

UCLA

Comitatus: A Journal of Medieval and Renaissance Studies

Title

"The Dialogue between King Arthur and Gwenc'hlan": A Translation

Permalink

<https://escholarship.org/uc/item/9cj789wk>

Journal

Comitatus: A Journal of Medieval and Renaissance Studies, 30(1)

ISSN

0069-6412

Author

Minard, Antone

Publication Date

1999-10-01

Peer reviewed

**“THE DIALOGUE BETWEEN KING ARTHUR AND GWENC’HLAN”:
A TRANSLATION**

by Antone Minard

King Arthur needs no introduction. A pseudohistorical king with mythological antecedents,¹ the literature concerning him runs continuously from the early Welsh material² to last year’s miniseries *Merlin*,³ and last week’s ad for the Excalibur Hotel and Casino in Las Vegas. The Arthur of tradition has changed as he has moved from culture to culture and language to language, but a few works have served as watersheds, influencing almost everything that came after them. These include Geoffrey of Monmouth’s *Historia Regum Britannium* (*History of the Kings of Britain*)⁴; the works of Chrétien de Troyes⁵; and Sir Thomas Malory’s *Le Morte d’Arthur*.⁶ Occasionally, however, a piece of literature has survived which is outside the loop. Lady Charlotte Guest brought some of these to international attention in 1848 with her translation of the *Mabinogion*, containing Arthurian prose narrative material.⁷

One such work, “The Dialogue Between Arthur, King of the Bretons, and Gwenc’hlan,” is especially important because it is one of the few Arthurian narratives recorded from Brittany. As J. E. Caerwyn-Williams points out, Brittany was probably the conduit by which the Celtic tradition concerning Arthur found its way to a wider audience in France and England.⁸ Most of the evidence for this is inference and the sources claimed by later writers—for instance, Marie de France’s claim to have translated Breton *lais*.⁹

The poem itself belongs to a branch of Arthurian tradition concerning the prophecies of Merlin. The two characters featured in this poem are

¹For a discussion, see Richard White, *King Arthur in Legend and History* (New York 1998) xv ff.

²See Jon Coe and Simon Young’s *The Celtic Sources for the Arthurian Legend* (Felinfach, Wales 1995) for an enumeration of portions of the relevant texts.

³*Merlin*. Dir. Steve Barron. NBC/Hallmark Entertainment, April 1998.

⁴Geoffrey of Monmouth, *The History of the Kings of Britain*, trans. Lewis Thorpe (1966; New York 1982).

⁵Chrétien de Troyes, *Arthurian Romances*, trans. William Kibler and Carleton Carroll (New York 1991).

⁶Thomas Malory, *Le Morte d’Arthur*, ed. Janet Cowen (New York 1986).

⁷Charlotte Guest, *The Mabinogion* (1906; rpt. New York 1997) 94–187.

⁸J.E. Caerwyn Williams, “Brittany and the Arthurian Legend,” *The Arthur of the Welsh*, ed. Rachel Bromwich, A. O. H. Jarman, and Brynley Roberts (Cardiff 1991) 249–272.

⁹Marie de France, *Les Lais de Marie de France*, ed. Jean Rychner (Paris 1983) xiii.

called Arzur and Guinclaff (also Guinglaff or Guynglaff). The identity of Arzur as King Arthur is secure. Arthur is a key figure in the Breton literary corpus, from the *Lais* of Marie de France to nineteenth-century fairy tales.¹⁰ Moreover, the sound change of -th- /θ/ to -z- /z/ or /h/ is regular.¹¹ Gwenc’hlan is a more mysterious figure. His wildness and his prophetic abilities tie him to Merlin, the Irish Suibhne Geilt, and the Scottish Lailoken.¹² His name is unique to this poem, and something of a problem. In this article, I have followed French and Breton literary convention of using the modernization *Gwenc’hlan*. This form, often used for personal names, derives from Hersart de la Villemarqué’s *Barzaz-Breiz*.¹³ In the manuscript form of the name, the element *-claff* is cognate with Welsh *claf* and modern Breton *klañv*, meaning sick, weak, or ill.¹⁴ *Gwin* is the word for wine in both Welsh and Breton, and it is possible that the name simply means *Wine-sickness*. But the word for white or holy in Welsh is *gwyn* (*gwenn* in Breton), and if the name were part of insular tradition, as is Arthur, it might mean *Holy illness* or, more loosely, *Madness*. A better modernization might be *Gwenglañ*, voicing the *c* /k/ to *g* /g/ in the second element (already seen occasionally in our text) and the change from final -aff /af/ to -añ /ã/.¹⁵

