



REVIEW OF THE YEAR APRIL 2004 TO MARCH 2005

From the House of Representatives

174 on Route 66

THE ROTHSCHILD ARCHIVE

REVIEW OF THE YEAR APRIL 2004 TO MARCH 2005

The Rothschild Archive Trust

Trustees

Emma Rothschild (Chair)

Baron Eric de Rothschild

Lionel de Rothschild

Julien Sereys de Rothschild (from November 2004)

Professor David Landes

Anthony Chapman

Victor Gray (from November 2004)

Staff

Victor Gray (Director to October 2004)

Melanie Aspey (Archivist; Director from November 2004)

Elaine Penn (Assistant Archivist)

Caroline Shaw (Assistant Archivist)

Gill Chapman (Secretary to July 2004)

Annette Shepherd (Secretary from July 2004)



The Rothschild Archive, New Court, St Swithin's Lane, London EC4P 4DU

Tel: +44 (0)20 7280 5874 Fax: +44 (0)20 7280 5657 E-mail: info@rothschildarchive.org

Website: www.rothschildarchive.org

Company No. 3702208 Registered Charity No. 1075340

Front cover

Members of the Rothschild family often featured in works by SEM (Georges Goursat, 1863–1934), the great caricaturist of the *belle époque*. After working in Bordeaux and Marseilles, SEM had moved to Paris by 1900, and is likely to have produced this drawing some time after that date and before 1905, the year in which Alphonse de Rothschild died. Alphonse features twice in this piece: the small figure on the far right and again on the left, next to Mathilde, the wife of Henri de Rothschild. Henri himself is at the centre. His great-aunt Leonora, Baroness Alphonse, is shown walking on the beach, possibly alongside Henri's uncle, Arthur, who died in Nice in 1903.

The other characters are drawn from the sporting world, especially the Turf, and the *beau monde* of Nice and Monte Carlo with whom the Rothschilds enjoyed social links. James Gordon Bennett, proprietor of the *New York Times*, shown on his yacht, *Lysistrata*, sponsored sporting prizes for cars and yachts; Lord Savile and Camille Blanc were both well known owners of successful race-horses, the latter also managing the Casino at Monte Carlo.

Contents

Introduction Emma Rothschild	7
Review of the Year's Work Melanie Aspey	8
The London house of Rothschild and its Belgian contacts (1815–1860) Hans Willems	14
Collecting Chardins: Charlotte and Henri de Rothschild Harry W. Paul	21
The Oil Refinery in Rijeka: A story of survival Velid Đekić	27
Fabergé and the Rothschilds Kieran McCarthy	34
Far-Sighted Charity: Adolphe and Julie de Rothschild and their eye clinics in Paris and Geneva Klaus Weber	42
Rothschild Reunited: The records of de Rothschild Frères at the Centre des archives du monde du travail Amable Sablon du Corail , Johann Comble , Melanie Aspey	49
Principal Acquisitions, 1 April 2004 – 31 March 2005	55

Introduction

Emma Rothschild, Chairman of The Rothschild Archive Trust

The contributions to the sixth *Review of the Year* reflect the diverse research interests of the Archive's users. The collections are literally worldwide in scope, and include resources for financial, political and industrial history, the history of communications, philanthropy, art, horticulture, and education. The Archive's London reading room has been visited this year by scholars associated with universities from Budapest to Brasilia, and with interests in topics from decorative arts in Russia to the politics of the 19th century Ottoman Empire; many more use the Research Forum of the Archive's web site, www.rothschildarchive.org. We are delighted that the first Rothschild Archive Bursary was awarded to Hans Willems of the University of Antwerp; an indication of the significance of the collection for his research is presented in this *Review* (see page 14).

The *Review* also contains an account of an important development: the transfer of ownership of the records of de Rothschild Frères from the Rothschild family to the Trust (see page 49). The Trust wishes to express its deep appreciation to members of the family who so readily agreed to the proposal that the future of these records should be the responsibility of this Trust.

The research project hosted by the Archive, with the generous support of the Hanadiv Charitable Foundation, *The Jewish Community and Social Development in Europe 1800–1940*, has entered a new phase, thanks to a grant from the Fritz Thyssen Stiftung (Cologne), for whose support the Trustees express their great appreciation. The funding enables a team of four researchers to examine in detail the surviving source material in Austria, France, Germany, Italy and Israel under the guidance of Dr Klaus Weber. The Thyssen Foundation will also support an international workshop at the Archive, on Jewish and non-Jewish welfare and charity, which will place the project in a wider context.

The board of Trustees has changed in the past year. Victor Gray has retired as Director, and has been replaced by Melanie Aspey. We are delighted that Victor Gray has joined the board of Trustees, as has Julien Sereys de Rothschild. One of the founding Trustees, Professor David Landes of Harvard University, has, to our great regret, decided to retire from the board, in order to have more time for research and writing. We are proud of his association with us, which will continue in a less formal way in the future, and we thank him for playing such an important role in the early years of the Trust. Professor Landes was succeeded, in 2005, by Professor David Cannadine of the University of London, who is himself a contributor to this *Review*, and whom we welcome to the Archive.

Review of the year's work

Melanie Aspey, Director of The Rothschild Archive

Acquisitions

More than one hundred separate accessions were recorded in the Archive during the year, ranging from a single document or photograph to significant collections of business papers. Outstanding among them was an acquisition by the Trust – intellectually if not physically – of a unique nature: the transfer of ownership of the records of de Rothschild Frères from the Rothschild family to the Trust was finalised.

In recent years staff of the Archive have gained a better understanding of the nature of the records of the French bank, held on deposit at the Archives Nationales' Centre des archives du monde du travail in Roubaix, northern France, thanks to the warm and open reception they have received from Madame Françoise Bosman, the Director of the centre and her colleagues.

The transfer of ownership has cemented this relationship between the archivists who look forward to working together with researchers to exploit the collections yet further. To this end Madame Bosman and Victor Gray, the former Director of the Archive, proposed a joint colloquium, which will take place at Roubaix in 2006. Two distinguished historians, Professor François Crouzet and Professor Alice Teichova, have agreed to co-chair the Academic Committee for the colloquium, which will take as its theme the Rothschild family's interests in eastern Europe.

An article about the development of the archives of de Rothschild Frères and plans for future joint ventures between staff of The Rothschild Archive and the Centre des archives du monde du travail appears on page 49.

Accessions of a more regular nature include a cartoon by SEM (Georges Goursat, 1863–1934) featuring members of the Rothschild family and their contemporaries (see front cover). SEM was a leading cartoonist of the *belle époque* in the early years of the twentieth century and depicted many Rothschilds during his career. The discovery of this item was of particular interest to Victor Gray who has been working on a new research project, Rothschild in caricature. The project, based in The Rothschild Archive, sets out to identify all surviving cartoons and caricatures of the Rothschild family and to use them as the basis for an analysis of changing attitudes towards the family and its enterprises. The first results of his research will be published on the Rothschild Research Forum.³

Two rare publications about the activities of the Austrian Rothschilds were also added to the collection of printed works. The first, *Der Baron Rothschild: Reisen, Jagden, Menschlichkeiten* by Forstrat Gruenkrantz (Munich: Verlag für Kulturpolitik, 1924), is an account of Baron Nathaniel

Opposite

The offices of de Rothschild Frères, rue Laffitte, n.d. A visitor from the London bank in 1847 remarked of the French clerks, *It is astonishing how they continue to come out such 'Swells' and to dress as well as they do.*

Private collection.



Obverse and reverse of a silver token granting free travel on the Lombardy and Central Italian Railway to Lionel de Rothschild, a director of the company.



von Rothschild (1836–1905) and the family’s hunting grounds in Austria. This was a gift from a member of the family. The second, a collection of reprinted official documents relating to the Southern Railway (*Sammlung der die Concession und die Constituierung der k.k. priv. Südbahn-Gesellschaft betreffenden Urkunden*), edited and published in 1900 by the board of the railway company was discovered, complete with map of the network, in an antiquarian bookshop in Vienna by one of the Archive’s research contacts. Another Rothschild railway involvement in the Habsburg Empire was reflected in the purchase of a silver coin engraved by Desaide-Roquelay, permitting Lionel de Rothschild, a director of the company, to enjoy free transport on the lines of the Lombardy and Central Italian railway.

Research

The continuing and growing popularity of web-based resources does not diminish the demand for access to original material at the Archive’s London reading room where visiting researchers continue to prove the value of the collections to scholars working in diverse disciplines. Financial historians have researched Rothschild loans to Hungary, Australia and Brazil, Rothschild involvement in the mercury trade with Mexico and the commission houses in North and South America. Biographers of the Rothschild women, Benjamin Disraeli, plant hunter George Forrest and financier of plant hunters, Lawrence Johnston, have found useful source material in the Archive which is being revealed by the archivists’ cataloguing work.

