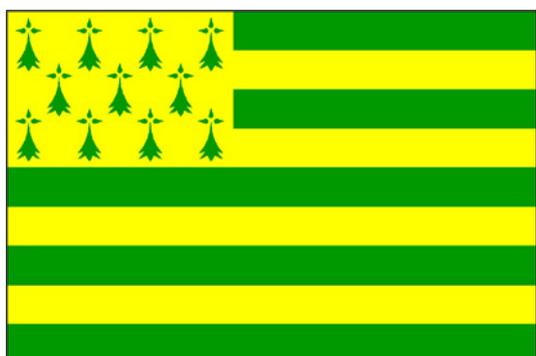
53. The *Melen-ha-Gwer*

In fact Nantes, the historic capital of the ancient and sovereign Duchy of Brittany, had been arbitrarily severed from the Region of Brittany by the French State in 1941, to become the capital of an artificial region, created out of a hotchpotch of territories and called the "Pays de la Loire".

In the summer of 2000, our SBV colleagues from the Nantes Country took the initiative to give real life to the *Melen-ha-Gwer*. After contacting numerous Breton cultural and political associations in the Nantes area, they organised a subscription to produce a first print of 200 *Melen-ha-Gwer* flags in 1 x 1.50m in size. These were made by our friend, Yann Le Mée. This initiative was rapidly crowned with success, as the first 200 flags sold like hot cakes, and a second batch was produced.

The eleven ermine spots in the canton could here symbolise the eleven players in a football team. This flag satisfied a real need on the part of the supporters of FC Nantes, who were not satisfied with just the *Gwenn-ha-Du*, common to the whole of Brittany. Nor was the *Gwenn-ha-Du* recognised in the official FC Nantes shop, which was completely commercial and downright hostile to everything Breton. Since the coming on the scene of the *Melen-ha-Gwer*, hundreds of supporters go to the

stadium with a personal flag which answers the slogan: "Brittany is yellow and green!" This flag effectively answers, with a powerful symbol, those in the so-called "Pays de la Loire" who seek to use FC Nantes as a tool of anti-Breton propaganda.

Through its form (that of the *Gwenn-ha-Du*) and its colours (those of FC Nantes), the *Melen-ha-Gwer* is not only the flag of the FC Nantes supporters. It is the best vexillological indication of the Breton character of Nantes and the fact that the département of Loire-Atlantique belongs by right to Brittany. Thanks to the initiative of the SBV, it will soon be visible in football stadiums, showing to millions of television viewers the indisputable fact that the Nantes country belongs to Brittany.

The *Gwenn-ha-Ruz* (white and red) is the emblem of the Breton trade union *Labour e Breizh* (Work in Brittany). It consists of a modern Breton flag, in which the ermine spots and black stripes are replaced by red, symbolising social claims. Several hand-made flags, painted on white cloth were seen in demonstrations. An artist captured the graphic significance of this flag (Fig. 54) and gave it a canton of the ermine plain, semé of ermine spots, symbolising the unnumbered mass of demonstrators following the trade union.
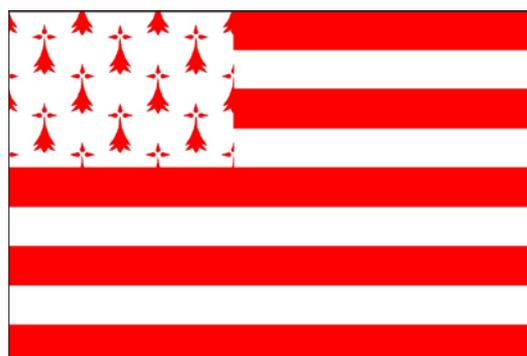

54. The *Gwen-ha-Ruz*

The Flag of the Retz Country

Situated just south of the Loire and bordered in the west by the Atlantic Ocean, the Retz country was conquered from the Frankish Kingdom by the Breton King Erispoù in 851 after the Breton military victory at Beslé. It was ceded to the Kingdom of Brittany by the Frankish King, Charles the Bald in the Treaty of Angers in 851 (which remains legally binding). The local population, comprising Gaulish Picts, closely related both culturally and linguistically to the conquering Bretons, had no problem integrating with the Breton nation, of which it formed part for eleven centuries. In 1941 the French State separated the département of Loire-Atlantique (which includes Retz) from Brittany, but the Breton feeling of the inhabitants remains strong, considering that in 2000 during a poll, two thirds of them declared themselves to be Bretons and demanded their reunion with the Breton region.