The poem opens with a strange scene: King Arthur “grabs” Gwenc’hlan, and forces him to prophesy. What follows is a long list of disasters, culminating in the English takeover of Brittany. The method of capturing a wild man in order to make him prophesy is a familiar theme in Celtic literature. In the folk-tale *Kontadenn Jozebig* (Little Joe’s Tale), the heroine must find a way to capture “wild Merlin who is in the woods over there.”¹⁶ Throughout the Merlin tradition, the wild man figure is elusive and marginal, but once captured his words take a traditional shape. The poetry and even the events prophesied are well attested in Celtic tradition, further linking this Gwenc’hlan to other aspects of Merlin.

Vaticinatory poetry is known throughout Europe and the Near East, but

¹⁰Léon Fleuriot, “Histoires et Légendes,” *Histoire et Littérature de la Bretagne* (Paris 1987) 97–130; Fañch An Uhel, *Kontadennoù ar Bobl* (La Baule, France 1984) 11–12.

¹¹Kenneth Jackson, *A Historical Phonology of Breton* (Dublin 1967) 670.

¹²Léon Fleuriot, “La Littérature Prophétique,” *Histoire Littéraire et Culturelle de la Bretagne* (Paris 1987) 157–158.

¹³Théodore Hersart de la Villemarqué, *Barzaz-Breiz: Chants Populaires de la Bretagne* (Paris 1923) 19–24; Gwenno Le Menn, *Grand choix de prenom bretons* (Spezed, France 1990) 38.

¹⁴Jackson (n. 11 above) 593.

¹⁵Henry Lewis and J.R.F. Piette, *Llawlyfr Llydaweg Canol (Diwygiedig)* (Cardiff 1966) 7–11; Roparz Hemon, *A Historical Morphology and Syntax of Breton* (Dublin 1984) 12–23, 172.

¹⁶Jef Philippe, *War Roudoù Merlin e Briez* (Lezvenen, France 1984) 27–29.

is particularly strong in Celtic tradition.¹⁷ Geoffrey of Monmouth did bring this tradition out of the Celtic vernacular, but later English, French, and German writers did not continue it.¹⁸ One of the earliest prophetic poems is the Welsh *Armes Prydein*, which predicts the return of Cynan and Cadwaladr to save their people. *Armes Prydein* dates from around A.D. 900.¹⁹ The Breton material is not as old nor as well known as the Welsh vaticinary poetry, but it is equally interesting. *The Dialogue Between Arthur, King of the Bretons, and Gwenc'hlan* is a dialogue poem, a subtype of vaticinary poetry, much like the *Ymddiddan Myrddin a Thaliesin*, the Dialogue of Merlin and Taliesin.²⁰ It predicts a series of disasters and describes the chaos of a then-future sixteenth-century Brittany. The prophet Gwenc'hlan foretells the return of the "true heir" of Brittany, Henry son of Henry, before the eventual takeover by the English.