The Archive continues to develop its relationships with historians of art and the history of collections, this year holding a seminar on the sources available to those engaged in research on collections of gold and silver *objets d’art* formed by members of the Rothschild family. The format of this seminar was of use to all participants, making available information about sources in the Archive and enabling the archivists to learn more about the research methods of the researchers. Further seminars are planned to promote the use of the collection to more scholars.

Rothschild Archive bursaries are available for researchers engaged in full-time education and committed to research projects which will involve substantial use of The Rothschild Archive. The bursaries are designed to provide practical assistance with travel, accommodation or incidental costs associated with such work in London. Hans Willems of the University of Antwerp received the first ever bursary this year to help him continue his research into the history of the Antwerp stock exchange. His account of this research and the importance of the collections of the Archive to him appear on page 14.

Palaeography

Letters exchanged between the first generation of the family to leave Frankfurt and establish business houses across Europe were usually written in a form they termed ‘Yiddish’, in this case the German language written in Hebrew characters. While the transcription and translation of these letters continues at a steady pace, revealing at every turn new information about the development of the business and insights into the family’s response to political events around them, the Archive sought advice from experienced palaeographers and Hebrew and Yiddish specialists about ways in which the necessary skills for reading this script might be preserved and transmitted to others. Plans for workshops based on the letters will be discussed in the coming year.



Watercolour of Baden by Emma von Rothschild, 1865, one of a group of thirty sketches and watercolours produced by the future Lady Rothschild in the years leading up to her marriage which were acquired by the Archive during the year.

The Rothschild Research Forum

The Rothschild Research Forum, launched as part of the Archive's web site in 2003, continues to expand. New members join weekly, and new content is regularly published by the Archive, by founder partners at Waddesdon Manor and by Forum members themselves. Articles from the *Review* appear on the web site in pdf form, and are the most popular pages among users. Guides to sources on the lives of a number of Rothschild women including Emma, 1st Lady Rothschild, Julie, Baroness Adolphe de Rothschild, Alice de Rothschild, Constance, Lady Battersea and Béatrice, Baroness Ephrussi, were published during the year. A contribution from Gillian Clegg – a valuable index of the horticultural literature relating to Gunnersbury Park – triggered further research by Dr Michael Hall that led to the discovery of a series of statues purchased by Nathan Rothschild, a hitherto unknown venture by the self-styled philistine. Dr Hall identified the statues as a series of eight by the sculptor James Thom based on characters from the poems of Robert Burns.

To commemorate the bicentenary of the birth of Benjamin Disraeli in 2004 the Archive contributed to the Research Forum a detailed finding aid to relevant sources in the collection. In the course of the preparatory research four letters from Disraeli came to light, copies of which were forwarded to Mel Wiebe, Professor of English and General Editor of the Disraeli Project (Emeritus), Queen's University in Canada. References by Disraeli in the letters to a pamphlet led the archivists, at the request of Professor Wiebe, to another item in the collection, one of a series of publications and manuscripts that had already been referred to on the Archive's web site, and which were listed in the previous issue of this *Review*.¹ Professor Wiebe was eventually able to assign to Disraeli an authorial role in the production of the pamphlet, which he identified as *Progress of Jewish Emancipation since 1829*. In a report on the investigation to the Research Forum² he commented,

This then is what the process of editing these four letters has accomplished.

A previously unidentified publication is now established as having been planned, largely written and brought to completion by Disraeli – in short, a new item has been added to the bibliography of Disraeli's works. Not only that, but these letters show that Disraeli was, behind the scenes, orchestrating Rothschild's campaign to gain admittance to parliament – in effect, he played a much more active role in the cause of admitting Jews into the British Parliament than has been previously recognized.

This new discovery exemplifies the rationale behind the establishment of the Research Forum, which was created to facilitate the dissemination of knowledge about resources for Rothschild history and to encourage the exchange of information between archivists, curators and researchers.

Library

Caroline Shaw's work on the Rothschild family's bibliography (the subject of an article in the previous *Review*) has led to the further enhancement of the Archive's library, notably in the area of natural history. Maurice de Rothschild's co-authored 1906 article on the forest pig of central Africa, 'L'Hylochærus Meinertzhageni O. Ths.', from the *Bulletin de la Société Philomathique de Paris* and an article published by the British Museum in 1982 on the Rothschild collection of Ixodoidea, to which Miriam Rothschild wrote a foreword, were welcome new discoveries. A generous gift from Professor and Mrs Stanley Weintraub was a copy of the rare *From January to December, a book for children*, written by Charlotte de Rothschild in 1873. Mrs Weintraub had discovered the publication during research at the Archive, and described it in an article on the Rothschild Research Forum before this particular copy came to light.

Donations from researchers at the Archive based on their use of the collection serve to highlight its diversity. The books include 'Los intereses de los banqueros británicos en España:



Far left

A sample group of post-First World War publications about the development of Hungary and eastern Europe from the papers of Rozsika Rothschild, deposited with the Archive by her daughter, Miriam.

Left

Poster in memory of Edmond de Rothschild (1845–1934) produced in Tel Aviv one month after his death.

la Banca Baring y su pugna con los Rothschild por el control del mercurio de Almadén’, in *Hispania*, 2003, by Dr Inés Roldan de Montaud; ‘A “láthatatlan” aláíró. A 4%-os államkötvények jegyzői 1881-ben’, [The invisible hand: the subscribers to the 1881 4% Hungarian State Bonds issue], which appeared in *Korall* no.14, 2003 by Professor György Kövér; *Les Rothschild: collectionneurs de manuscrits*, published by the Bibliothèque nationale de France, 2004, by Dr Christopher de Hamel; *Le Sang des Rothschild*, a comprehensive guide to Rothschild genealogy through the male and female lines of the family by Dr Henri Mars and Joseph Valynseele; ‘A display of opulence: Alfred de Rothschild and the visual recording of Halton House’, from the journal *Furniture History*, vol.XI, 2004, by Barbara Lasic.

Professional conferences and seminars have proved to be fruitful ground for developing research contacts and for promoting the availability of the Archive. During the year, staff from the Archive made presentations to the 15th International Congress on Archives in Vienna about the development of the Rothschild Research Forum; to the European Association for Banking History’s conference in Athens on the role of archives in corporate social responsibility programmes; to the International Railway History Association’s first conference in Semmering on railway history sources at the Archive; to a joint conference in Frankfurt on the Frankfurt Judengasse about material in the Archive relating to the Rothschild family and the ghetto; to the Bucks Gardens Trust about sources for the history of Rothschild gardens.

Articles about aspects of the collection written by the archivists appeared in the December 2004 issue of *The PhotoHistorian*, the journal of the historic section of the Royal Photographic Society, and *Latin American Research Review*, vol.40, no.1, 2005.

Exhibitions

A decade after the Frankfurt Jewish Museum staged its major exhibition, *The Rothschilds: a European Family*, the Archive enjoyed yet another collaboration with colleagues there. The exhibition *Zurück nach Moskau* (Back to Moscow), timed to coincide with the conference on the Judengasse, was based on the documents taken from the Rothschild family in Vienna by the Nazis and returned to them from an archive in Moscow in 2001. The venue for the exhibition was particularly fitting, since it was the Museum’s director, Dr Georg Heuberger, who first brought the documents’ location to the attention of the Rothschild family. Furthermore although the documents had been captured in Vienna, they had been transferred to that city from Frankfurt only eleven years before. Their display in Frankfurt was therefore something of a homecoming.

Documents and archives relating to the life of Ferdinand and Evelina de Rothschild were loaned to Waddesdon Manor for a display focusing on the couple and the Jewish Museum, London, borrowed material on the life of Disraeli for a bicentenary exhibition.

Philanthropy

The major research project hosted by the Archive, Jewish Philanthropy and Social Welfare in Europe, 1800–1940 continued into its second year led by Dr Klaus Weber. Dr Weber delivered a paper entitled ‘Housing the Poor: Rothschild initiatives in London, Frankfurt and Paris (1880–1930): conflicts of charity, profitability, publicity and anti-semitism’ in the section on Networks of Welfare at an Economic History Symposium at the Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona in January 2005. In November 2004 he presented a seminar on the scope of the project at the University of Southampton’s Parkes Centre, where he is a Fellow.

The future development of the project received a significant boost thanks to the award of a generous grant from the Fritz Thyssen Stiftung (Cologne), one of Germany’s major grant-giving bodies. Dr Weber made an application for funding to support one specific element of the project: the creation of a research team to investigate in more detail the sources of information about the foundations established and supported by the Rothschild family and their contemporaries in Vienna, Paris, Naples, and Frankfurt. Gabriele Anderl, Céline Leglaive, Luisa Levi d’Ancona and Ralf Roth were appointed to pursue this research. The information gathered in this way will be fed into a project database developed with creative enthusiasm by IT specialists at N.M. Rothschild & Sons.

