

TOURCOING'S TEXTILE INDUSTRIAL HERITAGE

INDUSTRIAL GLOSSARY :

Industrial Boulevard: Outer circular boulevard made up by successive roads, which was called "industrial" due to the presence of a number of factories and mills built there in the 1920s.

Georges FOREST (1881-1932): Architect who specialised in industrial building design and worked in the whole area. He designed 140 buildings, among which the Louis Lepoutre Weaving Mill in Tourcoing.

Marcel FOREST (1910-1998): Architect who specialised in industrial and utilitarian building design. The son of Georges Forest. He designed, among other things, the MacDonald Warehouse in Paris.

Jean-Baptiste MAILLARD (1857-1929): Tourcoing-born architect who was very committed to the town and designed many buildings, like the "Maison du collectionneur" (the Collector's House) and the "Chapelle du Voeu" (the Vow Chapel), for instance.

Combing: Preparation step prior to spinning which consists in discarding final residues and ensuring the fibers lie parallel to each other.

Spinning mill: A factory where textile fibers are turned into yarn.

Wool preparation process: The steps of washing, combing, spinning, weaving, dyeing, and finishing.

Saw-tooth roof: A roof comprising a series of ridges with dual pitches either side. One of the pitches was in glass, which allowed for natural light.

Prestressed concrete: Combination of concrete and metal reinforcement. Its peculiarity lies in the fact that, beforehand, it is submitted to compression stresses.



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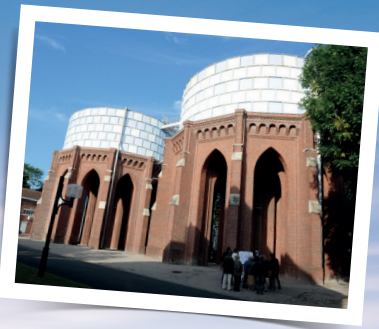
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"LES FRANCS" WATER TOWERS

Those water towers are intricately linked to the industrial expansion of Tourcoing as well as that of its twin city Roubaix. Indeed, to meet the growing needs of textile mills for water, both towns had those tanks built. The engineer Varennes was asked to design them and had the first tanks of water for industrial purposes in the Lille metropole area erected in 1863. Both brick constructions are topped by an open tank made of riveted cast iron. The water was drawn from the river Lys. This project was one of the first jointly initiated by Tourcoing and Roubaix. The tanks were restored by the Water Company of Northern France in 1989 and 1990.

> Corner of rue de Lille and rue de Paris



SMOKESTACKS

They were used to exhaust the flue gases released by the operation and production of factories. This outstanding heritage is endangered, though it bears witness to labour history. Fortunately, it is now the focus of a renovation plan launched by the Town of Tourcoing. There are still 30 of them in the city. Artists and architects have been asked to work on them, which means they should be a major attraction in a near future. On some of them, like that of the Leurent Spinning Mill, the construction date is still visible.

For more information, please visit:

www.chl-tourcoing.fr/
www.proscitec.asso.fr/
www.fiersdenoscheminees.org/
www.culture.gouv.fr/culture/inventai/patrimoine/

TO DISCOVER TOURCOING'S JEWELS:

- > BUS LINES COVERING THE WHOLE TOWN: WWW.TRANSPOLE.FR
- > DIRECT CONNECTIONS WITH METRO AND TRAMWAY LINES (9 METRO STATIONS, 4 TRAMWAY STATIONS IN THE TOWN)
- > V'LILLE: BICYCLES IN SELF-SERVICE AND LONG-TERM BICYCLE RENTING, 200 BICYCLES AVAILABLE IN 25 SELF-SERVICE STATIONS



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Tourcoing
La Créative

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TOURCOING'S PAST AND THE TEXTILE INDUSTRY

The first written mention of "Torcoin" dates back to 1080. At the time, who would have guessed the small town would become a powerful industrial city in the textile sector?

The year 1173 was the first turning point: Philip of Alsace, Count of Flanders, signed a treaty on fabric production in Tourcoing, which authorised the trade of sheets and fabrics made in Flanders and there were reports of "the massive spinning mill of Tourcoing" already back then. In 1372, the Tourcoing manufacturers were allowed by King John II "The Good" to mark their products with an official seal, which was the Mortagne family's coat of arms and has inspired today's town logo. The Mortagnes owned the land where Tourcoing stood.

In 1491, Maximilian of Austria set up in Tourcoing a "Franche Foire", i.e. a big fair that made the town one of the most important trade centres in France. During the following century, production was diversified and included cloth manufacturing as well as wool combing and spinning.