The Retz country possesses very ancient arms, gold

with a black cross and a banner of yellow with a black cross centred on the field. This was never much used. In 1996, Breton cultural militants of the Retz country decided to create a new flag for their country, which would permit them to reaffirm that Retz belonged to Brittany. At the end of that year, this flag was produced as a table-top flag 12 x 18cm, by the publisher Coop Breizh. Inspired by the flag of Nantes, it was a white flag, charged with a black fimbriated cross, with a canton of the arms of Retz and in the three remaining quarters four black ermine spots placed in a lozenge (Fig. 55).
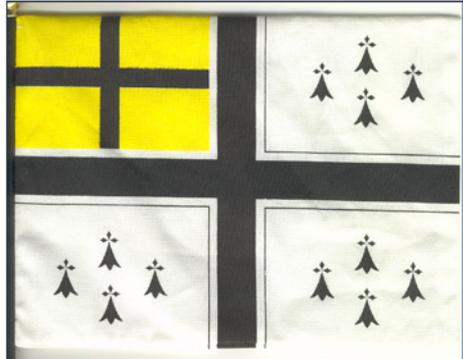

55. 1996 Retz Flag

At the same time, a young and dynamic Breton militant of the Retz country, Romuald Renaud, treasurer of the Celtic Cultural Circle of Pornic, conceived a flag corresponding to the same objective, but which proved to be a vexillographic disaster (Fig. 56). On a white field the banner of Retz and the simple ermine appeared side-by-side, underscored by the black legend "PAYS DE RETZ". No points for that one! Having read my book, where he learned of he table-top flag of the Retz country, which he had not known existed, he made contact with me and undertook to provide his country with a new, vexillographically suitable flag. With our colleagues in Nantes we focussed on a first attempt (Fig. 57). This was identical with the Coop Breizh design, except that the four ermine spots in the second, third and fourth quarters thereafter became five, arranged three and two, symbolising Brittany whole, with five *départements*.
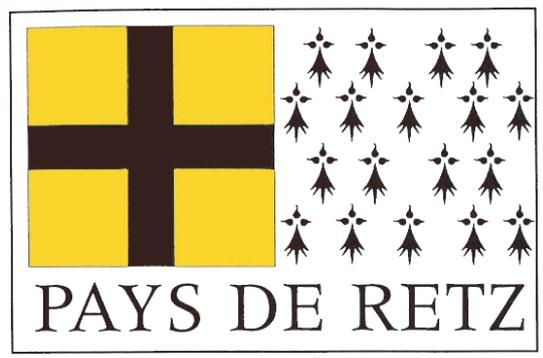