The poem is a 247-line work written in Middle Breton, probably composed in the mid-fifteenth century. Breton is a Brythonic Celtic language, still spoken by around 500,000 people in the departments of Finistère, Côtes-d'Armor, Ille-et-Vilaine, and Morbihan.²¹ It is closely related to Cornish and Welsh, and more distantly to Gaelic. Largillière's date of 1450 was confirmed by Gwenole Le Menn: the poem was composed toward the end of Brittany's independence, at a time when the power of the centralized French and English states were growing.²² Brittany was annexed to France some eighty years after the composition of the poem, and eighty-seven years before the 1617 date of the manuscript. What we have now was copied in 1710 by Dom le Pelletier from two manuscripts, one of which was dated 1619. Le Pelletier himself tells us that there were once more than 247 lines, but he did not copy the addition. In his dictionary Le Pelletier even cited a word, *orzail*, as used by Gwenc'hlan, though no such word appears in the text.²³

No English translation has ever been published. The only available edition in translation is in French, by Largillière in 1929. Breton lexi-

¹⁷Margaret Enid Griffiths, *Early Vaticination in Welsh with English Parallels* (Cardiff 1937) 26–55.

¹⁸*The History of the Kings of Britain* (n. 4 above) 170–185.

¹⁹Sir Ifor Williams, *Armes Prydein: The Prophecy of Britain*, trans. Rachel Bromwich (Dublin 1982) xiv.

²⁰Jean Balcou and Yves Le Gallo, *Histoire Littéraire et Culturelle de la Bretagne* (Paris 1987) 155.

²¹David Crystal, *The Cambridge Encyclopedia of Language* (Cambridge 1987) 437.

²²Gwenole Le Menn, "La Littérature en Moyen-Breton de 1350 à 1650," *Questions d'Histoire de Bretagne: Actes du 107^e Congrès National des Sociétés Savantes* (Brest 1982) 92.

²³J. Largillière, "Le Dialogue Entre Arthur et Guinclair," *Annales de Bretagne* 38.4 (Paris 1929) 629.

cography and comparative Celtic linguistics have progressed immeasurably since then, and information is available to which Largillière could not have had access. Using these tools, I have presented the text and translation here with a short introduction but no in-depth analysis due to space limitations.

The Dialogue Between Arthur and Gwenc'hlan has been published three times in full, once within Largillière's French translation in 1929, once in the journal *Steredenn* (1941), and once in the Breton journal *Hor Yezh* (Our Language) in 1994, with no translation.²⁴ I have chosen to use the Breton text from the latter because of what appear to be errors in the former, such as the misreading of *gourfenn* as *goursenn* (n. 5 below). I have noted the variant readings from the *Annales de Bretagne* article in each case in notes at the end of the text.

Folklore and Mythology
UCLA
Los Angeles, CA 90095

²⁴Ibid., 627–674; “Roparz Hemon: Testennoù Evit ar Studi,” *Hor Yezh* 200 (Lezvenen, France 1994) 46–56.

*An Dialog Etre Arzur Roe d'an
Bretounet Ha Guynglaff*

(testenn glok)

l'an de Notre Seigneur mil
quatre cent et cinquante

Dre Gracz Doe ez veve,
N'en devoe ez dre voe en beth

Nemet an delyou glas,
N'en devoe quen goasqet,
An rese en beve
N'endevoe quen boet.
Didan un capel guel ez voe

Nos ha dez en e buhez en beth,
Digant Doe en devoe e gloar en eff,
Ha ne manque quet.

Dre Graçç Doe ez gouuie,
Donediguez¹ flam an amser divin
illuminet.

An Roe Arzur en ampoignas da sul,
Pan savas an heaul un mintin mat,
Ha dre cautel ha soutildet
Ez tizas e dorn, hac e quemeret.

Maz goulennas outaff hep si
En hanu Doe; me hoz supply,
D'an Roe Arzur ez liviry
Pebez sinou a coezo glan,
E Breiz quent finuez an bet man²

Na pebez feiz, lavar aman:
Pe me az laquay e drouc saouzan.

GUYNGLAFF

Me a lavar dit adefry,
Quement a crenn a goulenny,
Diouziff a gouvezy,³
nemet da maru ha ma hany.
Cals a fizio en beth muy evyt en Ilis,

An-tra-se a coezo dre vicz,
Huy guelo etre tut a Ilis

Baeleien hep nep justicç,
Pep foll a goulenno offiçç.