The Fritz Thyssen Stiftung made a further gesture of financial support for the project by granting funds for a workshop entitled ‘Western European concepts of “Welfare”, “Philanthropy” and “Charity”: changes in meaning over space and time c.1800–1940’, which will be hosted by The Rothschild Archive.



Miriam Rothschild

Miriam Rothschild

In January 2005 one of the Archive’s friends and supporters, The Hon. Miriam Rothschild, DBE, FRS, died at the age of 96. Dame Miriam made numerous gifts to the Archive, enriching them all with her personal memories of her family and its history. It was in fact Dame Miriam who impressed upon the staff of the Archive the number and scale of philanthropic ventures supported by the Rothschild family, often anonymously, and the importance of recording them in some way. The encouraging interest that she took in the subject personally was one of the factors that led to the formation of the Academic Advisory Committee to oversee the Philanthropy research project and to the first successful bid for project funding.

NOTES

¹ ‘Sundry manuscripts and pamphlets dealing with religious disabilities in Great Britain in the cases of the Jews, Quakers and Roman Catholics, a collection in The Rothschild Archive, 000/573/6’, in *Rothschild Archive Review of the Year, 2003–2004*, pp.59–60. The

pamphlet identified by Professor Wiebe is item number 14 in the list.

² <http://www.rothschildarchive.org/research/?doc=/research/articles/mwDisraeli>

³ http://www.rothschildarchive.org/research/?doc=/research/articles/car_aopenpage

The London house of Rothschild and its Belgian contacts (1815–1860)¹

Hans Willems explains the significance of correspondence in The Rothschild Archive to the historian of Belgian financial history and the Antwerp Stock Exchange.

The manner in which it is possible to conduct transactions at the Brussels stock exchange may, from a technological point of view, be ranked amongst the most progressive systems in the world today. As a full-fledged partner within Euronext,² the Brussels exchange makes use of the virtual market environment, which allows members (clients) of the exchange to log in via their computer and engage in trades from any place in the world.

Methodology has indeed come a long way since the inception of the modern Belgian stock exchange at the time of the French occupation (1798–1815), when communications relied on a slow-moving mail service or carrier pigeons, rather unreliable messengers. So while during the first half of the nineteenth century, personal contact between the brokers and their clients was certainly very important, the technical impediments made smooth-running exchange transactions practically impossible.

During this period, the Antwerp stock exchange dominated the market for transactions in commodities and government bonds that were undertaken in the Belgian regions. Only after Belgium's independence in 1830, under the stimulus of transactions in corporate shares and Belgian government bonds, did the Brussels exchange begin to gain steadily in importance, to the extent that, as of the second half of the nineteenth century, it played a leading role in Belgian stock exchange history.

Because of the devastating fire that destroyed the Antwerp Stock Exchange in 1858, the archives of this important Belgian exchange institution up to that date have been irrevocably lost. In order to formulate a concrete picture of the exchange transactions and the *modus operandi* of the stockbrokers during the first half of the nineteenth century, the researcher is forced to fall back on indirect source material. While it is true that the documents kept in the City and National Archives provide a clear picture of the institutional definition of the exchange at that time, there is, nonetheless, hardly any information on the practical workings and the degree of activity of the exchange operations.

The documents kept at The Rothschild Archive provide us with a unique opportunity to fill in this lacuna. The extraordinarily detailed and well-preserved series of correspondence between the London Rothschild house and its Belgian 'agents' offer the researcher a rare glimpse into the inner workings of, initially, the Antwerp exchange and subsequently of the Brussels exchange and the Belgian financial market. During the first half of the nineteenth century, Nathan Rothschild employed different contact persons in the Belgian financial world to negotiate his business transactions.³ For his financial operations, Vande Wiel, Terwagne and, later on, Richtenberger/Lambert and the Société générale de Belgique were the most important contacts.⁴ For operations in public bonds and transactions on the Antwerp Stock Exchange, Rothschild relied on Jean Standaert. Osy entered into the picture to undertake transactions in commodities such as cotton, wool, coffee, tobacco, etc. All of these contact persons kept Rothschild informed about the Belgian markets. Every two to three days, they communicated to him extensively by letter. The huge collection of these letters allows the researcher to enter into the inner secrets of the workings and processes of the Belgian financial and commodity markets.



The Bourse at Antwerp in 1802, an engraving from the collection of the Antwerp Stock Exchange archives.
University of Antwerp.

N. M. de Rothschild Esq.
London

Antwerp 23 August 1830

Sir

I beg to confirm my requests of yesterday and to inform you that our prices are quite nominal, no business was done.

The news received yesterday evening at 9 o'clock from Brussels was unfortunately the most and perhaps the most dangerous. The garrison of Brussels is said to have surrounded and surrounded the people and that every thing was quiet this morning. To-day.

Every thing is quiet here and to maintain this state of things, the most respectable citizens will take up arms this morning.

I remain very respectfully

Sir

Your most obedient servant
Standaert

Net 46/6 mm. — Leds 388 pag. — Rbld. 40 1/2 mm.

Ed. 40 1/2 pag. — Broye 6/2 pag.

Spind. 40 1/2 pag. — in amty 40 1/2 pag.

Coke 1/2 mm.

Amely short 1/2 pag. 60 pag.

Paris — 3/4 pag. etc. — 20 pag. 60 mm.

London — 12. 62 mm. — 20 pag. 11. 97/2

Amst. — 35/4 — 20 pag. 34 3/4 pag. — 3 — 24/8.

Spelt — 35/4 —

A letter from Standaert to Rothschild in London, 25 August 1830, the first day of the revolution that led to Belgian independence.
RAL XI/38/247.

While Rothschild carried on an active correspondence with several people, it is the correspondence with the Antwerp exchange agent Standaert⁵ that is especially revealing and allows us to gain a better insight into the internal working of the exchange. This correspondence ran from October 1828 until June 1845.⁶ The contact with Standaert was initiated on advice from the Paris branch of the Rothschild family, which had for some time made use of the services provided by Standaert to direct their operations in the Antwerp commercial metropolis into the proper channels.⁷ Nathan Rothschild decided to make use of Standaert to carry out transactions in notes and public funds at the Antwerp exchange. Concluding the contract with Rothschild signified for Standaert an important step in his career as an exchange agent. Indeed, during this period, the transactions at the Antwerp exchange were fairly limited and to be able to rely on regular orders from Rothschild meant that Standaert now assumed a very lucrative and important position within the Antwerp brokerage community. Nevertheless, it took Standaert a great deal of effort to satisfy the expectations that Rothschild had of him. In his turn, Rothschild, used as he was to the large-scale workings and liquidity operations of the London exchange, needed to adapt himself to the small-scale operations at the Antwerp exchange. The initial orders that Rothschild passed on to Standaert in the course of 1828 were so large (up to £10,000) that it was impossible to transact them on the low-liquidity Antwerp exchange.⁸ This lack of liquidity would, in fact, remain an on-going problem long after Belgian independence, which meant that the execution of Rothschild orders could take weeks. This lack of liquidity was, in fact, not the only weakness confronting the Belgian exchange markets. Because of the high purchase price of funds and large quantities of commodities, only a very small circle of capital-rich individuals could handle these kinds of transactions. Standaert himself lacked the financial means to prefinance the transactions ordered by Rothschild and was thus forced at regular intervals to ask for cash, which Rothschild in turn then sent to Antwerp.⁹ The distance and the awkward connections between London and Antwerp proved not only an obstacle to transporting the liquid funds or securities that Rothschild wanted to sell in Antwerp, but turned the process of passing on trading orders by mail into a very involved procedure. Standaert, initially wary of upsetting Rothschild, did not dare to deviate from the limits passed on to him, which meant that he was regularly forced to ask the financier by letter if the latter agreed with the possibly deviating prices. The archives that were consulted often show an exchange of five to ten letters on the subject of the same order before the transaction was effectively concluded.

Drawing on the practically inexhaustible cash flow available to him, Rothschild had little difficulty in dominating the Antwerp stock market. For instance, Standaert, on orders from Rothschild, systematically purchased all 'bills on London' and in this manner had a dominating



'The Bourse at Antwerp
recently destroyed by fire',
Illustrated London News,
21 August 1858.