56. Romuald Renaud's Design
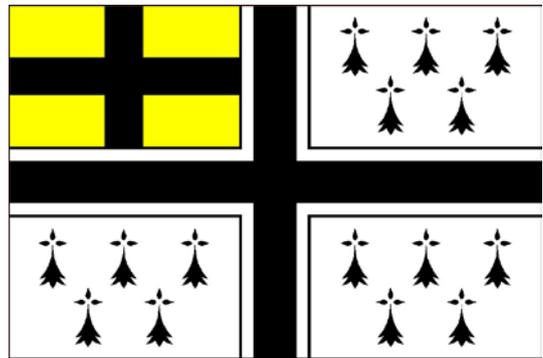
57. SBV's Design

Romuald Renaud then undertook a lobbying campaign among the local associations of Retz and all the mayors of the area. Bolstered by the support of the mayor of Pornic, the largest town in Retz, he succeeded in persuading the majority of the communes of Retz to adopt this flag officially as the local emblem. This was a real coup! The only change was that the fimbriated cross, regarded as too "Prussian" would be replaced by a simple black cross (Fig. 58).
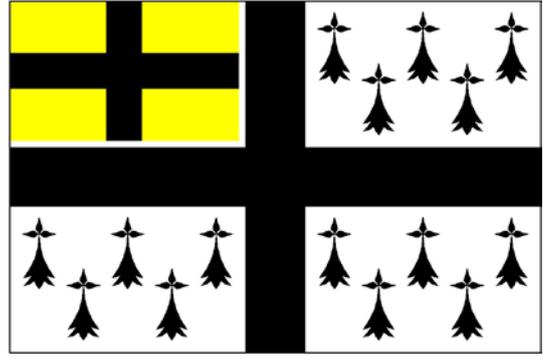
58. Revised Version

On 14 September 2000 the newspaper *"Courrier du Pays de Retz"* wrote under the headline:

"AN EMBLEM FOR THE BRETON COUNTRY OF RETZ"
"Historically uncontested and incontestable thus is presented the brand new, first ever flag of the Retz country, created by Romuald Renaud, on the initiative of the Celtic Cultural Circle of Pornic.

"From the drawing-board to the issuing, a year and a half elapsed and in May 2000, this flag with its historic character and uniquely identifiable appearance has received the approval of the Breton Vexillological Society, the Heraldic College of Brittany, the Breton Cultural Institute and the Honorary President of the Society for Historical Studies and Research in the Pays de Retz. Furthermore, its design is protected by patent. Besides this historic recognition, the new flag also gains from the approval of the Combined Tourist Information Centre of the Pays de Retz Atlantique. In fact, thought of as a federating symbol, this flag will be equally a tool of communication and promotion of the Pays de Retz and its land."

Produced in sizes 1 x 1.50m and 1.50 x 2.25m this flag was presented by Romuald Renaud to the IV Congress of the SBV in Nantes, 23 October 2000, where M. Renaud did us the honour of joining our society – a very valuable recruit. It is already used in Retz on shops, hoisted by individuals and associations and, following on its inauguration in October 2000, it flies in front of town halls, tourist offices, cultural centres and businesses who have already accepted this development.

Romuald Renaud explains the symbolism of the flag in these terms: "The black cross on a white field represents the oldest flag common to all parts of Brittany, dating from the 12th century. Its link with the three ermine quarters is borrowed from the flag of Nantes, dating from the 18th century. The five ermine spots specify that the Pays de Retz historically forms part of the bishopric of Nantes, one of the five Gaelic-speaking Breton bishoprics. The Retz country equally is an integral part of Loire-Atlantique, one of the five départements which sprang from the dismemberment of the Province of Brittany in 1789. The armorial canton (gold with a black cross) of the Pays de Retz shows the importance of its rank and position as playing a full part in the history of Brittany.

A great victory for Breton vexillology.

Taking the same inspiration, there exists today the flag of the Quadrille Sèvre et Maine of Vertou (Fig. 59). Vertou is a small town south-east of Nantes, at the confluence of the Maine and Sèvre Nantais rivers, a little to the east of the Pays de Retz. The Quadrille of Vertou is a Celtic Circle of Breton vineyards south of the Loire, which had lacked a personalised parade flag. This has now been rectified with this black cross on its ermine field in the fashion of that of the Pays de Retz. The canton is yellow, charged with a yew tree of noble proportions, flanked by two bunches of grapes and wavy descending and ascending diagonals, all in green. The yew tree is the principal charge in the arms of Vertou, while the grapes symbolise the vineyards and the diagonals the rivers Sèvre and Maine. The yellow climate symbolises the sunny climate south of the Loire.
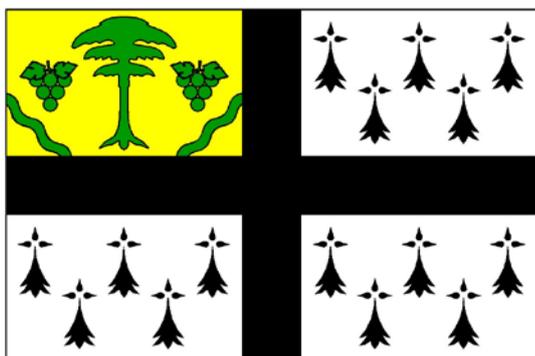