*The Dialogue Between Arthur, King
of the Bretons, and Gwenc'hlan*

(complete text)

the year of Our Lord 1450

Through the grace of God he lived,
He had, beside [the fact that] he was
in the world,

Nothing but the green leaves.
He didn't have as much of a shelter
As the other ones did who lived.
He didn't have as much food.

He was seen beneath a hood
[or: behind a chapel]

In his life in the world he had glory
From God night and day
And he didn't lack [anything].

Through the grace of God he knew
How to illuminate the bright gift of
holy time.

King Arthur grabbed him on Sunday,
When the sun rose one fine morning
And through guile and subtlety
He seized his hand, and took him.

If you asked me without fault
In the name of God, I beg you,
You will tell King Arthur
What holy signs will befall
In Brittany before this world comes
to an end.

By my faith, tell (me) here:
Or I will put you into wicked confusion.

GWENC'HLAN

I will tell you seriously,
As much as you will ask
You will know from me, except your
death and my name.
Many will trust in the world, more still
in the church.

The former will fall through vice.
You will see among the people of the
church

Priests without any justice.
Every madman will seek office.

ARZUR

Lavar Guinglaff, me a pet,
En hanu Doe, so Roe dan beth,

Pebez sinou a coezo quet,
Quent evit an guez da donet.

GUINGLAFF

Te a guelo quent e donet
An haff han goaff quemesquet,
Ha ne anavezey heur en beth,

Nemet dyouz an guez delyet,
Pe diouz an goeliou statudet.
Neuse ez duy trubuyll meurbet,
Bleau oar penn jouuanc loedet

Gant an berr hoary arrivet,

An beth a bezo quen tanau,
Nep a bevo a guelo gnaou.
Huy a guelo⁴ mar bevet,
Quent an guez da donet,
An tut a Ilis diguyset,
An douar fallaff a roy guelaff,
Han guisty guellaff dimezet;
Hac un hoeresi a puplio
Dre Cristenez, huy a guelo,
Hac a tenno da muyha glachar,
Quent ez finuezo an douar.
Huy a guelo, quent ar gourfenn,⁵
Hoeretiquet a drouc empenn,
Na sellont pep quis dispenn,

An feiz a Doe so roy ha penn,
Ha rac se ho castio tenn,

Maz vezo truez ho guelet,
Quent evit an guez da donet.

ARZUR

Lavar diff Guinclaff, me a pet,
En hanu Doe so roe dan beth,

Petra vezo a coezo quet,
Quent evit an-tra-se d'arrivet.

ARTHUR

Tell, Gwenc'hlan, I pray,
In the name of God, who is king
of the world,
What signs will certainly befall,
Before the time still to come.

GWENC'HLAN

You will see before it comes
The summer and the winter mixed,
And you will not know the time in
the world
Even from the trees in leaf,
Or from the official feasts.
Then extreme troubles will come.
The hair on the head of the young
will turn gray

With the ephemeral trouble

[which has] arrived.
The world will be so sparse,
No one will live to see it manifest.

You will see, if you live,
Before the time to come,
The people of the church disguised.
The worst earth will produce the best,
And the debauched married best;
And a heresy will be published
Throughout Christianity, you will see,
And will hold to the greatest sorrow
Before the earth comes to an end.

You will see, before the end,
Heretics with wicked minds,
How everyone will look to tear
apart custom
The faith that God is king and chief,
And because of that will punish you
heavily,

If pity sees you
Before the time still to come.

ARTHUR

Tell me Gwenc'hlan, I pray,
In the name of God who is king of
the world,
What will befall
Before that thing arrives.

