

1 siècle de succès

La Cimentelle : A successful century about Vassy cement ... an eternity of work ... but now, a charming residence in an unusual place.

Vassy cement is one of the most important french invention during the industrial century.

In 1830, the Gariel brothers found the remarkable hydraulic properties of the Vassy ash blue stones : a clay limestone full of magnesium coming from the jurassic era.

They made use of it and gave to this cement a great succes, it brought prosperity to the regions around Auxerre and Avallon.

If there is plenty of cement factory emerging, Vassy's is the one which created the reputation of french cement. Until 1860, this factory never stopped growing, it is in this factory that the first steam machine of Yonne region was installed.

The "fast" Vassy cement, also known as Roman cement, permitted to revive some building techniques forgotten since the Middle Ages : Roman used those techniques to construct outstanding edifices like the Colosseum or the Pont du Gard.

Lost throught the ages, by lack of strong mortar, construction were led by gothic and novel styles.

Formerly using Portland cement, France covered back its self-reliance in work of art construction. New clay limestone deposits such as Vassy one filled the newsbuilding work needs. Vassy cement is part of Yonne history.

About the transportation, at the begining, cement were carried by floating inland navigation like wood and Auxerre en Chablis wine. Then in 1871, after the construction of a railway, goods were carried by train.

In this way, Vassy cement was part of the great transformations of Paris during the 19th century, you still can see it throughout Haussmannian buildings. Paris' subway is made of this cement, as well as Montsouris parc reservoir or even the Suez canal.

Vassy' is also present in some great works such as Marseille, Dieppe, Alger or Constantinople port or the Midi canal.

Sur place, vous pouvez encore examiner les fours ovoïdes servant à la cuisson, les meules ainsi que les chemins de meules.

On site, we will observe some millstones and ovoid ovens which were used to bake cement. The building of the factory will show you how cement substituted stone. All those works, older than one century, are still in a perfect state of preservation.