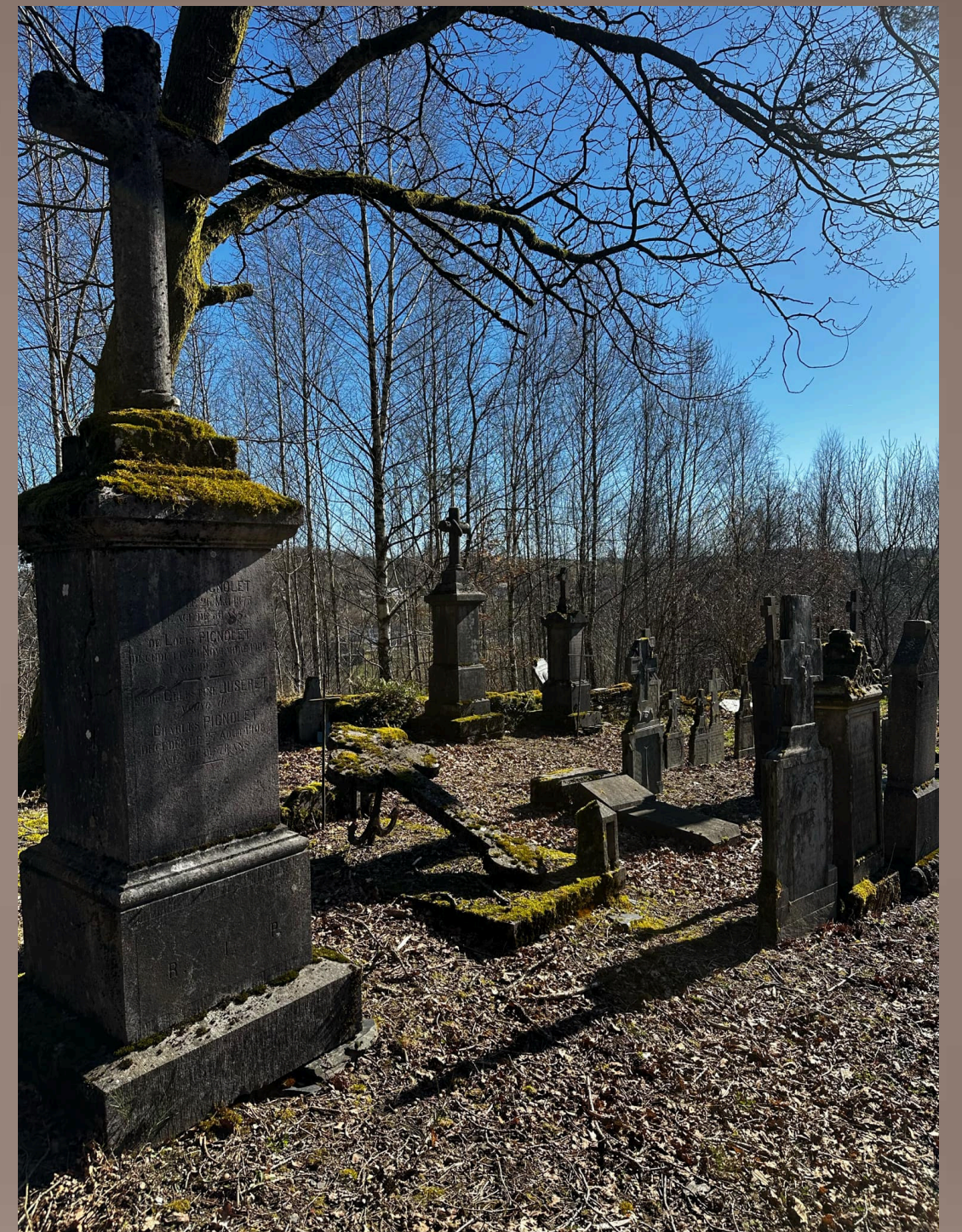


Funeral heritage of the old Warmifontaine Cemetery

The old cemetery of Warmifontaine was thoroughly renovated in 2012 and features a collection of crosses and funerary slabs mainly made of schist, of which slate is one of the derivatives.

The site of the old cemetery is particularly remarkable for its collection of crosses. Around 700 people from Warmifontaine and Harfontaine, including 400 children, are believed to have been buried here, mainly during the second half of the 19th century.

More than 40 small stelae and crosses bear witness to a typically Ardennes funerary art, practiced mainly in the 19th century and at the beginning of the 20th century. Due to its fissile, non-porous nature, its resistance to shocks and temperature, and its softness when carved, schist allows for the creation of characteristic crosses and stelae of modest size, with subtle reliefs and fine workmanship.



The stones extracted from the Warmifontaine slate quarry do not allow the production of slabs thick enough to make such monuments. It is likely that the quarries of Herbeumont supplied the stone suitable for light engraving. The monuments are unsigned and were probably created by local craftsmen.

In the 19th century, in our regions, the use of schist and cast iron for funerary monuments was very widespread. Generally, the crosses are adorned with imagery referring to religion: a central motif, often Christ (in various forms, of very high quality in this cemetery), accompanied by symbols evoking faith, Christian virtues, the life of the deceased, and an ornamental layout.



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