GUINGLAFF

Pan vezo Duc en Estampes,
Ne vezo den en Breiz hep reux,

En bloaz mil pemp-cant, triugent,
ha dec,

Ez vezo an peuch criet,
Maz lavarer e pep kaer—⁶ gouezet!
Ez vezo an bresel finisset.

En bloaz mil-pemp-cant hac unnec

Ez savo mension meurbet
A bresel ha ne pado quet.

En bloaz douzec ha triugent
Ez vezo bresel ha meruent.
En bloaz triugent ha trizec
Ez vezo an beth dipreder
En esamant tout entier.

Goude-se⁷ ez deuy deury

Sauson cals ha diamesidy
A deuy hep si diouz Orient,

Dren bro gant gourdroux⁸ ha cry,

A laquay Breiz e mil sourcy,
Oz breselequaet peur defry.
E triugent ha pevarzec
Pan vezo da sul dez Nedelec.
Guerz⁹ da cazec, ha pren yt,
Ha martese ez vezo ret.

En bloaz triugent ha pemzec,
Ez vezo an yt difiget.

En bloaz seiz ha pevarugent,
Ez collo en Autronez ho rent:
Ilis ha terrien antier oll e collint seder¹⁰

Doufarz ha trederenn ez ranner.

En bloaz mil pemp cant pevarugent
hac eiz,

Ez vezo truez gant bresel e Breiz:

Ha quent pevarugent¹¹ hac eiz,
Ez vezo adarre he guir aer e Breiz
Herry map Herry, ha dou baron

GWENC'HLAN

When the duke comes to Estampes,
There will be no man in Brittany
without hardship.

In the year 1570

Peace will be cried,
When it is spoken in every town, [•] known!
The war will be finished.

In the year 1511

(=1571, 1500+[60]+11)

A great rumor will be raised
Of war which won't last.

In the year [15]72

There will be a war and they will die.

In the year [15]73

The world will be carefree
In complete happiness.

After that a flood of Englishmen
will come,

Many and solitary,

And will come without a doubt
from Lorient

Through the country with couriers
who cry

And put Brittany into a thousand cares,
Waging war quite seriously.

In [15]74

When Christmas falls on a Sunday,

Sell your mare, and buy corn,

And perhaps it will be necessary.

In the year (15)75,

The corn will be unappetizing.

In the year (15)87,

The lords will lose their rent:

Every church and landowner will lose
[his] cheerfulness

Two thirds and one third will be divided.

In the year 1588,

There will be mercy along with war in
Brittany,

And before [15]88,

The true heir will once again come into Brittany.

Henry son of Henry and two of

da Herry

A deuy, ne fazio quet,
Diabell bro, hag a vezo enoret
Hac a laquay Breiz hep moneyz.
Cals a calon mam a vezo rannet,
Hag yvez lazet;
Hac ez vezo entre pep ty
An bresel criet.
Un laezr¹² a savo a Goelou,
Hac a taulo Breiz oar he guenou.
Neuze ez lazer pep Autrou
Gant clezeffiou dir hac armou.
Her dre-vezo¹³ dour en tnou glan,
Pep tieguez a vezo goazha e rann.
Hac e metou tnouen Ry
Ez duy Jacob d'auber e ty.
Ha gode se glan damany
Ez vezo eno defry,
Ma forcher eno Abaty¹⁴
Da pep sort gant an flechy.
Oar creis pont Ry, hep nep si,
Ez savo alarm diboell ha cry,
Ha ne pedo nemeur ho cry.
Maz duy muguet mil digentil diblas,

Na vezo dezo¹⁵ comparaig,
Hac an rivier so hanvet Dourgoat,
A chenko he liou, ha he stat.

Hac a hano ez duy an rivier un tro.
An tra se so estimet d'en bro,
Nep a vezo a guelo hep sy,
En guelo glan damany.
Cals a vezo a listry
Azraouantet digoezien.

ARZUR

Lavar Guinglaff, me a pet,
En hanu Doe so Roe d'an beth:

Petra vezo a coezo quet,
Pan vezo an-tra-se hoarvezet?

