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Alexandre Charpentier, 1897, Lithography advertisement for Émile Müller's Grande Tuilerie in Ivry.

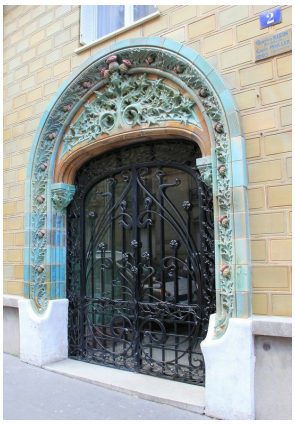
Émile Müller (21st september 1823 – 11th november 1889) was the architect of the workers housing estate in Mulhouse. He founded in 1854, the **"Grande Tuilerie" in Ivry Port** (Seine). At first he used ceramic products on buildings and industries, then in 1884, he developed an enamelled Terracotta, which he used on architectural decoration and artistic reproductions. His prestigious works, such as these, went on to achieve great recognition, both in France and abroad. The "Grande Tuilerie" won awards at the **Universal Exhibitions** in Amsterdam (1883), Anvers (1885) and Chicago (1893). At the World's Fair of 1889, the "Grande Tuilerie" was a huge hit and received a grand prize. For this same exhibition, Émile Müller built the stoneware balustrades for the Eiffel Tower. It stood out from its competitors because it used porcelain stoneware tiles, a material which went on to open up new markets for businesses. When **Émile Müller** died in 1889, his son, Louis took on running the "Grande Tuilerie", under the name **"Émile Müller and company"**. The society became *"the largest factory of ceramic products for buildings, industries and works of art in the world"*.He continued to work with architectural stoneware and won a number of awards at Universal Exhibitions, including one at the **Universal Exhibition in Brussels in 1897**, where he won a grand prize and three gold medals. He also made the roofing and the frieze decorations for the domes of the **Grand and Petit Palais** for the World's Fair of 1900.
In 1900, the "Grande Tuilerie" was made up of five factories in Ivry, work being divided by type of production. Until this date, the number of workers varied between three hundred and four hundred.

Émile Müller, then his son, went on to actively work with other artists such as**Eugène Grasset, Henri de Toulouse-Lautrec, Louis Chalon, Isidore de Rudder**, or sculptors such as**Vibert, Charpentier, Fix-Masseau, Falguière, Guillot, Szymonowski**. They thought Emile Müller offered a perfectly adapted, and high quality cermaic "support", which they used in their own works of art, and which considerably contributed to his fame. Around 1895, Louis Müller made the enamelled stoneware for several of Grasset's works of art, such as *"l'affiche du Salon des Cent de 1894"*and a monumental decorative clock.



Front of Meunier chocolate factory in Noisiel. The architectural ceramics were made at Émile Müller's Grande Tuilerie.

The **"Grande Tuilerie"** quickly specialised in architectural ceramics, which developed over fifty years, from 1870 to 1914. **Émile Müller**, then Louis, went on to work with architects, including**Hector Guimard**. For example in 1871 he made the earthenware polychrome décor which covered the metallic structure of the windmill of the **Meunier chocolate factories in Noisiel**, designed by architect**Jules Saulnier**. For the World's Fair of 1878 in Paris, he was commissioned to decorate the pediments inside the **Gallery of Machines**, built by Léopold Hardy. Then, for the purpose of the World's Fair of 1900, and according to the model given by **Alexandre Charpentier**, Louis Müller made the low-relief monumental feature called *"The bakers"* (today known as the Scipion square in Paris). In 1903, Louis Müller decorated the building built by **Charles Klein**, Claude-Chachu street in Paris (16th arrondissement). Today called*"House of Thistles"*. During the same year this building won an award at the competition of facades in the town of Paris. Other works such as the varnished tiles made for the Beaunes Hospices and the tiles decorated with fleurs-de-lys made for **Mont-Saint-Michel** took place in this competition.
In 1904, the business changed its name to**"new society of Émile Müller establishments"**. In 1910, Louis Müller constructed a new building for the factory, on the banks of the Seine, and a kilometre from Austelitz station. But the factory went into administration shortly after, in 1912. Camille Bériot then bought back the factory and kept its same name. With the factory being flooded with requests, Camille Bériot built another factory in Breuillet in 1922. This factory employed about five hundred people over a period of forty years. Camille Bériot died in June 1939. Following her death, one of her sons, Jacques, took on the running of the Emile Müller society. He went on to be the manager for the next thirty years. During the Second World War, the society survived, with considerably debts, and in 1968, the factory was sold to a subsidiary of the Lafarge group. It was at this time that the high relief stoneware feature, The Frieze of Work, made by sculptor Guillot and cut in the furnaces of the Grande Tuilerie, was transferred from Ivry to Moulin de Breuillet park. This high relief feature was recovered by Emile Muller from the left pillar of the monumental door made for the exhibition of 1900, which he placed on a pedestal in his factory in Ivry. The Müller establishments became subsidiaries of the Carbonisation and Ceramic society in 1967, and were completely overtaken by this society two years later as all Müller factories were then demolished.



Entrance gate for the "House of Thistles" in Paris.



Old photo of low relief feature "the bakers" by Alexander Charpentier.

See also

Pichenot-Loebnitz — Hector Guimard — The Eiffel Tower — Art Nouveau — 1878 World's Fair — 1889 World's Fair — 1900 World's Fair

See our exterior architecture