Chappe semaphore telegraph station, Condé, 30 November 1794, a military invention later adapted for commercial purposes. Alexis Belloc, *La Télégraphie Historique*, (Paris: Firmin-Didot, 1888). BT Connected Earth.

influence on the performance of the market. Often he was the only buyer of the government bonds that were being negotiated in Antwerp, and certain securities, such as the Brazilian bonds, were included in the Antwerp quotation lists at his express request.¹⁰

From the reliable reporting of the market situation, it further becomes clear that the Antwerp market was in the first place geared to the situation in Paris.¹¹ News about a drop in the market in Paris meant, according to Standaert's correspondence, instant repercussions on the Antwerp exchange, whereas the London market fluctuations often had little influence on the Antwerp exchange movements. This factor made it very difficult for Rothschild to make gains via arbitrage between the Antwerp and London markets. Frequently, Standaert was forced to return Rothschild orders without negotiating them since the Antwerp prices were out of line with the situation in London. In 1842, the Rothschild bank provided Standaert with carrier pigeons to facilitate communications between them.¹²

Because of the confidential nature of the correspondence between exchange agent and client, the letters saved in The Rothschild Archive offer a unique glimpse into the practices of

the price setting of securities negotiated on the Antwerp exchange. Thanks to the very restricted market, large orders by a single individual could influence the entire market. Rothschild, as well as other major players on the Antwerp exchange, such as Le Grelle, for instance, were very much aware of this and via strategically prepared buy/sell orders often succeeded in steering the prices of specific securities in order to serve their personal interests.¹³

Following Belgian independence, the London House of Rothschild proceeded full throttle to the buying of securities of the initial Belgian government issues that had been released through its bank.¹⁴ These buy-orders were so extensive that Rothschild during this initial phase secured the bid for these securities and here also monopolised the market so as to drive up the price. Standaert, who during this period continued to act as an agent for the French Rothschild branch, frequently found himself forced to divide equally the few securities he had been able to buy on the Antwerp exchange between both the Rothschild Houses, whose buy orders kept on exceeding the limited supply of securities. The Antwerp exchange, but likewise the Brussels institution, struggled for business because of the tense political situation in newly independent Belgium. Correspondence to Rothschild reveals continuous complaints about the absence of transactions. None of this, however, deflected Rothschild from placing his stream of orders on the Belgian market.

Although, after 1830, the number of limited companies that were listed on the Belgian exchanges rose, Nathan Rothschild continued almost exclusively to place orders in various government bonds (Danish, Brazilian, Belgian, Prussian, and so forth).¹⁵ That was also the reason why, through Standaert, he kept dealing primarily on the Antwerp exchange, and specialised in this type of security, and not so much on the Brussels market, which, as of 1840, recorded an increasing number of listings of limited companies.¹⁶

From 1844 onwards, a few years after the death of Nathan Rothschild in 1836, the correspondence between Standaert and the London Rothschilds became less frequent, and in 1845 was reduced to the trickle of one single letter per month. On 17 June 1845, Standaert sent his last letter to London. Why the exchange of letters was halted is not clear. Rothschild's interest in placing orders on the Antwerp exchange had subsided for some time already. From the correspondence with Lambert (see below), it also appeared that Rothschild had become more and more interested in the Brussels exchange and diverted its attention in that direction. Also for transactions that had to be conducted in Antwerp, Lambert had increasingly become the central figure. Nonetheless, it is remarkable that a relationship carried on by correspondence for more than fifteen years would be halted abruptly without any given reason or explanation.¹⁷

As mentioned earlier, for the historical researcher interested in the workings of the Antwerp exchange, Standaert was Rothschild's most interesting contact person. In addition, The Rothschild Archive contains a treasure trove of information about the Belgian economy and the workings of the commodities markets, all of which may be gleaned from studying the very extensive correspondence Rothschild conducted with other Belgian contacts.

The London house of Rothschild maintained with Joseph Osy a business relationship during the period 1810 to 1815 based on cashing exchange notes in Brussels.¹⁸ In turn, Osy informed Rothschild about the price fluctuations of the government bonds. But Osy limited himself to the execution of financial operations on commission from Rothschild and did not act as an agent for the eventual transactions of these securities.

As of 1814, the son of Joseph Osy established a base in Antwerp from where he represented the Rothschild interests.¹⁹ The concluding of financial transactions from a distance was at the start of the nineteenth century still a very complex matter. Like Standaert, Osy too had to cope with an inefficient postal system and the forwarding of large sums of money between Brussels/Antwerp and London was not without its pitfalls.²⁰

Subsequently, these financial operations were taken over by P.J. Vande Wiel (from 1829 onwards together with F. Terwagne), as well as trading in commodities.²¹ With this trading

Above

One of the regular reports on the exchanges arriving in London, from the firm of Terwagne & Vande Wiel. RAL XI/38/250.

Opposite

Postal cover for a letter from a major Rothschild agent, S. Lambert, Antwerp, 1864. RAL XI/78/3.

company, Rothschild carried on a very active correspondence in German and in French. Vande Wiel kept Rothschild minutely abreast of the price fluctuations of the government bonds and exchange notes via a daily dispatch of the price quotations on the Antwerp exchange. It was, for instance, on the basis of this information, that Rothschild subsequently passed on his orders to Standaert. Rothschild thus simultaneously relied on different sources of information to keep in touch with the situation in the Belgian markets.

Starting in 1844, Samuel Lambert increasingly assumed the role of informant on the Belgian situation and demanded a central role in the transactions that the London Rothschilds conducted on the Belgian markets. Both commodities and security transactions were to pass through his office.²² The Rothschild bank was happy to be able to use Lambert's expertise to carry out transactions in cotton, and, as of 1847, also in grain, sugar, coffee, and tobacco. When in December 1853, Richtenberger²³ (Lambert's father-in-law) died suddenly in Brussels, Lambert also undertook these Brussels activities, by commission and as agent of the Paris and London houses of Rothschild.²⁴ From that time onwards, the researcher can, in separate archival series, retrieve from this correspondence very instructive information about the workings of the Brussels exchange and its market transactions.²⁵ As of November 1854, the Rothschild bank would ever more frequently place orders by telegraph, while correspondence was used only to pass on information on the Belgian financial and economic situation, and as an extension of the social contacts that existed between the Lambert and Rothschild families.

The files in The Rothschild Archive containing correspondence with the Société générale de Belgique and the Banque nationale de Belgique complement the rich treasure of letters with Belgian contacts that is present in the collection. The correspondence with the latter pertains primarily to purely financial operations and the management of the current accounts that Rothschild had opened with the Société générale and the payments that needed to be made in consequence of the transactions that Rothschild had undertaken in Belgium. It also provides information on the nature of the business relationships that the Rothschild bank enjoyed with the Belgian government via the issuance of loans to the latter.

Hans Willems, Doctoral Candidate FWO-Flanders, is preparing a PhD on the history of the Belgian stock market at the University of Antwerp. He was awarded the first Rothschild Archive Bursary in 2004.