59. Vertou's Flag

A first example of this flag was made (by Robin Ashburner) in the size 1.20 x 1.80cm and approved by the SBV at its meeting in Brest on 25 March 2001. It remains to convince the town hall of Vertou to adopt this as the official municipal flag. This alas was a setback for our colleague in the area.

The next flag is that of the Pays de la Brière (Fig. 60). La Brière is a marshy area situated between Nantes and Guérande/*Gwennran*, also known as the Black Country, because of the colour of the marsh turf, as opposed to the White Country of Guérande, where salt is produced.
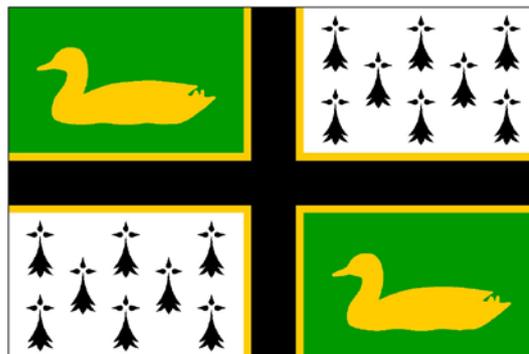
60. La Brière Flag

This is the history of this flag by its re-discoverer, Jean-Michel Mahé: While watching a video cassette concerning the work of the painter René-Yves Creston, my attention was drawn by the characters in one picture. They were dressed in Breton costumes and carried flags. Among them was a Breton in the costume of the Pays de Guérande, holding a flag with a yellow-bordered black cross, with the first and fourth quarters green and charged with a yellow duck, and the second and third quarters showing eight ermine spots arranged 3-2-3. Considering Crestons birth in St Nazaire as well as the numerous works which he devoted to the Black Country, it seems clear that this standard symbolised the Brière district to which he was so attached.

Inspired with this description, the SBV accepted the basic design, and only reduced the number of ermine spots to five. The SBV was successful later in popularising this flag and in giving the Pays de Brière a new symbol of identity, which has gained great success with the local population.

Flags, Flags, Always Flags!

Before ending, and having reviewed these successes of pro-active vexillology on the part of the SBV, we shall mention a few other works of our society.

The Flag of the SBV : This was the first flag produced by the society, in November 1996. It resulted from an internal competition which produced 28 suggestions. The black saltire on white was inspired by the flag "Victor" in the international signals code, white with a red saltire. "V" in black and white symbolised Breton Vexillology. The ermine triangle at the hoist recalled our history.

A Flag for the OBE: The Organisation of Bretons Abroad (OBE) asked us officially for suggestions to bring about a flag of its own. We politely delivered about ten designs of excellent vexillographic quality. Three years later, the OBE has not yet deigned either to make its choice, nor even to thank us. Ah well...

A Flag of the POBL: A similar request was received from the Party for the Organisation of a Free Brittany (POBL). Nine suggestions were provided and finally the POBL decided that it did not need a flag after all. But at least it thanked us. Among the suggestions was one of mine, which I named "the Flag of Breton Liberation" (Fig. 61). It comprises three unequal horizontal stripes of white, orange and black, in the ratio of 3:1:2. Black and white are the traditional Breton colours. Black also stands for the dark past of the Breton nation. White symbolises the bright coming of independence. Orange is for the brightness of national liberation, which, little by little, is overcoming the dark past. The Celtic sun symbolises the new dawn of Brittany, while its nine rays are for the nine Breton provinces. The triskell evokes the Celtic civilisation to which Brittany belongs.

