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The Saint Gilbert slate mine

This mine was founded by Gilbert Lefort, a lawyer well known in Fumay for having defended the cause of slate mine workers in a dispute with the *Moulin Sainte-Anne* slate quarry in 1832.

The foundations for the future company were laid as early as 1836, when several exploratory boreholes were drilled on either side of the hill, the most significant of which was the *Trou Chapeau*. Situated on the flank of the Fumay-Oignies road, it overlooked an old mill that became a driving force of the project. A double line of tie rods housed in this building powered the pumps used to drain the seepage and also to drive a system of counterweights to lift the wagons loaded with stone. While the building is still standing, the road has since been moved and built over the 400 metres of diversion canal used to power the mill wheel, whose ditch has been filled in.

After an initial change of status in 1863, the company was dissolved and its assets taken over by the *Société des Ardoisières de la Renaissance* in 1886.



The old slate mine, a source of hydraulic power for hauling the wagons uphill



The waste from the slate mine



The "Verdean of Saint-Gilbert"