NOTES

- 1 I would like to take this opportunity to thank the collaborators at The Rothschild Archive for the invaluable assistance they offered me in the course of my research, as well as The Rothschild Archive Trust for giving me a study grant that allowed me to spend an extended period at the archives in London.
- 2 Euronext is the product of the merger of the stock exchanges of Amsterdam, Brussels, Paris, and Lisbon, founded on 17th September 2000. Euronext offers an integrated service, consisting of uniform trading regulations, a single price list, central electronic order book, trading platform, and system for clearing and settlement.
- 3 This network was in the years 1820 and 1830 expanded into the world's most important trading centres (New York, Havana, Saint Petersburg, Madrid, and others). In these centres, the Rothschilds attracted agents to their employ; in other cities that were readily accessible to the Rothschilds and where they had already established good contacts with local bankers, exchange agents, and the like, this method was not used. In Belgium, only in 1832 was a fully-fledged agent appointed. Yet, even so, many transactions continued to be conducted via the existing contact persons. See Niall Ferguson, *The World's Banker: the History of the House of Rothschild*, (London: Weidenfeld & Nicolson, 1998), pp.296–7.
- 4 The files that are kept at The Rothschild Archive of the correspondence between Vande Wiel, Terwagne, and the London Rothschild banking house cover a period from 1827 to 1837, those with Osy from 1814 to 1826, with Standaert from 1828 to 1845, with Lambert from 1844 to 1918, with the *Société Générale de Belgique* from 1832 to 1868, and with *Banque Nationale de Belgique* from 1851 to 1855.
- 5 On 1 May 1806, J. Standaert was appointed by Napoleon as official exchange agent at the Antwerp exchange and remained in that position until the end of the 1870s.
- 6 Standaert sometimes wrote daily letters, but mostly every other day, to Rothschild. Initially, these letters were written in English and contained, aside from confirmation of Rothschild's orders, a brief account of the state of affairs at the Antwerp exchange. Starting in November 1831, the letters were written in French and became gradually more expansive.
- 7 The Rothschild Archive London (RAL) XI/38/246A, Standaert to Rothschild, 7 October 1828.
- 8 Also during the unsettled and uncertain period in the spring of 1831 following Belgian independence, Rothschild continued to pass on orders of £5,000 and more, and this while the Belgian exchange markets had completely collapsed. Standaert frequently urged Rothschild to limit his orders to £1,000 or £2,000, even though these amounts also seemed to him rather on the high side. Nathan Rothschild nonetheless continued unabatedly to place his orders in Antwerp for the same amounts, undaunted, so it appeared, by the political unrest reigning in Belgium. RAL XI/38/24A, Standaert to Rothschild, 8 March 1831.
- 9 On 24 October 1828, Rothschild shipped 4000 coins of 10 Dutch guilders to Standaert. In July 1832, Captain Cook, on orders from Rothschild, delivered a shipment of Danish securities to Standaert for negotiation in Antwerp. RAL XI/38/246A, Standaert to Rothschild, 28 October 1828 and 3 July 1832.
- 10 As of 1830, Standaert, on orders from Rothschild, was introducing very large quantities of Brazilian government bonds into the Antwerp market. RAL XI/38/246A, Standaert to Rothschild, 3 March 1830.
- 11 Via carrier pigeons and the optical 'Chappe' telegraph (a military invention that dated from the period of the French occupation), the Paris exchange price quotations were transmitted to interested parties at the Antwerp exchange who adjusted their orders on the basis of this information.
- 12 These pigeons were delivered to Standaert by ship. RAL XI/38/246A, Standaert to Rothschild, 3 September 1842.
- 13 The massive buy/sell orders from Rothschild for, as an example, Danish or Brazilian securities often resulted in direct repercussions on the price fluctuations. In February 1833 Le Grelle did the same thing with Belgian government bonds.
- 14 At the end of 1831, Rothschild, together with J. Osy (see below), approved a loan of £2.75 million to the Belgian government. Because of the internationally charged situation and political uncertainties, the Rothschilds decided to shore up the market via buy-backs of the securities. Ferguson, pp.268–9.
- 15 As of 1833, Standaert in his letters made frequent mention of new limited companies that were being incorporated in Belgium. But since Rothschild failed to show any interest in this information and no orders ever resulted from it, Standaert quickly limited himself to providing information regarding the movements of the (foreign) government bonds.
- 16 Exceptions were in the course of 1837 and 1838 the purchases made by Rothschild of securities of the firm of John Cockerill in Liege. RAL XI/38/246A, Standaert to Rothschild, 7 August 1838.
- 17 As a note to the last letter that Standaert sent to London, we mention only that there was no answer to it, without any further explanation. RAL XI/38/246A, Standaert to Rothschild, 17 June 1845.
- 18 RAL XI/38/193, Osy J., 1810–1815.
- 19 RAL XI/38/194–198, Osy J.J.R., 1814–1826.
- 20 RAL XI/38/193, Osy to Rothschild, 24 September 1814.
- 21 RAL XI/38/266, Vande Wiel P.J. & Co., 1827–1828; and RAL XI/38/250, Terwagne F. & Vande Wiel 1829–1837.
- 22 Richtenberger had in 1840 opened an Antwerp branch office and made S. Lambert (1906–1875) its manager. As of 1843, the name of the firm was 'Lambert-Richtenberger, agent Rothschild'. RAL XI/77/0–19, Lambert S. 1844–1914; RAL XI/78/0–25, Lambert S. 1853–1918 and RAL XI/38/209–12, Richtenberger L., 1827, 1835–1841.
- 23 Lazare Richtenberger became in 1832 the first fully-fledged Rothschild agent in Brussels. See Ferguson, p.301.
- 24 The activities in Antwerp would shortly be entrusted to his brother Eugène Lambert. RAL XI/78/0, Lambert to Rothschild, 8 December 1853.
- 25 In fact, the Brussels exchange was confronted with the same problems as its Antwerp counterpart. These problems centre on an absence of sufficient liquidity, a very limited number of transactions, and a very close dependency on what was happening on the Paris exchange.

Collecting Chardins: Charlotte and Henri de Rothschild

Harry W. Paul analyses the significance of the collecting tastes of two members of the Rothschild family in France.

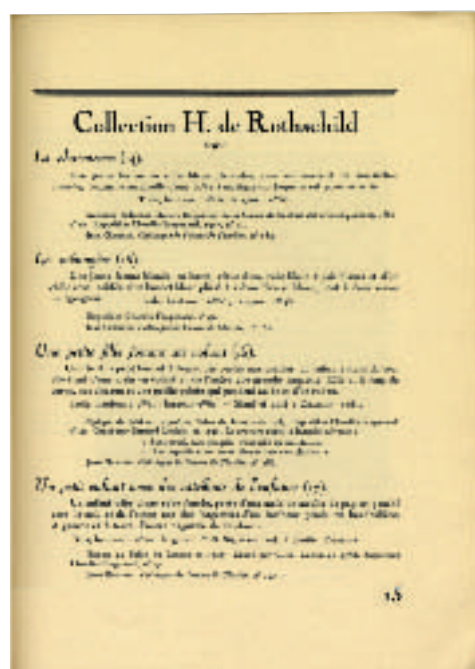
It is often convenient to begin Rothschildian history in biblical fashion, establishing who begat whom. Take, for example, a sub-group of the French tribe during the last 150 years or so. Philippe de Rothschild (1902–1988) is known because of his prominence in ‘the civilisation of wine’ and his prowess as a translator of English poetry and theatre, including the work of Christopher Fry. His father, Henri (1872–1947), a significant figure in Parisian medicine and a prolific writer whose plays enjoyed a brief success in Paris and London, is, however, often relegated to *opéra comique* status. Henri’s father, James-Edouard (1844–1881) is a practically unknown figure. James Edouard’s father, Nathaniel, often gets mentioned in books on wine because of his English roots and for his savvy purchase of the Mouton vineyard (Pauillac) in 1853, three years before his father-in-law, James (1792–1868), managed also to become the complete Parisian banker by acquiring the Lafite domain. The marriage of Nathaniel to Charlotte (1825–1899), daughter of Betty (1805–1886) and James (*le grand baron*) had a considerable cultural influence in French artistic and bibliophilic history, especially through Charlotte, her son James Edouard, and her grandson Henri. After a few words on ‘La bibliothèque Henri de Rothschild’, this article will deal with one aspect of that influence, namely the collecting by Charlotte and Henri of paintings by the great French artist Jean-Baptiste-Siméon Chardin (1699–1779).

James Edouard earned a law degree and enjoyed legal culture, especially forensic medicine; he even practised law for a few lucky clients who got his services free of charge. Family pressure, especially that of his mother, drove him reluctantly into the bank after the death of his father. Though interested in many things, including medicine – he founded a children’s hospital at Berck-sur-Mer – his great passion was early French literature and the collection of the works of its literary stars; and of course for this type of collection the books, in their famous



Henri de Rothschild;
Charlotte, Baroness
Nathaniel de Rothschild.
The Rothschild Archive.

The baroness Nathaniel (Charlotte) had put together the basic collection of Rothschild Chardins in the second half of the nineteenth century. Hot-housed into high European culture



22



Henri's former Paris townhouse, the château de la Muette, and a detail from the entrance, after the property was acquired by the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development.

© OECD PHOTO OCDE.

by her father and mother James and Betty, Charlotte blossomed into one of the leading bourgeois patrons of nineteenth-century culture. Chopin, from whom she took piano lessons in 1839, dedicated waltzes and ballades to her. After extensive restoration work on the ruins of the Cistercian abbey in Vaux-de-Cernay, her residence there became, in Roche's words, a music salon with a piano for an altar.² The musical gene was not passed on to Henri, who described himself as a 'melophobe'. At the abbey Charlotte had a reputation for receiving not only royals and aristocrats but also artists – Corot, Rousseau, and Manet – and musicians – Bizet and Saint-Saëns. The great Scribe also came. Fifty or so of the paintings (including works by Boucher, Tiepolo, van Dyck, La Tour, and Boilly) that Henri later installed in La Muette – his new château, now the home of the OECD, near the Bois de Boulogne – were collected by Charlotte between 1860 and 1898. It has been said that Nathaniel was not excessively fond of paintings, which he compared to women: everyone must please himself and pick them according to his own tastes. This appears to be a misleading aesthetic judgment on Nathaniel, at least concerning paintings. Henri's uncle Edmond (1845–1934), noted that Nathaniel collected a group of Dutch paintings, Sèvres vases, and furniture, including two 'magnificent commodes de Boule', which were later installed in the library of the residence of James-Edouard and Laura-Thérèse at 42 avenue de Friedland.³ If Chardin's paintings were, as is sometimes said, in the Dutch naturalistic tradition of the seventeenth century, then the tastes of Charlotte and Nathaniel (and Henri) had a certain area of agreement. With Henri's additions, it might be said that no one else had 'a collection [of Chardins] of such quality', so varied as to give an idea of the range of work of the artist.⁴ A unique collection and therefore one that conformed to the old Rothschild aim of achieving aesthetic (and social) greatness in collecting.