The town and the industry both flourished, and there were about 500 weaving machines in Tourcoing in 1693. The town developed thanks to the successive industrial revolutions, and attracted more and more workers. The population grew from 20,000 in 1825 to 81,600 in 1906. Localities turned into actual quarters: Croix-Rouge, Blanche-Porte...

This expansion culminated in 1906, when Tourcoing hosted the Textile Industry World Fair, which undeniably shows how influential the town was. It thrived until the 1960's.

Textile production continued until the beginning of the 21st century, thanks to, notably, mail order companies. It was then hit by desindustrialisation. The factories closed down, and the question of their future was raised. A number of them were preserved, restored or converted as the last remnants of this amazing era of textile production.

Tourcoing takes pride in its glorious past and stays true to its century-old textile history, but has now turned to new sectors and invested in the CETI, the European Centre for Textile Innovation.



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TOURCOING'S TEXTILE INDUSTRIAL HERITAGE



1 LA TOSSÉE COMBING MILL

Adolphe Binet had a wool combing mill built in 1870. It was extended in the two following decades. In 1896, the Binet and Sons Company officially became the « Société du Peignage de la Tossée ». It kept developing in the course of the 20th century and produced up to 16% of the French combed wool. After a number of mergers and restructuring plans, Standard Wool Inc. lost control of the wool combing market in 1986 and had to close down in 2004. It was the last wool combing mill still active in the Nord Department. Now, the brick complex is to be turned into an "integrated city" as part of a project led by Reichen et Robert, an architect firm. This project is part of a larger one, led par SEM Ville Renouvelée and funded by the Urban

Community of Lille Metropole. The site is already home to a branch of the Arab World Institute and to the Union House on the Champ Libre, one of the old warehouses which has recently been renovated. The old boiler house, which features a monumental 53-meter high smokestack, was refurbished and enhanced in 2014. The project will, eventually, include companies, housing units, services and shops.

> rue de l'Union

2 VANOUTRYVE

Built in 1873 for the company Vanoutryve Félix et Cie, as the date on one of the stones of its central span shows, this fully operating wool processing mill became a jewel of the Nord-Pas de Calais textile industry. It received, among other things, the Gold Medal in the category "carpet/carpeting/furniture" during the Paris World's Fair in 1889. The mill featured 63 housing units for its workers and employed up to 7,000. It closed down for good in 2006 and since 2009, it has been housing a number of companies active in various

creative sectors (cinema, video games, 3D, animation) at the heart of the "Plaine Images". Two massive tanks from the old boiler room are thus visible at the entrance of the Imaginarium, a structure that was placed in the old doubling mill. The brick building has steep gable and saw-tooth roofs.

> Boulevard Constantin Descat
(block between Rues Quinet and Capitaine Aubert)

3 MCR PROUVOST

Erected in 1861 for the Dervaux-Lamon Company, the building used to house a wool combing mill. As of 1891, activities were diversified to include wool-washing and the building had to be extended in 1899. The mill operated until 1963 and was then bought out by MCR Prouvost. It was turned into a cloth-printing factory which operated for about two decades. The building was then converted into social housing units in 1984 and as such, is the only example in Tourcoing. This conversion was imagined by the architect firm Reichen et Robert.

The brick building comprises three floors linked by a central spiral staircase. The girders, the pylons and the old MCR Prouvost plate are the last remnants bearing witness to the building's past.

> Avenue Georges Pompidou

4 LORTHIOIS & MALPEL

Mainly made of reinforced concrete and bricks, the factory was built in 1925 by the architect Georges Forest. Originally a hosiery mill, it also produced wool stockings and then knee-high stockings as well as socks as of 1930. When it closed down, the premises were taken over by the pharmaceutical company Elsay Riga, then turned into and refurbished as housing units. The old two-storey factory has a saw-tooth roof. The inscription "Laines" (Wools) and the two ram faces to be seen at the top of the adjacent building (which used to house the offices and the home of the manager) illustrate the town's textile activities.

> Avenue Albert 1^{er}

5 PAUL ET JOSEPH LEURENT SPINNING MILL

This cotton mill was erected in 1901, complementing the Paul and Henri Leurent mill built two decades earlier at number 100. Extensions were built in 1909 but business slowed down after the company was plundered during World War I. Work at the spinning mill resumed after the war. The company diversified in 1965 and took up synthetic fiber spinning, which became its main activity until the mill's closure in the late nineties. The complex was redesigned by the architect Stéphane Degroot and turned into lofts in 2010. The old brick spinning mill, featuring saw-tooth roofs, roof decks and a glass roof, is three-storey high. The old smokestack was preserved.

