BUDAPESTAND ITS SURROUNDINGS

Besides its role as the capital of the country, the developments of the previous centuries made Budapest an industrial city as well. Among the capitals of the world the number of workers employed in the industrial sector here was outstanding. In the second half of the 20th century one fifth of the whole population lived in Budapest and almost half of the industrial workers. Besides mining a considerable portion of the other domestic industries were located in the capital and many factories were built in the surroundings of Budapest.

So such industrial giants as the largest heavy industrial base of Hungary, the Csepel Iron and Metal Works (earlier Weiss Manfred Factory) were built in Budapest. Although this factory never had the complete range of metallurgy (it did not have raw iron making furnaces, blast-furnaces and adjoining workshops), the wide choice of excellent quality finished- and semi-finished iron, steel and non-ferrous metal products made the performance of the nearly 30 000 workers and technical experts employed here world famous. The war orders encouraged the owner to start substantial developments. Later their agricultural machines, tractors, machine tools, armored cars, bicycles, motorcycles, sewing machines became famous products. They forged tools and machine parts. They cast tubes, bells, pots and pans, heaters, bathtubs and medical equipment from non-ferrous metals, iron and steel as well. They rolled tubes and other plumbing appliances.

In Budapest the machine factories that were engaged in metallurgical production with a smaller or bigger capacity (forging, iron, steel and metal casting) as well especially to secure the supply of raw materials and semi-finished products for themselves had or even still have large industrial sites in Budapest. (In 1975 there were 81 iron, 2 temper, 35 precision, 13 steel, 130 light metal and 30 heavy metal foundries in the country.)

Among them we can mention such big companies as the MÁVAG Machine Factory in Budapest, the Hungarian Ship and Crane Factory, the Ganz and Co. Firm's Wagon Factory in Kőbányai Street, the Lang Machine Factory, the Kőbánya Iron and Steel Casting Factory, the United Electrical Machine Factory and the Metallurgical Factory Building Company, etc....

In the second half of the 20th century more and more companies in Budapest -maintaining their headquarters in the capital- opened subsidiaries and factories in the country as well. For example the Casting Company besides its factory in Budapest had iron foundries with considerable capacities in Sopron, Kisvárda, Szeged, Mohács and Kecskemét.

These structures were considerably modified toward the end of the 20th century so we can witness the formation of a new industrial structure at the beginning of the 21st century. In spite of this most industrial sites in Budapest can still give an interesting and instructing picture and provide information for the curious tourist or searching expert.

The proportion of the industrial monuments characterizes the industrial dominance of the capital in the 19th and 20th centuries. In a survey carried out in 1981 out of the ten professional categories only in 2(the mining and ceramic industry) there were not major industrial sites in Budapest.

As a rule most museums can be found in Budapest and the collection of these is the richest.

Of the 100 museums in Budapest 21 shows our heritage of technical history and one, the Foundry Museum displays the artifacts of domestic metallurgy.

These public collections possess a very precious and rich material, a small portion of which can be seen by the wider public as well. The very bad conditions of some of them are not worthy of their importance and their European level function. For example the National Technical Museum in Budapest possesses a warehouse but no showroom. (Its expanding collection from 1981 was moved to Kassa in 1938 and the whole collection was left there. The new collecting work was restarted in 1954.)

The Foundry Museum was founded in 1969 with the material and ethical support of the CEO (Dr. Sándor Énekes) of the Diósgyőr Metal Works (earlier Lenin Metal Works), under the instruction of industrial historian Gyula Kiszely. For its location one of the halls built in 1858 of the foundry founded in 1845 by Abraham Ganzwas chosen.

This foundry was the first and for a while the only crustcast foundry in Central Europe. Production was stopped here in 1964. The building was restored in 1892 and since then it has housed the subsidiary of the National Technical Museum.

Abraham Ganz, the founder of the factory was born in Switzerland in 1814. He moved to Budapest in 1841 and he founded his own iron foundry in 1845. In 1853 he began casting crustcast wagon wheels.

The iron castings are cast in sand moulds. On the surfaces where they want to form an abrasion proof crust e.g.: on the running surface of the wagon wheels or the covering of grinding cylinders- in the moulds they put a good cooling quality iron facing called casting mould which is covered with a special enamel so the iron will not stick to it.

Ganz made the wagon wheels by using this method and his invention, his hard work and his enterprises made him one of the outstanding personalities of his time. He was awarded several prizes and chosen honorary citizen of Buda. At the top of his successes not long after casting the 100.000th wagon wheel, he died in tragic circumstances. His life work was continued by András Mechwart.

