

CHARMS of BRITTANY



Some of the Great Stones Near Carnac.

(Prepared by the National Geographic Society, Washington, D. C.)

Even in a continent rich to repletion with interest, Brittany, the "spout" of the French "tea-pot," is remarkable for the multiplicity of its appeal. One traveler may be engrossed in its ethnology; another is delighted by its architecture; a third is charmed with its medieval picturesque and quaint costumes; a fourth shuts himself up to dream over its history and romance, while a fifth satisfies his soul to the full with its eminent paintability.

In any of these seductions, of course, the province may be matched or outmatched by other countries; but it stands unrivaled as the land of those strange megaliths—the grandes pierres or monuments celtiques—in which a prehistoric race, a people apparently of considerable civilization and intense religious feeling, seem to have striven titanically toward self-expression and to have left, after all, a great but almost unintelligible cry. That, perhaps, is the enduring emotion left with the visitor to the giant dolmens and the vast alignments of Morbihan. These were the work of men agonizing to the end that they and their dead should never be forgotten. And yet, who were they, and what is it they have tried so hard to say?

Assyria, chronologically still more remote from our era, is as an open book through the almost miraculous recovery of the key to the cuneiform inscriptions; but these Herculean toilers of western Europe, transporting and raising their huge boulder monuments on the wild Breton moors, seem mere shadows in the mist, unable, because they left no written language, to speak to us across the centuries.

And yet, through patience in investigation and skill in interpretation amounting to genius, a few eager workers, especially the little group connected with the Musée Milin, at Carnac (50 miles west of Redon), have begun to explain these monument-builders to us.

Nowhere in the world could a specialist have found greater wealth of this peculiar archeologic material than lay around M. Zacharie Le Rouzic and the man to whom he affectionately refers as his "regretted master, Mr. J. Milin," in Morbihan and Finistère.

Many Monuments About Carnac.

Almost every commune in Brittany has one or two Celtic monuments—indeed, they are found, sometimes in very fine examples, throughout western France. But grouped about Carnac, within a radius of seven miles, there are nearly 300, even counting the hundreds of menhirs in each of the great alignments as a single unit. Milin's results, gathered in the museum bearing his name, have been and are still being continuously extended and enriched by his successor, and the following summary is based largely on their deductions.

This region, it appears, was a sort of Mecca, or peculiarly holy ground, to which the remains of heroes and leaders were brought for entombment, to which the faithful flocked in pilgrimages, and in which the great religious ceremonies were held.

Carnac was probably to the western continent of Europe what Stonehenge was to the British Isles. There is at that place, in fact, a focus and concentration of the megalithic works left by the Celtic forerunners in their prehistoric migration which, starting in Asia, moved across northern Africa, over Mediterranean waters into Spain, and along the shores of the Atlantic, constantly striving westward to find the resting place of their god, the sun, but ever baffled by the impassable ocean, and so forced northward until the effort died out in Scandinavia.

In their long sojourn near these shores, covering at least 2,000 years, they became increasingly an agricultural people. The weapons and implements placed in the sepulchers lose their rough but serviceable character and appear in polished but merely votive forms, often of soft or valuable stone. A few attempts at carving (as in the dolmens of the Table of the Merchants and the tumulus of Mane-er-Hroek, at Locmariaquer) have satisfied the most careful investigators that some use, at least, of iron—or, at all events of metal—had begun.

Most Important Types.
Nine types and several subtypes of these monuments have been defined, of which the most important are: the

menhir, or "long stones" set on end; the dolmen, or bousillike structures, with stone slabs or boulders for walls and roof; and the tumulus, or mound. Alignments are groups of menhirs arranged in line or in several parallel lines. Cromlechs are groups of menhirs standing in a circle or an arc of a circle, more rarely a square, usually terminating an alignment or surrounding a tumulus. The dimensions are sometimes incredible.

The Great Menhir near Locmariaquer, now thrown down and broken (probably by an earthquake), was nearly 70 feet high and weighed some 375 tons.

Some of the dolmens have a height of 18 to 20 feet, with roof slabs 20 by 35 feet in area and several feet thick. Baring-Gould indeed mentions one near Nevez (Finistère) "whose capstone measures 45 feet in length and 27 feet in breadth and 6 feet thick."

The alignments of Carnac, in 10 to 13 parallel rows, stretch across the country for nearly five miles. The tumulus of Mont St. Michel looks like a natural knoll, dwarfing the modern chapel which crowns it. It is hard to realize that it was heaped by human hands.