GUINGLAFF

Huy a guelo oar an douar an guez
Discaret gant rust amser,
Hac an rivierou debordet,

Henry's barons

Will come, there will be no mistake,
From a far country, and will be esteemed
And will leave Brittany with no money.
Many a mother's heart will be divided,
And killed as well;
and between every house
War will be cried.
A thief will rise in Goëlo,
And will throw Brittany onto its knees.
And then each lord will be killed
With steel swords and arms.
Water will imitate them in the holy hills;
Every household will be worse in part.
And among the hills of Ry
Jacob will come to make his house.
And afterwards a holy domain
Will in truth be there,
When the abbey there is deprived
Of everyone but the gentlemen.
On the center of the Ry bridge, with no sign,
A hue and a cry will be raised from afar
And not much will endure their cry.
Where a lily-of-the-valley replaces
1000 noblemen,
There will be no comparison to them.
And the river called Bloodwater
Will change its bed [or color]
and its state [or bed].
And thence the river will come to a tower.
That thing is esteemed in the country:
There will be no one who sees faultlessly
In seeing the holy realm.
There will be many vessels,
Devils will fall.

ARTHUR

Speak, Gwenc'hlan, I pray,
In the name of God who is king
of the world,
What will befall
When that thing has happened?

GWENC'HLAN

You will see the trees on the earth
Fallen with rough weather,
And the rivers overflowed,

En amser maz metter an yt.
 Car tut gaillard ha paillardet
 Sicour a rencont da monet
 Dre ho bezaff quent langouret.
 Pan vezo baeleien hep quet a reiz,
 Ha gant an groaguez collet mez,
 Hac eat carantez oar divez
 Arriff eu gant Guengamp he guez,
 Un Duc a deuy da Breiz a Francz,
 A laquay an bro hep chevancz,
 Ha hennez a collo gant tut e ty,
 Dre re fiancz.
 Taillou a laqay cals meurbet,
 Unan a deuy ne paehor quet.
 En divez ez vezo cry gant manier¹⁶,
 Ha hoary creff.
 Hac an trede a deuy a vezo defry
 Maz dezrauo an devet gant cry,
 Hep quet a si, ha tagaff a deufri,
 Ha trechiff oar an holl beleien.
 Er¹⁷ bloaz pevaruguent hac eiz,
 Ez duy an Saouson e Breiz.
 Donet a rahint a flot meurbet
 Pa ne gouuezhor quet an pret.
 An peuch querz a vezo criet
 En bloaz quent evit ho donet
 E Breiz e pep kaer gouuezet.
 Un duc a yalo a Breiz e Francz,
 Gant meur gallout puissancz,
 Ha goude querz hep setancz
 Ez punisser dre martirizancz.
 Hep faut pan vezo un guez couezet
 Saouson e Perzell disquennet,
 Ha Brest, ne fazio quet,
 Da Leon ha da Guengamp—credet.
 Pan ay an Saouson oar an mor
 Da breselequat gant enor,
 Ez deut an avel tempesteux
 Maz vizint groet morehedus.
 Ha dre hir spacz ez digachor,
 Ha da Leon, ha da Treguer
 Maz disquenhint e teir bandenn,
 E Brest, Goelou, han Porz guenn.
 Sech vezo an bloaz maz dleont
 disquenn,