61. Flag of Breton Liberation

This flag was officially adopted during 2001 by the new Breton nationalist party *ADSAV!* (Rebirth), which represents the Right-wing Breton nationalists, and which made several hundred examples of it. This flag is very popular among the militants of Adsav and has proved to be an excellent propaganda tool, waved by many during demonstrations of the nationalist party, where by virtue of its aestheticism and colours a strong impression on observers. This flag of Breton liberation, re-named by the *"Tarzh-an-Deizh"* (The Dawn), is also seen on t-shirts, caps, post-cards, stickers and stamps of the party. In short it is the greatest vexillological success of the Breton Movement of the 21st century.

The Pan-Celtic Flag: This charming patchwork was publicised in 1998 by people outside the SBV (Fig. 62). It immediately found great success and the initial production was soon sold out. At the end of 2000, the design was revised in a new production (Fig. 63), notably in eliminating the useless black lines, and in the correction of the Trinacria of the Isle of Man. It was produce

in large numbers in sizes 1 x 1.50m and 12 x 18cm and it is already a success. It will be a very fitting decoration for the traditional Inter-Celtic Festival in Lorient, which takes place there each year at the end of August.

62. Pan-Celtic Flag

63. Revised Pan-Celtic Flag

The Flag of the Commune of Pace: Our colleague, Bernard Parage, thanks to his indefatigable militant proselytism, succeeded in convincing the council of the small town of Pace (very close to Rennes) to ask the help of the SBV in the creation of a municipal flag. The council has already made an advance payment of 2000 francs to the society for our services, but has not yet decided among the ten or so suggestions offered. This matter is not yet resolved, but is moving forward.

The Renewal of the Black Cross Flag: (Figs 64 and 65) One of the effects of the publication of my book "The Breton Flags from 1188 to the Present Day" in June 1998, has been the very sympathetic renewal of the traditional flag of the ancient Breton State, the Kroaz Du. It has begun to reappear almost everywhere, and made its presence felt at the International Festival of the Sea in Brest 2000, whereas at the Brest festival of 1996, only a single one was seen. So much the better!

64. Black Cross Flag
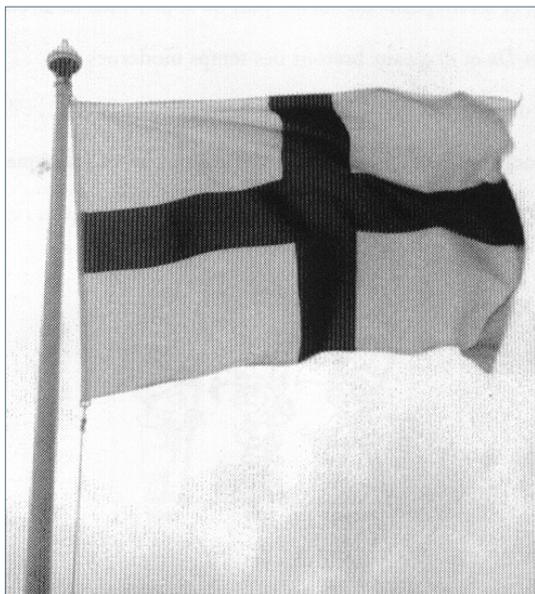
65. Black Cross Flag

In Summary: The Breton Vexillological Society, in the first five years of its existence, has acquitted itself well in the fight for the defence and promotion of Breton culture, by the application of the principles of pro-active vexillology.

"For an ever more and ever better be-flagged Brittany!"

Thanks/*Trugarez*

♦ To my dear devoted wife, Sophie, better known in the vexillological world by the surname "Madam Prime Minister", without whose patient and selfless assistance I should have been unable to face and deal with the infernal inventions of Mr Bill Gates.

♦ To Bernard Parage for his good advice, which I admit I did not always follow.

♦ To Doctor Dominique Lengrand, an unrivalled fount of information, without whom I should never have even begun.

Thanks to all! *Ho trugarekaat a ran kalz evit ho skoazell!*