

Lead

**The material of yesterday,
today and tomorrow**

PART OF OUR HERITAGE

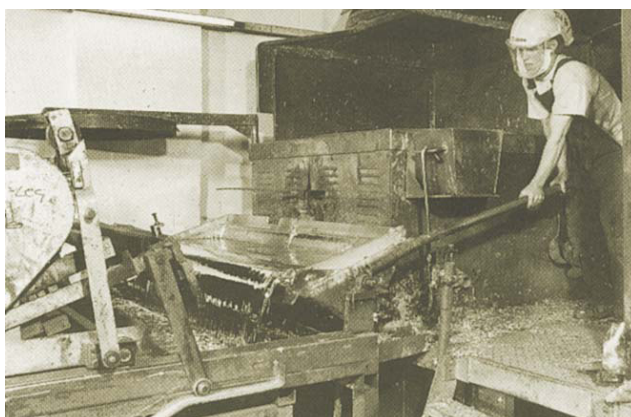
A statue of the temple of ABYDOS (Turkey) erected in homage to OSIRIS today allows us to date the first traces of the use of lead in 3800 BC. Even centuries later, the Romans, who were practically-minded, recognised the value of lead as a construction material. Lead from Cornwall was therefore exported to the capital of the Roman Empire where it was used largely for water conduits and tanks and, in sheet form, for roofing and baths. In France, lead has had a particular place in religious architecture since the middle ages. Nevertheless, its use in large public buildings was a trend that followed periods of economic expansion when man had shaped the world by thinking of his descendants.

ECONOMICAL

When lead covers slender, pointed roofs or domes, it is unlikely to be matched by any other material. Although lead may seem more expensive, a more precise analysis of costs will often demonstrate the opposite. This is especially the case when the covering is a very complex product.

TRADITION

Currently, the process of casting on a bed of sand is, largely, identical to that which it has always been. Before, the lead-worker installed a melting basin in the churchyard, to melt the lead used. Then he cast the lead by melting in the bed to produce a sheet that was ready to use. Today, the principle remains unchanged. However, a new technology has been introduced, to be able to meet the more rigorous demands of modern construction. When the lead is at the ideal temperature, around a tonne of cast metal



is poured onto the bed of sand which has been prepared beforehand. Here, the lead starts to solidify almost immediately, leaving a granular appearance.

LONGEVITY

Its qualities make lead a very special material. Also, lead has been largely recognised as the ideal material for covering roofs when the durability and aesthetic appearance are paramount. Furthermore, knowledge of the evolution of lead over time allows a well-designed and well-placed covering of lead to be affirmed, that is unproblematic for several years. Contrary to public opinion, lead is not heavier than other materials used for roofs. So lead with a thickness of 3.2 mm is not as heavy as tiles or thatch, and its service life is even longer.



LENGTH	WIDTH	THICKNESS
Max. 6 m	Max. 1500 mm	From 2.6 to 5 mm