All menhirs, cromlechs, and alignments were from their beginning open to the sky. Dolmens and similar constructions were all originally covered by tumuli, since removed. In many cases, in the course of farming or building operations.

The tumuli were indeed simply tombs, of which the dolmens and "covered alleys" were the crypts. In some of the great quantity of skeletal remains, earth-buried or incinerated, would indicate collective sepulture. In other cases, the greater or central dolmen has been found surrounded by smaller dolmens or stone coffers containing the bones of animals and human beings, the latter probably slaves or servants, all slain to accompany their master into another world, indicating a definite belief in a future life. With these have been found stone implements (celts or hatchets), arrow points, and tools of various kinds, fragments of pottery, pendants and beads of turquoise and other semiprecious stones, and amulets of baked clay.

Isolated menhirs have yielded little or nothing indicative of use as monuments for individual tombs. They seem to have been generally commemorative, indicators of roads and territorial boundaries, and "symbolic of an immortal god."

Scheme of Orientation.

The alignments, on the other hand, appear to have been designed as open-air temples, each group (with its cromlech, placed always at the western end of the lines) having been erected on a single comprehensive plan and at one time. They are the remains of huge religious monuments, the alleys between the parallel files of stones being the aisles in which the devotees gathered and moved, and the cromlech the holy of holies in which the priests performed their rites.

They have a curious general characteristic in that the tallest menhirs are always placed nearest the cromlech, the lines diminishing in height from west to east.

Most interesting of all, however, is an apparently definite scheme of orientation, which tends to prove that, in addition to their ritual use, or perhaps as part of it, these impressive files of monoliths served a peculiar purpose. M. H. de Cleuziou and F. Gaillard have pointed out that in each group of alignments will be found a single very large menhir—the "giant" of the group—so placed in one of the outer files that if one stands at a given point in the cromlech he will see the sun rise over the giant at a specific date in the astronomical year.

The orientation, be it understood, is not exact at the present date. Calculations made independently by two astronomers reach the same result—that it was correct at a period about 1,900 years before the beginning of the Christian era. This curious testimony to the age of the monuments agrees with conclusions reached on other grounds by M. Le Rouzic, placing only the earliest of the megalithic structures prior to 200 B. C.; the greatest development of dolmen building and the erection of dolmen alignments and cromlechs between 2000 B. C. and 400 B. C., and the latest work, expressed by small galleries and stone coffers, in the first century before the Christian Era.

FLASH The Lead Dog

By
George Marsh

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CHAPTER XIV—Continued

As the galloping dog team swung through the gloom down to the river trail, the flames of the burning schooner turned her masts into fingers of fire thrust upright into the wall of blackness. Around her burning hulk dark shapes ran helplessly to and fro. Then they left her to her fate as the flames, bursting through the windows of the cabin, drew them back to save their provisions and fur.

On went the dog team into the south, bound for the Big Yellow-Leg while the hearts of two boys beat high with pride and happiness. Since the freezing moon when the men of "Red" Macbeth had started to hunt them from the Yellow-Leg, they had traveled a long trail. And now they had won—found the father whom the loyal Gaspard could not put from his heart.

Before turning the first bend, the dog team stopped.

Lighting the river shores, schooner and cabin sent red flames high into the smother of murk. Seizing the hand of his partner, Gaspard said, as his eyes measured the completeness of his revenge on the men who had taken him from his father, "Wal, Brock, I tink dat M'sieur Macbeth ever had dis night dat he try to run two little boy out of de Yellow-Leg cuntry."

"He'll be lucky not to starve this spring," laughed Brock.

"He not starve; he has beeg enche," added Pierre, "but he lose de fur and stuff in the shack."

When the team stopped, later, to soothe the kettle and rest the dogs, Pierre told them his story.

Ambushed one day, the previous March, he had received a shot shattering his ankle, and in the knife fight following the rush by three Indians had been badly slashed across the face. Brought, half-dead, on a sled to Macbeth's quarters, Pierre had later amputated his own foot, and not until an inn had regained his strength.

His knowledge of fur and ability to handle Indians had been put to valuable use by the free-traders, who had not treated him badly. For this reason, alone, he had not killed them in their sleep, but was waiting for spring, to steal a canoe and follow the coast home. But his boy, instead, had come for him. And the shattered Pierre Lecroix glanced proudly at the boy who stood by the fire with mistle eyes.