A well-known artist herself, Charlotte painted landscapes, did watercolours and engravings. She studied with Ercole Trachel and Nélie Jacquemart. (With her banker husband, Nélie formed the collection, including two Chardins, now in the Jacquemart-André museum, originally their residence, which they gave to the Institut de France.) After 1864 Charlotte exhibited at the annual Salon des aquarellistes français. The entry for Charlotte in the Bénézit – getting a good entry here is a significant achievement – praises her fine talent and sensitivity, though it relegates her to the status of a very distinguished amateur rather than putting her in a professional category.⁵ This amateur enjoyed a respectable professional success, showing her work in London in 1879 and achieving a minor immortality in the Musée du Luxembourg as well as museums in Sceaux, Bayonne, Nice, Tourcoing, Beaufort, Angers, and Rouen. In public sales between 1881 and 1898 her watercolours sold for between a high of 1450 and a low of 260 francs, the latter being about a fifth of the usual price for her work. When Charlotte showed her *Oignons du Midi* in the salon of 1872, *Le Grelot* flattered the 'aquarelliste d'élite', with a satire.

Charlotte's collections, which were brought together at her residence in the rue du Faubourg Saint-Honoré were divided among her heirs on her death in 1899. Henri did very well, acquiring French works of the eighteenth century – Chardin, Boucher, Rouais, and Lépicié. Charlotte, a third generation Rothschild was culturally French in a certain 'ethnic' way, unlike her parents, great patrons of the arts though they were; she certainly reinforced her French identity by building this particular collection, though other factors have to be considered in the complex business of acquiring a great art collection. Betty de Rothschild was very fond of Henri: she bought him the *Molière de Boucher* with the original drawings and all the versions (états) of the engravings. Henri also inherited from the family many original drawings, including illustrations of La Fontaine's works. Henri's sister Jeanne was consoled with paintings by Frans Hals and Francesco Guardi. Charlotte added significantly to the *patrimoine national* with a gift to the Louvre of fourteen Italian paintings and the famous *Laitière* by Greuze, which her father had bought in 1819 and she had inherited. Henri added some Chardins, including the *Jenne fille au volant* (see illustration, page 24) and *le Lièvre*, to his collection in a gallery at his château de La Muette.

Chardin died in 1779; so collections of his works received big shows at the end of decades:

1929, 1979, and 1999 make up a famous trinity. Hoping to make a big splash worthy of ‘un pantouflard parisien nommé Chardin’, Henri and Philippe asked French and foreign museums for loans of some works.⁶ Support came from the administration of French national museums, the Prussian education and fine arts department, and several private French collectors, including David Weill and Georges Wildenstein. Thirty-eight paintings, one pastel, and a drawing by Chardin along with thirty-two engravings by artists of the caliber of Lépicié were put on display. (The Chardin show at the Grand Palais in 1999 offered ninety six pictures to viewers.) A famous scribbler of the day, André Maurois, wrote the preface to the catalogue. Philippe personally supervised all the preparations for the show and outlined the programme. Friends and supporters in government and high places came to the show; true, they went to many shows in the course of routine duty, but Chardin exercised a special French cultural attraction for them and the Rothschilds. Poncet, undersecretary of state in the ministry of beaux-arts, and Paul Léon, chief executive officer (*directeur général*) of the beaux-arts bureaucracy, opened the show. At the end of November big politicians showed up, including the minister of education and the president of the republic, Gaston Doumergue. Guided by Philippe, the president spent some time scrutinising pictures and engravings. It is striking evidence of the success of the Rothschild ‘Exposition Chardin’ that more than fifty articles on the show appeared in the French and foreign press.⁷

Why this particular attachment of Henri – and probably Charlotte and her great-grandson Philippe – to Chardin, ‘the poet of the French bourgeoisie’ as well as ‘the first Frenchman who looked at nature with modern eyes’.⁸ Two good reasons right there, one might say. (Philippe published a fair amount of poetry, including verse on vine and wine, some of which is seductively good.) Pierre Rosenberg pointed out that it is difficult to pigeonhole Chardin, for each age ‘has seen him with its own sensitivity ... and has loved him in its own fashion’.⁹ What makes Chardin a great painter? Assuming a universal, persistent aesthetic objectivity, Rosenberg claims that it is ‘the voluptuousness, tenderness, and the gravity which set Chardin apart and place him in the ranks of the great painters’.¹⁰ After his death in 1779 Chardin entered into a half-century or so of relative neglect, being ‘rediscovered’ about the middle of the nineteenth century. Charlotte may be placed among a significant number of artists in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries who owned works by Chardin.¹¹ The artists knew better than the historians, who soon

Below, left
Girl with a shuttlecock,
 Jean Siméon Chardin, 1737,
 oil on canvas.
 Private collection.

Below, right
The cut melon,
 Jean Siméon Chardin, 1760,
 oil on canvas.
 Private collection.





Jean Siméon Chardin,
The Silver Tureen, 1728, oil
 on canvas. (76.2 x 108cm).
 The Metropolitan Museum
 of Art, Fletcher Fund,
 1959 (59.9).
 Photograph © 1998
 The Metropolitan
 Museum of Art.

caught up, however. Henri's taste was, to some extent, determined by what was in the family. Perhaps the hardcore Parisian who 'virtually never left his native city' but managed to turn out 'the least "Parisian" paintings of the entire [eighteenth] century' had a special attraction for Henri, often described as the quintessential Parisian.¹² Henri's persona is, of course, quite different from what we know of Chardin's, but both were proudly Parisian, nevertheless. Both men belong to that nebulous social category we call the bourgeoisie. It may be that the genre scenes painted by Chardin – 'the finest images we have of the industrious and upright bourgeoisie of the artist's time' – provided an icon for the family, many of whom have worshipped work.¹³ An added virtue was that the icon was famously French.

Another medical man had collected Chardins: the art collection of William Hunter (1718–83) included three of the artist's works, now in the Hunterian Art Gallery in Glasgow. It would be stretching things a bit to try to see a special attraction of medical men to Chardin, though his social realism was certainly appealing to Henri, whose vast medical charity in Paris was based on his knowledge of the harsh living conditions of the city's population, especially its women and children. Henri once owned eight of the paintings in the exhibition of 1979. A few had also been kept in the family. The painting of the blind man (*l'Aveugle des Quinze-Vingts*) had been bought by Charlotte in 1886 and passed on to Henri. Nathaniel had gone blind before his death; the subject matter must have been doubly interesting to Henri, physician and hospital builder, both as a portrait of a common medical condition and as a reference to the hospital Quinze-Vingts (15 x 20), founded by Saint Louis for 300 blind persons. Chardin's interest in portraying natural philosophers (*les Attributs de la science*, 1731; *un Chimiste dans son laboratoire* or *le Souffleur*, 1734) as well as his *les Aliments de la convalescence*, 1746/7 link Chardin vaguely to the world of science. His famous monkey painter unfortunately had no companion monkey

doctor, who might have illustrated Henri's denunciations of medical charlatans over two centuries later.¹⁴ Chardin painted many creatures killed by hunters. This fact no doubt did not escape Henri, a devotee of the hunt with all its rituals and traditions.¹⁵ Many paintings, many fantasies, and much on the canvases to bond the works to the lucky owner.

The exegesis of Henri's love of Chardin is susceptible of much speculation, not all of which is farfetched. In the end it may be best to remember what he inherited and his interest in adding to his collection of the works of an artist who more than anyone showed 'the originality and greatness of French eighteenth-century painting'.¹⁶ The Rothschilds collected great art, and the fact that an artist was French was an advantage for French Rothschilds in doing their bit to preserve the *patrimoine* and in showing their aesthetic patriotism, especially for Henri in an age that was showing its anti-Semitic teeth.

Harry W. Paul, emeritus professor of history at the University of Florida, is the author of *Science, Vine, and Wine in Modern France* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996) and *Bacchic Medicine* (Amsterdam and New York: Rodopi, 2001). He is now completing a study of the life of Henri de Rothschild.



A receipt for a Chardin bought by Charlotte in the last year of her life.
RAL 000/929: OE448

NOTES

- 1 Philippe Chauveau, *Les Théâtres parisiens disparus 1402–1986* (Paris: Les Editions de l'Amandier, 1999). The theatre closed in 1948 and was replaced by a garage ten years later.
- 2 François Roche, *Les Rothschild à l'abbaye des Vaux de Cernay*, La vallée de Chevreuse en 1900 ... à travers les cartes postales, no.7 (Paris: I.D.C. plus, n.d.).
- 3 Pauline Prévost Marcilhacy, 'Hôtel Nathaniel de Rothschild', in *Rue du Faubourg-Saint-Honoré*, eds. Béatrice de Andia and Dominique Fernandès (Paris: Délégation à l'action artistique de la Ville de Paris, 1994), pp.119–124; The Rothschild Archive London (RAL), 000/930: 58–1, 172–182. Edmond's

- comment on Nathaniel found in RAL 000/930: 58–1, 140. The residence at 42 avenue de Friedland has been replaced by a modern building.
- 4 André Pascal and Roger Gaucheron, eds., *Documents sur la vie et l'œuvre de Chardin* (Paris: Editions de la Galerie Pigalle, 1931).
- 5 E. Bénézit, *Dictionnaire critique et documentaire des peintres, sculpteurs dessinateurs et graveurs*, rev. ed. (Paris: Gründ, 1999).
- 6 Geneviève Breerette, 'La main géniale d'un pantoufflard parisien nommé Chardin', *Le Monde* (10 September 1999), p.28.
- 7 Pascal and Gaucheron
- 8 In *La Croix* and *Le Populaire*, see Pascal and Gaucheron, section on press coverage.

