

The Factory

Having once belonged to the Marquise de La Tour du Pin, it was bought by Brun Pons and then by a Madame Fouletier, a descendant of a family of silk weavers from Lyon. The many milling and weaving factories were established, employed a mainly female workforce who greatly contributed to the family income. At the turn of the 20th century, Alexois referred to this building as the "Factory". This impressive stone building about 40 meters in length, two stories high, leaning against the mound of the cliff, was then a spinning mill.

The tasks performed by the workshops:

The first step of the process, one not carried out in this building, consisted of extracting the silk thread contained in the cocoons produced by silkworms. It was most likely the work of a spinning workshop, located in the Rue du Centre, owned by the Jurus family. This extraction was performed by workers residing in Alex as well as workers coming from Italy, some who subsequently decided to make their roots in the village. The fiber then underwent multiple operations: twisting, assembling and steaming in order to make it ready for future use. In addition to pure silk thread, other fibers such as wool of animal origin, cotton, linen and hemp were also processed. By the mid-20th century, artificial silk and synthetic yarn such as rayon, nylon, and rilsan were also manufactured. The factory received the raw silk thread by train at the Alex / Grâne train station. The rayon yarn came from Germany. One then proceeded to the reeling and then to the milling. The yarn, once unwound and ground, was destined for knitting or weaving. The workshops occupied the ground floor; the first floor was organized half lodging/half workshop.

The activity ceased in 1975.