In the time when the corn is gathered.
 Because people, merry and bawdy,
 Will need help to go
 Since they will be so languid.
 When the priests come with no right,
 And the women have lost shame,
 Let amity follow shamelessness.
 Guingamp's time will arrive:
 A duke will come to Brittany from France
 And leave the country without wealth,
 And that one will lose through his
 household's efforts,
 Through too much faith (in them).
 Taxes will be levied to such an
 extreme extent,
 One will come which will not be paid.
 Shamelessly it will be cried in a way,
 Which is mighty trouble.
 And the third one that comes will be serious.
 If the burning begins with a cry,
 With no sign at all, and serious strangling,
 And all the priests will be defeated.
 In the year [15]88,
 The English will come into Brittany
 They will come in a huge fleet.
 When, the moment will not be known.
 A usufructuary peace will be cried
 In the year before they come
 In every town in Brittany.
 A duke will come from Brittany into France,
 With great ability and power.
 And after walking without judgement,
 He will be punished, and made into a martyr.
 Without fault when a time will fall,
 Englishmen go down into Perzell,
 And Brest, there will be no mistake,
 To Leon and Gwengamp: believe it.
 When the English go to sea
 To make war with honor,
 A storm wind will come.
 They will be made late.
 And through a long space it will be sent
 Both to Leon, and to Tregor,
 Where they will come in three troops:
 In Brest, Goëlo, and White Harbor.
 The year when they ought to come
 down will be dry,

Rac an profecy a queleenn,
 Hac pan prederhor bihanaff
 Ez arrivint a credaff
 Un sul beure e creis an haff.

Maz savo alarm gant armou
 En Bretonery knech a thnou,
 Hac etre tut burzudaou
 Gant an alarm ha marvaillou.

Brest ha Leon, han Porz-guenn
 A quemerhint goude henn.
 Sauson a futin arrivet guenn
 A vezo quen theo ha guelvenn
 Ahet an douar hac an lenn.
 Goa nep a vezo o tifenn,

Ma ne vez e graçç Doe Roen glenn,

Y a losquo canoliou,
 Evit lazaff an tut a armou,
 Ha laquat sig oar an kaeriu,
 Diquar questel ha thourellou,
 Pan crier en Breiz an bresel¹⁸
 Neuze ez vezo quen cruel,
 Maz rencquo an ezech fall ha groaguez
 Monet da meruel ditruetz.
 Didan poan da vezaff dipennet,
 Gourchemennet¹⁹ don dan Bretonet,
 Couls dan-re diarm ha re armet,

Da stourm oz ho azraouantet monet
 Maz dastumont fall ha seven,
 Dre gourchemenn a un Capiten,
 Gant armou fall ha paltogou,
 Hac an groaguez a sicouro,
 Maz maruint oll a strolladou:
 Oar menez Bre a bagadou
 Hac an Saouson dren hent hepmuiquen²⁰

A vezo meurbet armet guenn.
 Gouaz a vezo an Bretonet,
 Mar techont oll eval deuet
 Peur muihaff²¹ ez vezint lazet
 Gant an Saouson diresonet.

Neuse ez ahint gant vaillantis
 Da laquat sig oar Guengampis,
 Maz vez Boy Ivon estonet
 Rac ne gouuizie quet ho donet.

Because of the prophecy which teaches [it].
 And when it is considered most minutely,
 They will come, I believe,
 One Sunday morning in midsummer.

When the alarm is raised with arms
 In Brittany, hillside and hollow,
 And there will be miracles among the people
 With alarm and wonders.

Brest and Leon, and White Harbor,
 Which they will take after this.
 Englishmen from [???] arrive white
 And will be as fat as souring milk
 Along the land and the lake.

Nobody's lance will be there to
 defend them
 If it's not through the grace of God,
 king of this world,

They will fire the cannons
 To kill the men at arms,
 And put a sign on the towns.

Castles and turrets will fall
 When war is cried in Brittany.
 Then it will be so cruel
 Where the wicked men and women must
 Go to death without mercy.

Under the pain of being beheaded,
 [It will be] firmly commanded to the Bretons
 As much to the those without weapons
 as to those with arms

To struggle against the devils coming
 Where they will gather, wicked and polite,
 Under the command of a captain,
 With evil arms and cloaks.

And the women will help
 If all of the troops die.
 In Ménébré both the troops
 And the English, by means of the
 road and no more,

Will have a ton of bright arms.

The Bretons will be the worse
 If they all flee like they came
 When the greatest [of them] are killed
 By the mad English.