The most important parts of the collection: the original furnishings of the Ganz crustcasting foundry, with 2 furnaces, 4 rotating cranes, mould cabinets and crustcrasts made here in the shaping, casting and the drawing off parts of the foundry: The artifacts of the 19th century iron casting industry (e.g.: munkácsi heaters); and the Artifacts of the domestic bell-casting profession.

Its permanent exhibitions: the original parts of the Ganz factory's crustcasting equipment, the tokens of the life of Abraham Ganz and the history of iron, steel and metal casting in the Carpathian Basin.

The building of the museum was made in 1966-67 according to the plans of Egon Pfannl, from the original 1675 sqm 1125 sqm remained. (The open-air exhibition area is 2841 sqm.)

In the casting hall the shaping and casting of the crsutcast wagon wheels took place under the 4 rotating cranes. Two of them were left in their original condition for showing them as historical monuments, under the other two the permanent and temporary casting exhibitions are placed. The feeding store of the iron casting furnaces built in 1897 is part of the exhibition too.

In 2002 the museum received the special award of the Pulszky Society-Hungarian Museum Alliance for its many-sided activities carried out during the previous years.

The address: OMM Öntödei Múzeuma

(Foundry Museum of HMST, Gleesereimuseumdes UTM) H-1027 Budapest, II.ker., Bem József u. 20. Tel./fax:36/1/201-43-70 E-mail:omm.om@freemail.hu



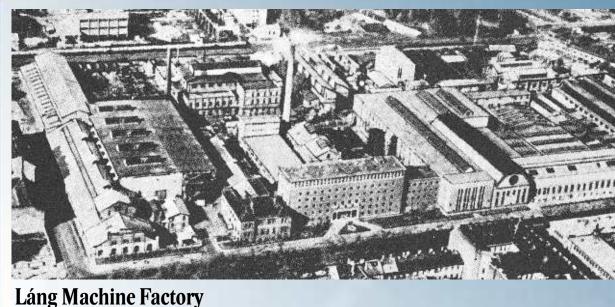
Ábrahám Ganz (1814-1867) **Founder of the Foundry**



View of the Royal National Machine Factory at beginning of the 20th century



Workers of the foundry gave a honorary album as a present to Ábrahám Ganz on the occasion of casting the one hundred thousandth piece of railway wheels, on 23 November 1867.





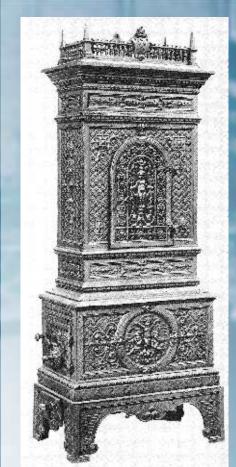
Details of Újpest with the shipyard in the background in 1860



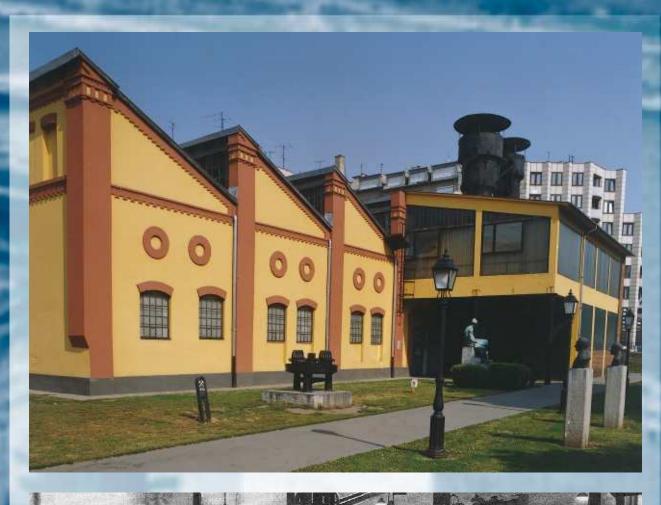
Freeman certificate of Ábrahám Ganz (1863)

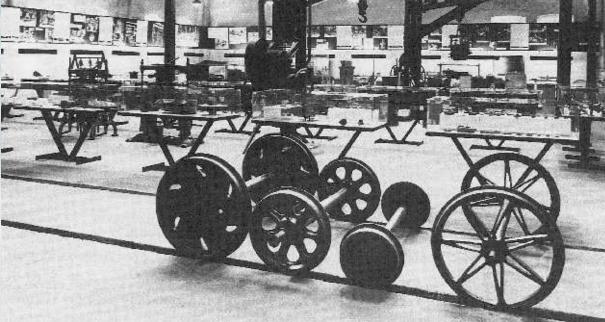


Cast iron spiral stairs before its inauguration (2000)



from the collection of Foundry Museum







Foundry Museum of the National Technical Museum