It was Mac, called by the Crees the "Mating Moon" of the birds. To the south, in the land of the Ojibwas, it was the "Moon of Flowers." Long since, the black-tipped wings of the snowy geese had flashed overhead on the long flight to the arctic islands. Already the gray Canadas were nesting in the muskeg ponds back of Hungry House, and the little brothers of the air, duck and snipe and plover, guarding their eggs on lonely backwaters.

The grinding ice had plunged and churned past to the bay. River billows and alder were reddening and the young grass thrusting green from the post clearing where huskies sprawled in the warm sun. But there was an air of unrest at the house of Angus McCain. Bullly, a mother, anxious of face, talked nervously with the grave factor and his head-man, of the absent Peterboro, which had, the August before, started for the unknown Yellow-Leg.

Ten days overdue, there was hardly a moment of lengthening days when some one at Hungry House was not searching the river where it forked at the delta islands for the black speck of moving canoe, and the flash of dripping paddles.

"I'm worried, Angus. I don't want Antoine to wait another day," said Mrs. McCain, one morning. "They may have been smashed up in the rapids—lost their food. I wish you'd send him and Saul tomorrow."

"Yes, Mother, answered the sober Angus, picking up his telescope and starting across the factor's plot, guarded by dog-stockade, on his way to the high shore.

In a half hour he returned.

"Nothing in sight!" demanded his wife.

"No," and McCain went to the trade-house to talk with his head-man. The two were getting together an outfit which would take the search through to the Yellow-Leg waters when a black head thrust through the trade-house door.

"'Cano comin'—at de lisan!" announced Saul.

"The boys!" cried Angus McCain and he hurried to his house to tell the worried mother of Brock; then joined Antoine and Saul on the high shore above the swollen river.

Where the river split into three channels at the delta islands, a black spot moved slowly upstream close to the main shore. Focusing his small

telescope, for a space McCain then handed it to Antoine.

"I can't make it out yet, but there seem to be more than two in the boat." "Ah-hah! Three—four paddle, I tink," answered the halfbreed.

"It's the Peterboro?"

"Ah-hah! Eet ees no bark cano!" Mrs. McCain joined the little group of men, women and children in the cliff shore, watching the approaching boat.

"You're sure, Angus—there's no mistake? It's not Indians?"

"It's the boys for sure, mother," and the relieved trader patted the shoulder of the anxious mother.

"Four paddles, dere!" announced Antoine, handing the glass to his chief. "There're no Indians wintering up the coast—who in thunder have they picked up?"

For an hour the canoe bucked the drive of the current, hugging the shore for the easier going there. They were less than a mile distant when some one shouted: "There are the dogs!"

On the beach, three huskies kept abreast of the canoe.

"There's Brock in the bow!" cried Angus McCain as the craft approached the post. "I'd know his shoulders, anywhere; and Gaspard's steering her!" Closer came the wanderers, and the little group of excited people on the high shore ran to the beach below to welcome those who had returned from the ruthless maw of the Yellow-Leg wilderness.

"Brock!" called his mother, waving her white apron, her eyes blinded with tears. "Brockie! Brockie!" yelled in chorus two young brothers and a sister, leaping like rabbits in their excitement and joy.

"Gaspard! Kowway, Gaspard!" shouted the halfbreeds, as the bow and stern men stood grinning, waving their paddles at the shore.

Then, as he waved his arms at his hulking son in the bow of the approaching canoe, Angus McCain gasped in amazement. "Antoine, look! Raised from the dead! Well—I'll be—Hello! Pierre. Pierre Lecroix!" shouted the astounded trader, running out into the water to meet the canoe.

Standing in water to his knees, Angus McCain took his son in his arms, then passed him on to the mother who waited.

"Pierre!" The Lands of Frenchman and factor met in a long grip. "Man, I'm glad to see you! We had given you up!"

Then McCain saw the crippled leg. Pierre Lecroix swung himself from canoe to beach, then standing surrounded by the excited group, said proudly, as he rested a hand on the shoulder of his son:

"Tru de long snows, dese boys here were hunted by Red Macbeth, and twenty men. Dey want de Yellow-Leg cuntry for demself. Did Gaspard and Brock run home? No, in March dey hunt Macbeth—clear to de coast."

The silent audience, Indian and white, listened breathlessly as the scurred Frenchman went on: "At de mou' de de Carcajon, dey find schooner and Macbeth's camp. In de night I see de sky red wid fire of burning ship and shack—and dey tak' me home."