- 9 Pierre Rosenberg, *Chardin 1699–1779* (Cleveland: Cleveland Museum of Art in cooperation with Indiana University Press, 1979), p.61.
- 10 Ibid., p.61.
- 11 Ibid., p.73.
- 12 Ibid., p.43.
- 13 Ibid., p.37.
- 14 Henri de Rothschild, *Le médecin dans la société contemporaine. Conférence à la salle des agriculteurs le 2 mars 1911* (Paris: L. Carteret, 1911).
- 15 See Georges Benoist, *Grandes chasses, grands fusils* (Paris: S.A.D.E.I., 1952).
- 16 Rosenberg, p.73.

The Oil Refinery in Rijeka: A story of survival

Velid Đekić traces the development of a business that was initiated by the Viennese Rothschilds in 1882, through changes of ownership, corporate structure and nationality.

At the moment when Milutin Barač, the technical director of the Fiume oil refinery,¹ finished writing his notice to the local police announcing that he would put the first facilities on trial the following day, as a seasoned expert he must have known that by signing this notice he was entering a new and important chapter in the history of the European oil industry.

The date was 12 September 1883. As soon as the letter left the office, Barač started to make the final arrangements for what was to follow. And in fact, less than 24 hours later, the facility was already showing the first signs of life. It did this in an impressive way, promptly exhibiting a refining muscle that was unrivalled in the surroundings. What surroundings? Rijeka, today a city in the Republic of Croatia, was then within the Hungarian part of the Austro-Hungarian Empire, run by Governor Count Géza Szapáry, and was called Fiume. The refinery emerged as the tenth facility of its kind on the territory under St Stephen's Crown. However, the total processing capacity of the other nine Hungarian refineries did not even come close to the processing power of the new Fiume refinery.

Furthermore, covering a space of 790,508 sq. feet (73,440 sq. meters), with twelve horizontally positioned cylindrical primary-distillation tanks, six petroleum and gasoline re-distillation tanks, and a total processing capacity of 60,000 tons of crude oil per year, the refinery was the largest plant of its kind on the European continent.² What such a capacity would mean to the



Notification from Barač to the Fiume police, 12 September 1883, that the new refinery will begin partial operations on the following day. Velid Đekić.

country became manifest as early as the first year of full-time operation. For of the 2,648 million forints in import duty for the imported crude oil that were paid into the government coffers in 1884, the share paid by the Fiume refinery was 2,059 million forints,³ a total of 78 per cent.

Fiume was something else indeed. While the other refineries processed crude oil through manufacture, in small quantities, employing as a rule some ten or twenty workers, unsupervised by any petroleum industry specialist, Fiume started its processing operations with 300 employees and a technical director who was a university-trained professional chemist. Fiume was in fact the first European facility for industrial oil refining.

The first five wagons of lighting petroleum were despatched from the facility on 21 September 1883. The product shipment would soon grow to twenty wagons per day. On its road to consumers, lighting petroleum, the major oil product of the time, would be joined by gasoline (including varieties such as hydriir, natural gasoline and ligroin), paraffin, lubricant oils, bitumen, coke, gas oil and phosphates. The refinery's production would satisfy a third of the Austro-Hungarian demand for oil products.

The press could not conceal its enthusiasm for the new facility. Fiume's daily *La Bilancia* first recorded the launch of the refinery in an article which featured expressions such as 'a magnificent factory', 'a miracle of science, industry and money' (21 September 1883), and later also 'a colossal building', 'a dazzling success', and 'the eternal monument to genius and will-power' (3 January 1884). Browsing the news items which followed in the local press, Milutin Barač could not hide his satisfaction. *La Bilancia* was distributed to the most important cities of the empire, which also meant the city some 340 miles away from where it was published, where Barač's superiors were. The newspaper arrived in Budapest, at the headquarters of the Mineral Oil Refinery Company (Kőolajfinomító gyár részvénytársaság), Nádor utca 12.

Why to this particular address? The very existence of the Mineral Oil Refinery Company was a direct outcome of the Hungarian government's decision to speed up the growth of their home oil industry. The decision was reached following the sharp rise in the country's demand for oil products in the beginning of the 1880s. The tool used by the government to deter the import of finished products and stimulate the import and the processing of crude oil instead, was the customs policy. In 1881 an import duty of two gold forints was placed on 100 kg of oil, compared with one of ten gold forints for 100 kg of petroleum.⁴ Among other things, such terms would stimulate investors to establish a joint-stock company with the goal of constructing modern mineral oil refineries (crude oil was called mineral oil at the time), building similar industrial plants, and managing these facilities.

The Mineral Oil Refinery Company was founded on 7 October 1882 at the general foundation conference held at the Hungarian General Credit Bank (Magyar Általános Hitelbank), at Nádor utca 12.⁵ Marquis Eduard Pallavicini presided at the conference which featured names that represented the total initial capital of the Hungarian General Credit Bank. These names were: Móricz Dub, representative of the S.M. von Rothschild banking house of Vienna; Eduard F. Ziffer, head of the Austrian Credit Institute for Commerce and Trade (Österreichische Kreditanstalt für Handel und Gewerbe)⁶ – the Creditanstalt – of Vienna; Lajos Takacs PhD, representative of the Eduard Wiener Company of Vienna; and Rudolf Fuchs, Antal Frank, Zsigmond Kornfeld and Baron Frigyes Kochmeister. Pallavicini, Kornfeld, Ziffer, Dub, together with Henry Deutsch (manager of the Les Fils du A. Deutsch Company of Paris) and Wilhelm Singer (manager of Steinacker and Company in Fiume) were appointed members of the management board of the company. Geza Ghyczy, Frigyo Glatz, Luigi Ossoinack and Emil Stapf were members of the supervisory board. The founding of the company was recorded by the Registrar of Companies at the Budapest Commercial Court on 13 October 1882.

The new company did not conceal its connections to its parent, the Hungarian General Credit Bank. One of the eight largest financial institutions in the country at the time, the Hungarian General Credit Bank had the objective of aiding the growth of the Hungarian economy

Opposite

The construction of the refinery facility in 1883.