Then they will go with valor
 To put a siege on Guingamp
 When Boy Ivan is astonished
 Because he didn't know they were

An madou a vezo cuzet,
Hac en toullou cuz taulet,
Hac an porziou clos a hast serret,

Dre hasart don gant canoliou
Ez pilhont fier an mogueriou
Hac ez disquarhont an muriou,
Ha terrif e Guengamp an holl camprou,

Ha pillat oll an oll madou,
Hac an oll tut en em rento.

Hac entre breman ha neuse
Ez vezo spount bras, rac se,

Rac en divez n'arriuhe.

Pan vezo Guengamp disquaret,
Ez forzhor groaguez ha merchet
Hac ez lazher ezech ha pautred²²
Ha Doe an²³ fet a permetto
Dem reuengiaff hon punisso.²⁴
An Saouson a yal²⁵ adarre,
Hep nep remed, a eston²⁶
En un bandenn an oll Saouson
Da quemeret e Breiz possession.

Ego d.y. Queu²⁷ exscripsi die decima
sexta Augusti anno Dñi 1619.

coming.
The goods will be hidden
And thrown into hiding holes,
And the doors will be closed and
hastily shut
Through chance deep with guns.
They will pillage the proud walls,
And they will descend the walls,
And they will break into all the rooms
in Guingamp,
And pillage everything and all the goods.
And all the people will render
themselves
Between now and then.
There will be a great fear, because
of that,
Because of the shamelessness
which arrives.

When Guingamp has fallen,
Women and girls will be raped
And men and boys will be killed.
And God will permit this fact
In vengeance he will punish us.
The English will go back again,
With nobody's remedy, at full length.
In a group, all of the English are
To take possession of Brittany.

I Kev (cave) wrote this on August 16,
Anno Domini 1619.

1. Doediguez—AB 1929.
2. Pebez sinou e Breiz a coezo glan,/ Quent
finuez an bet man, AB 1929.
3. Gouuezy—AB 1929.
4. guelo, mar—AB 1929.
5. goursenn—AB 1929 (untranslated).
6. AB 1929 has kaer gouezet with no omis-
sion noted.
7. Goud-se—AB 1929.
8. gourdrousc—AB 1929.
9. GuezAB 1929.
10. oll a commanço seder—AB 1929.
11. pevaruguent—AB 1929.
12. laerz—AB 1929.

14. Abbaty—AB 1929.
15. deza—AB 1929.
16. mainer—AB 1929.
17. En—AB 1929.
18. breseliou—AB 1929.
19. Gourc'hemenet—AB 1929.
20. equipet—AB 1929.
21. mihaff—AB 1929.
22. groaguez—AB 1929.
23. dan—AB 1929.
24. Hon punissa evit em reuengaff.
25. yalo hoaz—AB 1929.
26. remod a estoc—AB 1929.
27. Quen—AB 1929.

13. drevezo—AB 1929.

1. Doediguez—AB 1929.
2. Pebez sinou e Breiz a coezo glan,/ Quent finuez an bet man, AB 1929.
3. Gouuezy—AB 1929.
4. guelo, mar—AB 1929.
5. goursenn—AB 1929 (untranslated)
6. AB 1929 has kaer gouezet with no omission noted.
7. Goud-se—AB 1929.
8. gourdrousc—AB 1929.
9. GuezAB 1929
10. oll a commanço seder—AB 1929
11. pevaruguent—AB 1929
12. laerz—AB 1929
13. drevezo—AB 1929
14. Abbaty—AB 1929
15. deza—AB 1929
16. mainer—AB 1929
17. En—AB 1929
18. breseliou—AB 1929
19. Gourc’hemennet—AB 1929
20. equipet—AB 1929

21. mihaff—AB 1929
22. groaguez—AB 1929
23. dan—AB 1929
24. Hon punissa evit em reuengaff
25. yalo hoaz—AB 1929
26. remod a estoc—AB 1929
27. Quen—AB 1929