> 92 rue du Touquet



12 PJT-PAUL ET JEAN TIBERGHIE COMPLEX

Textile production started rather early at this site, as the 1835 business and trade almanac reports. The Roussel Frères et Réquillart and the Tiberghien-Delcourt weaving mills shared the premises. In 1867, Napoleon III and Empress Eugénie visited the Réquillart mill. At the end of the 19th century, the Charles Tiberghien company occupied the entire building. The Paul et Jean Tiberghien Company was

founded in 1921. The factory closed down in the 1990s, and offices were converted into housing units. The rest of the site now houses a school and its sports ground. The brick complex is three-floor high and covered by gable roofs.

> 105, rue de Lille



"LA FABRIQUE": TIBERGHIE FRÈRES

The mill was built in 1853 but was only occupied by the Tiberghien Frères company in the early 1890s. Originally specialised in wool scouring, the business diversified as of 1900 and new buildings were added to the site, partly designed by Edmond Liétard. Up to 2,500 people worked in the combing, spinning and weaving mills. The company thrived until the 1990s, when it closed down. The building was renovated by the Tourcoing-born architect Boualem Chelouti and has been housing since 2005 a municipal youth and cultural centre called "La Fabrique". The three-storey brick mill has bay windows featuring metal mullions and is covered by a gable-roof.

> 98, rue de Paris

ETABLISSEMENTS MASUREL

With the town enjoying unprecedented growth, the Etablissements Masurel Frères erected an extra building as part of the existing factory on rue de Vailly. It was indeed a strategic location given that a new rail station had been built in the Les Francs quarter, which made wool conveyance easier and attracted workforce from Belgium. A massive weaving mill was built there in 1884, boasting a 75-meter-high smokestack – the highest in Northern France. The company diversified and had a knitting mill erected there in 1945, designed by the architect Marcel Forest. The single-floor buildings feature bay windows. The whole compound, made of reinforced and prestressed concrete and bricks, is now occupied by La Blanche Porte, a mail-order company.

> 220, rue de Paris

FLIPO

The Jules Flipo Company was founded in 1867 and had a weaving mill built on the "Industrial Boulevard" in 1925, a date which is engraved on its smokestack. Originally specialised in the weaving of carpets and upholstery fabrics, it also produces quality carpeting. The company is still operating and has been the supplier of the Hotel d'Angleterre in Geneva, Switzerland, the Hotel du Palais in Biarritz, in the south-west of France, and the Sofitel Baltimore in Paris - among others. The Art-Deco style buildings (offices and workshops) are made of reinforced concrete and bricks and covered by roof deck.

> 333, chaussée Fernand Forest

LOUIS LEPOUTRE WEAVING MILL

This impressive building, located on the "Industrial Boulevard", was erected between 1921 and 1923 and designed by the architect Georges Forest. The Louis Lepoutre Textile Mill dealt with all the steps of wool processing except wool-washing. This means the entire production chain was to be found there: combing, spinning, weaving, dyeing as well finishing were carried out at the mill – a perfect example of what is called vertical integration. The mill is now classified as a Historical Monument on the French Supplementary Inventory. It closed down in the 80s. One quarter of its surface is now used for storage by the company La Blanche Porte. This old brick weaving mill has four storeys and features bay windows with metal mullions that pour light into the workshops. The adjacent tower houses a staircase that provides access to each level, as well as an old water tank at the top.

> 156, chaussée Pierre Curie



6 L'ATELIER ("THE WORKSHOP")

The land was first developed in 1867 with the building of the Dubrulle wool-combing mill, which was taken over by the Malard Company in 1890. It was rebuilt by the architect Marcel Forest in 1956. However, wool-combing operations stopped in 1962 and the company focused on trading exclusively. The adjacent office building (at the corner of Rue Driant and Rue de Guisnes) was designed in 1933 by the architect Jean-Baptiste Maillard in Art Deco style. It was converted into housing units by the architect Boualem Chelouti in 2009. The whole complex, made of reinforced concrete, was occupied by the Buisart Trading Company during the last quarter of the 20th century. Part of the old wool combing mill was preserved and turned into the Atelier, a municipal sport and leisure centre that was completed in 2009.

> 81 rue des Piats



IUT B - LILLE 3: SAINTE BARBE

This old wool spinning mill is undoubtedly one of the greatest examples of what is called in Northern France an "industrial castle". The building, erected in 1866 by the Van den Bergh-Marescaux Company, as the letters V and M engraved on the surrounding wall show, became in 1898 the property of the Van den Bergh-Desurmont Company, which then decided to specialise in the production of combed wool and knitting wool. The mill closed down for good in 1980 and various renovation projects were submitted. Eventually, the old mill was chosen to house a branch of the University of Lille, IUT B - Lille 3, in 1995. Made of bricks and cut stones, the one-floor building is covered by a gable-roof.

> 3, rue Sainte-Barbe