



THE ROTHSCHILD ARCHIVE
Review of the year April 2000 – March 2001





The Rothschild Archive Trust

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INTRODUCTION

Emma Rothschild, Chairman of the Rothschild Archive Trust

The Review of the Year for 1999/2000 recorded the establishment of the Rothschild Archive Trust, the generous donation to the Trust of the archives of N M Rothschild & Sons Limited and the opening of the Rothschild Archive in its new premises in St. Swithin's Lane. To coincide with the opening, a Guide to the collection was published and the Archive launched its own website. These steps represented a remarkable stride forward in bringing the Archive to the attention of a wider audience and helping it fulfil its potential as a major resource for historians.

In 2000/2001, as this second edition of the Review demonstrates, the Director and staff of the Archive have maintained the momentum, with the active help and support of many who have recognised the significance of what the Trustees are attempting to achieve: the gathering together in a safe haven of the records of a family which has had the opportunity to play a part in many aspects of the history of the last two hundred years, and the creation of a centre for research to explore them to the full.

This year, with the publication of the Guide behind them, the staff of the Archive have been investigating various routes by which the content of the Archive could be more fully explored. One approach is reflected in Richard Schofield's article in this Review and other pilot projects are recorded in Vic Gray's account of recent work in the Archive.

The Trustees have also continued with the work of building the collections - adding new papers both from within the Rothschild family and its businesses and from other sources. As the record of acquisitions shows, members of the family have responded well to this objective and during the year the collections have been considerably enriched by new deposits of papers. We hope this will be the beginning of a collective effort to make the Archive as comprehensive and useful a research centre as possible.

The pursuit of other related material has taken the Archive into new and unexpected fields. Collaboration with the Stadt- und Universitätsbibliothek in Frankfurt has yielded microfilm of a remarkable international collection of press cuttings recording the activities of the family over a period of many decades. Collaborations of this sort will be a keynote of the Archive's programmes in future years.

None of this would have been possible without the continuing generosity of N M Rothschild & Sons Limited in funding the administration of the Archive, for which the Trustees once again record their deep gratitude. This year has also seen the early stages of development of a capital fund which, one day, may allow the Trust to move towards a greater measure of self-sufficiency.

The reintegration of political history and financial history is one of the genuinely exciting new opportunities for historians of the modern period, as Professor Niall Ferguson demonstrated this year in his lecture at The Rothschild Archive on Bankers and Politics. So is the reintegration of national and international or global history. The Rothschild Archive can in both respects, we believe, become a very substantial resource for historical scholarship and public understanding.