

# *Saint Cornély's Soldiers*



## *The alignments of Carnac*

These aligned stones are the soldiers transformed into stone by Saint Cornély; they move only one time per year. On Christmas Eve, at midnight, they go to drink in the neighboring streams and evil be to those who meet them in their way—they will be totally crushed!

Under many of the stones there are hidden treasures, but all who have wished to find them have died.

One day Father Galudec, says Moh tu, threw down one of the giant stones at the head of the Méné alignment to find its treasure; but when the stone fell, the treasure had whisked itself away, because Father Galudec found nothing.

*Zacharie le Rouzic, Carnac: Légendes, traditions, coutumes et contes du pays*

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Translated by Susan Oldrieve

*Saint Cornély's Soldiers*

Listen all, small and grown, to the story of the marvelous things by which Saint Cornély is known among the people of our country, how agreeable he was to God!

Saint Cornély was the Pope. In the course of a persecution where Christian blood poured out in full streams, during nine days and nine nights, in the streets of Rome, he was forced to seek safety in flight. His departure was soon known, and soldiers were sent in all directions, with orders to bring him back, dead or alive. What anguish for the unhappy Pope! What fatigue! What dangers! If he managed one day to hide all traces of himself, he found himself again in the morning face to face with persecutors more numerous, more relentless than ever for his ruin. Seven years entire he wandered ever from one place to another, always fleeing, always pursued. God upheld him in the midst of his cruel trials and permitted him to arrive safe and sound in the heart of Brittany, in the disguise of a cattle driver<sup>1</sup>. When, driving before him his two companions in misery, two huge white oxen, he reached the village of Moustoir, in Carnac, he could think himself out of all danger: for more than eight days he had not encountered even one of his enemies.

"I will settle myself here," said he, "good soil, beautiful shade, and without a doubt, brave people."

He deceived himself more than a little. Almost right away, he heard a woman swear and a son insult his mother. His heart all saddened, the saint made a sudden start backwards. In this movement of recoil, he struck strongly his right foot on a huge stone so that the imprint of his foot can still be seen there today. After a short moment of hesitation, he resumed his journey onwards and descended a hill into the town of Carnac. There an unhappy surprise waited yet again. The pagan soldiers that he had hoped never to see again were occupying the entrances to the town and all the surrounding countryside.

A few steps further, he fell into their hands. Where to flee? Before him the wide wide sea, to the left, to the right, everywhere, his enemies. He spoke to his guardian angel:

"My good angel, pull me out of this peril!"

"Willingly!"

"What's to be done?"

"Enter the ear of one of the oxen."

"How can I possibly do that?"

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<sup>1</sup> *Toucheur des boeufs.* – Trans.

“God will aid you.”

God gave him aid, indeed, to enter into that little secret place, and he hid himself so well there that the Roman soldiers passed close to him without perceiving his presence.

He would have stayed there longer if the same soldiers who began to miss their food, one day helped themselves to the two oxen and led them into Ménec to slaughter them. Saint Cornély called newly on his guardian angel,

“My good angel, pull me out of peril!”

“Willingly.”

“What’s to be done?”

“Extend your arms and order your enemies to change themselves into stones.”

“I don’t have that power.”

“God will give it to you.”

And God did give it to him, as the angel had told him. The Roman soldiers, without exception, were struck immobile in the same instant. They were eight or ten thousand who, from Étel to Locmariaquer, descended in thick columns: all, without exception, were in the same instant changed into stones. At the place that they had occupied, they still stay; at the place where they found themselves nailed to the earth, one can still see them today—not all of them: lightning has obliterated many; the hand of men has destroyed more still—but a big enough number to witness to never a greater wonder that the infinite bounty of God has permitted to one of his saints to accomplish.

These stones are known by all the world under the name of “The Soldiers of Saint Cornély.

In remembering the day when he had taken refuge in the ear of one of the oxen Saint Cornély wished to be the protector of beasts with horns, and this favor was not refused him. He drives away from stables the toad, the voiceless, the serpents and the evil spirits. He prevents sorcerers from drawing out the strength of the bulls and from spoiling the milk of the cows. He is the physician and the benefactor of cattle.

Honor be to the great Saint Cornély, the patron of Carnac!

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Translated by Susan Oldrieve.