

The Tumulus

Behind Erbaut's church and cemetery lies a marshy meadow surrounded by two streams – the Ruisseau des Richards and the Petite Dendre – just before the two streams cross. In the middle of the meadow, there is a clay mound, which measures 40 metres in diameter at the base and about 12 metres at the top, with a height of 6.5 metres. It is surrounded by a ditch. Its circular shape, its location and the nature of the soil from which it is formed all indicate that it is man made.

There are many hypotheses on the exact nature of the tumulus. It could be:

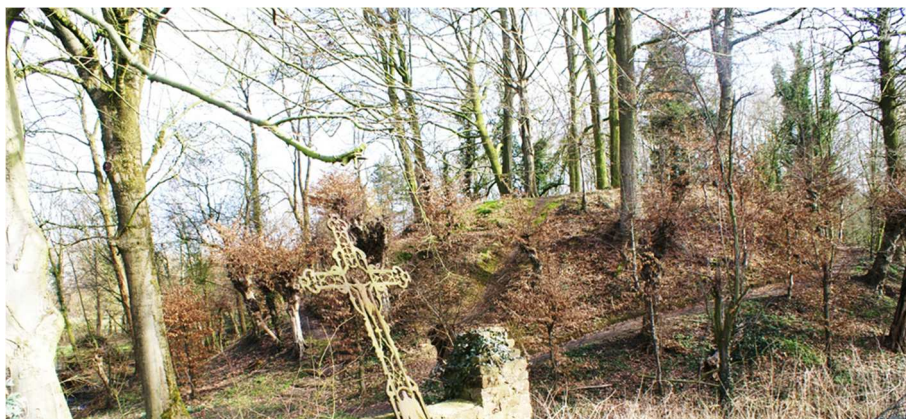
- the tomb of a Gallic leader from the Roman era, or even from the pre-Roman era. The name "Tombelle", which is sometimes used to describe it, backs up this hypothesis;
- a fortified mound dating from the early Middle Ages. The ditch surrounding the tumulus, the possibility of creating a courtyard between the streams, and the presence of the church, which could have been the fortified building's chapel, all support this hypothesis;
- a small hill forming part of a line of defence between the County of Hainaut and the Duchy of Brabant, which extended as far as this point in 1200.

A poet's opinion (excerpt):

*It is a magical place, away from the village,
An oasis of calm and serenity,
Where we see the doors to another age opening,
Where we can touch the vastness of eternity.*

*There you will find, under the shade of the trees,
The gigantic and humble tomb of a giant.
This mausoleum is bare: no cast iron, no marble,
Nothing but a stony mound to cover its nothingness.*

Pierre Niesgrad
"If Jurbise were told to me", 2015



View from the cemetery, 2012