Pierre Lecroix, choking with emotion, then finished:

"Dese boys here, Brock and Gaspard, de dese 'tings!"

With a cheer from the crowd, the returned voyageurs were led to the post clearing where the red emblem of the great company, blazoned with the white letters H. B. C. was hoisted. Then as Brock and Gaspard stood grinning at the honor about to be conferred, from the foot of the flag pole crashed a volley from a dozen rifles.

With an arm about the mother who smiled beside him, and a hand on the massive skull of the great gray and white husky nuzzling his sleeve, Brock said to Gaspard, "Do we hunt the Yellow-Leg next long snows, partner?"

Gaspard black eyes snapped as he gave Brock his answer: "Do de bird come back in de snoreng?"

[THE END.]

Willie Evidently Had Heard of That Breed

Willie's mother was entertaining the members of her bridge club, and Willie had been instructed as usual as to conduct, etc., in the presence of the visitors.

The guests arrived singly and in pairs, and with each ringing of the doorbell Willie would run to the door to "assist" his mother in receiving. Between times he showed much interest in the maid's preparation of tea and the dainties that were to be served.

All the guests had arrived save one, and the ladies were all seated around the room waiting. Finally the dilatory one arrived, bringing with her in her arms a small Chow dog. Willie took charge of the dog and the party got under way.

Right in the midst of a silence unusual for a women's afternoon bridge party, Willie appeared in the room leading the dog.

"Mother," shouted the youngster, "is this dog a tea hound?"—Philadelphia Public Ledger.

They Knew

The woman orator was raving and ranting to an audience of men.

"Women," she shrieked, "at all times have been the backbone of all nations. Who was the world's greatest hero? Helen of Troy! Who was the world's greatest martyr? Joan of Arc! Who was the world's greatest ruler? Who, I say, was the world's greatest ruler?"

And simultaneously that entire crowd of men arose and answered in one voice, "My wife!"—London Tid Bits.

Fear Loses Power When Confronted by Faith

"Fear is the common heritage of all thinking creatures," says Dr. William S. Sadler in Collier's Weekly. "It is one of the ten or twelve basic human emotions—emotions which we share more or less with the animal world. "When you have once become a victim of fear in any domain of your life, faith is the only known remedy. Common sense, reason and good judgment all enter into it, but the real, the definite and positive cure, the one which does the business, is the exercise of faith."

"Modern civilization has largely eliminated the dangers which beset our ancestors, but it has not terminated his inherent fear tendency. Today, not having the dangers of our ancestors to fear and avoid, we are prone to dig up sensations and feelings in our own bodies to accommodate our imaginary fears."

Could "Improve" Tennyson

The present Lord Tennyson, grandson of the famous poet, is becoming one of the most popular cricket players in England. Since he has ceased to be known as the Hon. Lionel Tennyson he has had many reminders of his distinguished grand-parent. He recently received the following letter from a woman: "In honor of your visit and your vigorous batting, I have purchased a volume of your poems, which I think are exceedingly good, but I'd like to meet you personally and point out one or two parts that I think you could really improve."

Dainty white dresses for baby or daughter made beautiful by Russ Ball Blue. Your Grocer has it—Adv.

What Would Be the Price?

Scottish Constable—What! Dae ye suggest that I would tak' a bribe? Dae ye insult me, sir?

The Ferring One—Oh, excuse me, I—Constable—Blit now, supposin' I wis that kind o' man, how much wid ye be inclined to give?

Already Attended To

"A fellow just told me I look like you!"

"Where is he? I'll punch his head!" "I've punched his head!"—Stray Stories.

It happens that a man will regret confessing a mistake longer than he regrets the mistake.

It May Be Urgent



When your Children Cry for It

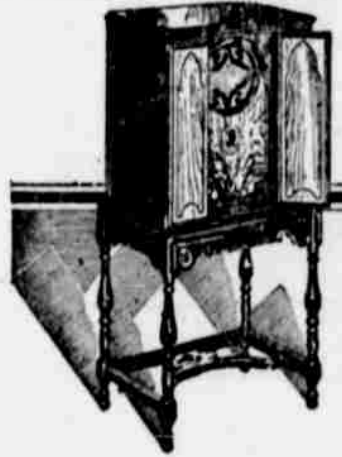
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Had Its Uses

"What's the idea of repainting that cheap car? It ain't got even a motor in it an' it won't run." "Well, it'll look nice when I park it in front of the house."



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