

2 The chapel

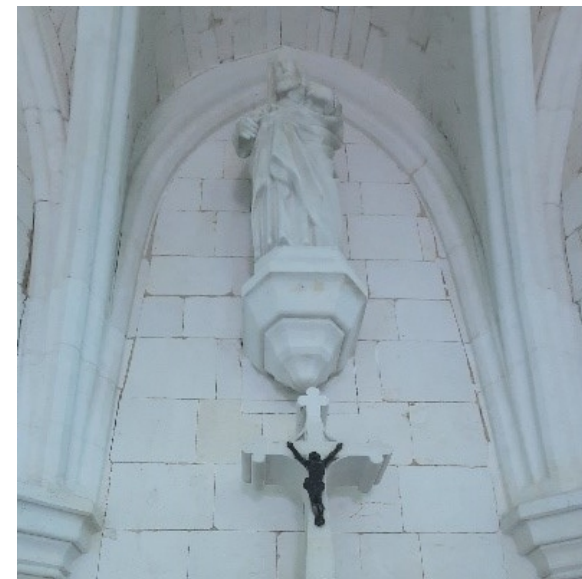
The Neo-Gothic era

The late 19th century was marked by a **revival of the Gothic style**, in both religious buildings and castles. It is important to remember that in our region the many wars hindered the development of the Renaissance style from the 16th century onwards. This chapel has a **pointed ogive arch at the entrance**, **geminated windows** with tracery, and buttresses topped with **pinnacles** indicating a vaulted interior. While it looks as if it was built in the same era as the church, it is much more recent! It was completed in **1869**, thanks to a **donation by Miss Sophie Bournonville** (also known as Sophie Fajet), a retired schoolteacher. At that time, rural chapels were most often made of brick, but this one is **particularly beautiful** with its elaborately carved white chalk limestone.

Friend of the photographer Marcel Guilbaut (from Lambersart), posing beside the road sign at the entrance to the village, 1950-60s. We can see the chapel and the church in the background (postcard, coll. Marcel Guilbaut).



As many as **105 chapels were built in the diocese of Arras from 1864 to 1873**, demonstrating how devout these country people were. The chapel was part of a newly **revived religious fervour**; along with oratories and calvaries, they were the stations that marked religious procession routes. Like many other chapels at the end of the 19th century, it is dedicated to the Sacred Heart of Jesus, a plaster statue of whom stands above the altar. These shrines were sometimes built in times of war, epidemic or famine; they were also a symbol of gratitude for divine protection, or built as a memorial to the victims of those hard times, like the **cholera epidemic** which scourged the region from 1853 to 1856. The chapel was **designated a place of worship on 5 August 1888** and was even used for the **local children's catechism lessons**. Thanks to the town council and the *Fondation du patrimoine*, the chapel was restored in 1990. This emblematic building at the entrance to the village shows off the local chalky stone to perfection.



Plaster statue of the Sacred Heart, above the altar of the chapel (photograph by Mathilde Duval, coll. CHHP 2021).

Chapel in the Rue de la Mairie (photograph by Mathilde Duval, coll. CHHP 2022).



You're right Mathilde, but they aren't all like this one. In the Rue de la Mairie, at the corner of a farm, the chapel is made of brick...

There are another three chapels in Acquin-Westbécourt!

