

The story behind the iguanodonts of Bernissart

# The Bones of the Borinage

SANDRA CORDIER

In April 1878 miners in Bernissart, a Walloon village in the former coal region of the Borinage, came across a vast quantity of dinosaur bones. The remains of some thirty iguanodonts were discovered in the clay at a depth of 322 metres. Thanks to the clay, several skeletons had been preserved fully intact.

A century on, Sandra Cordier first clapped eyes on the tall skeletons during a school trip to the Brussels Museum of Natural Sciences. That visit marked the start of a deep fascination.

## Reads like an exciting detective novel

DE STANDAARD DER LETTEREN

In this book Sandra Cordier goes in search of the story behind the discovery. How did the iguanodonts end up in the mineshaft of Bernissart? What road, both literally and figuratively, have the skeletons travelled since their discovery and excavation? Cordier delved into libraries and archives, studied original illustrations and spoke to relatives of those who found the bones. She also reflects on the future of the skeletons and explores the likelihood of the mine in Bernissart ever being opened up again for further research.

From her in-depth research, Sandra Cordier distils a story with all the qualities of a 'whodunit': colourful protagonists blinded by ambition and arrogance, lost documents, uncooperative institutions, contradictory testimonies and incorrect interpretations. Sometimes the truth is stranger than fiction.

## A comprehensive and intriguing book

AMAZING BELGIUM



## AUTHOR



Sandra Cordier (1967) is a graphic designer and amateur paleontologist. She spent seven years researching the iguanodonts of Bernissart. 'The bones of the Borinage' is her debut.

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