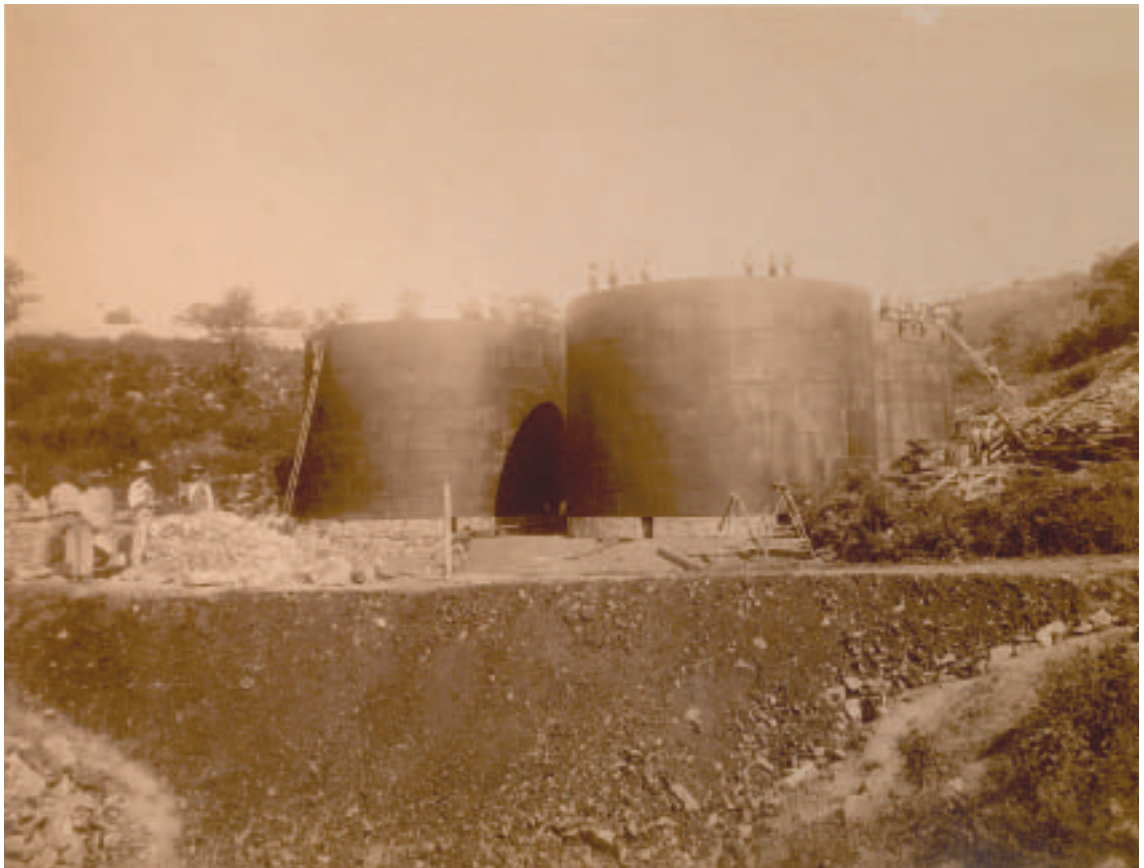
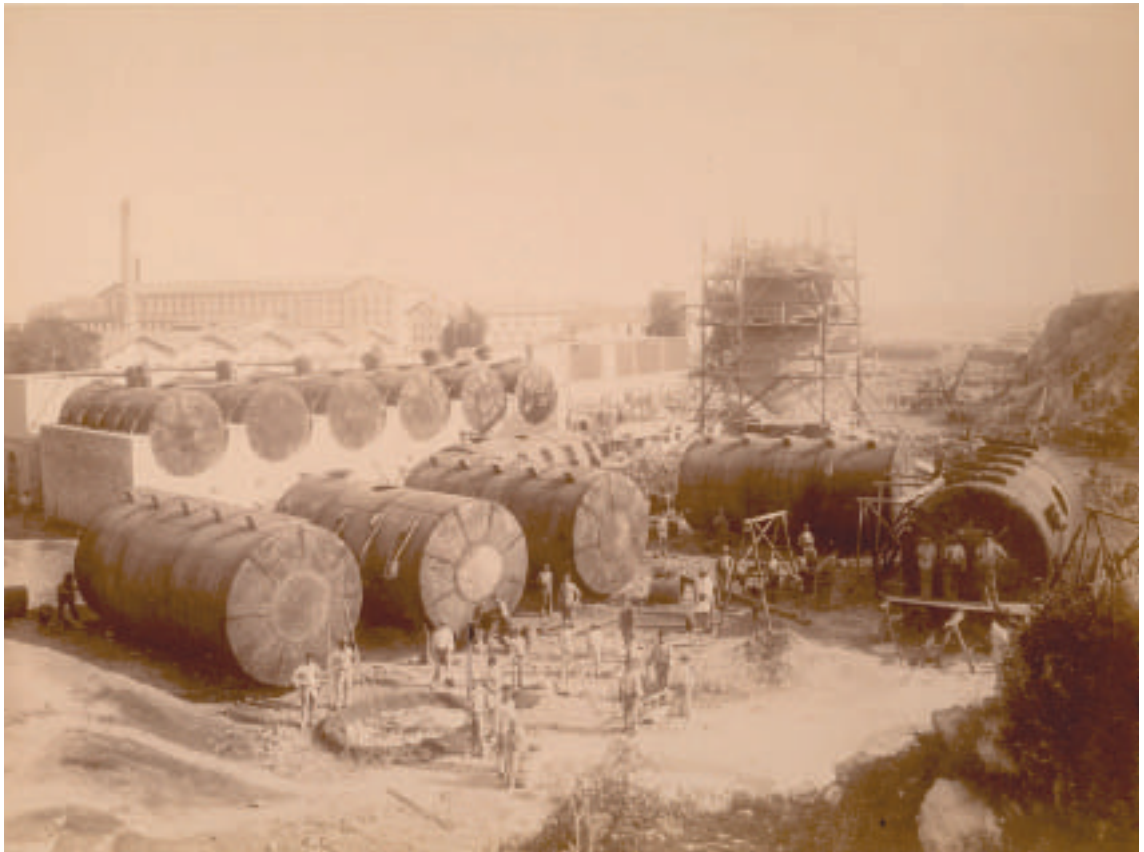
The smoke stack was only decommissioned at the end of 2003.

Heirs of Milutin Barač.

Opposite, below

Building of the first storage tanks in the summer of 1883, some of which remain in place.

Heirs of Milutin Barač.



and had decided to spread its activities into the oil business. The bank had been founded in 1867, under the auspices of the Creditanstalt. The Creditanstalt, in which the Rothschild bank had a controlling interest, provided the financial framework for the newly founded bank and became its most important business partner. In 1877, S.M. von Rothschild and the Creditanstalt held 7,550 out of the total 11,595 shares of the Hungarian General Credit Bank, 65 per cent in all. In 1878 they held 11,730 shares out of 20,130 (58 per cent); in 1894, 16,500 out of 20,945 (78 per cent); in 1903, 15,000 out of 19,000 (79 per cent).⁷ They were always distinctly the biggest shareholder, theirs the lion's share.

If the Viennese branch of the Rothschild family was the chief owner of the Hungarian General Credit Bank, did they also own the Mineral Oil Refinery Company?

The answer is affirmative. On its foundation the capital of the joint stock company was two million forints, divided in 10,000 shares with a face value of 200 forints.⁸ At the foundation conference Mórícž Dub represented S.M. von Rothschild, with 3,834 shares; Eduard F. Ziffer represented the Creditanstalt, with 3,083 shares at their disposal; Marquis Pallavicini was present on behalf of the Hungarian General Credit Bank, with 2,633 shares; Lajos Takacs represented the Eduard Wiener Company, which owned 250 shares. Baron Frigyes Kochmeister, Antal Frank and Zsigmond Kornfeld held 50 shares each.

Through S.M. von Rothschild, the Creditanstalt and the Hungarian General Credit Bank, the Rothschild house was distinctly the company's biggest shareholder. This left no doubt about the owner of its facilities.

Of course, when the foundation conference was held, the Fiume refinery was but a project on paper. If the company was founded in order to build new refineries and kindred industrial plants, all these facilities had yet to be built. Which would be given precedence? The second of the Articles of Association was categorical: it stressed that the company's mission was to build a crude oil processing facility 'in Fiume first'.⁹ Why in Fiume of all places? With no large deposits of its own, Hungary imported crude oil, mostly from the American continent. And the transport by sea of the raw material meant it would be delivered to the then leading Hungarian port, Fiume. Besides, given the special appeal Fiume held for capital, the Hungarian General Credit Bank had already established a subsidiary in the city. It had functioned since 1880, at first under the name Steinacker and Co., and from January 1887 as the Fiume Credit Bank (Fiumei Hitelbank, or, Banca di Credito Fiumano). The bank's supervisory board director was the mayor Giovanni Ciotta. Among the more important companies from Fiume, whose foundation was supported by the bank's subsidiary, were the rice-husking plant (1881), the biggest in the Austro-Hungarian Empire, and the shipyard Ganz-Danubius (1905).

The company would start to enact the goal defined by the formulation 'in Fiume first' forty days after its founding. In the suburban area of Ponsal (today Mlaka), a parcel of land for the future facility was acquired on 18 November 1882. The request for a building permit was submitted to the municipal authorities on 11 December, and the first general blueprint of the refinery was created on 9 December 1882 with the signature of Mate Glavan,¹⁰ an architect from Fiume. The authorities issued the building permit on 8 February 1883. This was the sign to start levelling the terrain through mining, which would remove 430,000 tons of rock to be used in



Nádor utca 14, Budapest, the headquarters of the Hungarian General Credit Bank from 1913 is today occupied by the Hungarian Ministry of Finance. Photograph by Miljenko Marohnić.

the simultaneous building of the petroleum port in front of the facility. Milutin Barač would head the building of the refinery: after responding to the advertised job vacancy he received Marquis Pallavicini's notice on 13 December 1882 appointing him the 'technical director of the Fiume Mineral Oil Refinery in founding'.

Barač would head the refinery's operations for the next forty years. To be more precise, he would lead the facility as long as its direct management was in the Nádor utca in Budapest, and would achieve impressive business results in that time. The initial work of the refinery was marked by the predominance of Pennsylvanian crude oil, while as early as 1890 the majority of raw material arrived from the Caspian and Black Sea regions. When the refinery's ship *Etelka* arrived in the petroleum port on 12 December 1892, carrying 350 tons of oil, the refinery would once again make history: *Etelka* was the first and the only Austro-Hungarian tanker. In the period between 1883 and 1896, 750,000 tons of crude oil were processed in Fiume, with the annual average of 56,000 tons of processed crude oil and the production of 46,000 tons of petroleum. The utilisation rate was around 95 per cent. The refinery's shareholders were satisfied: from the mid 1880s to the mid 1890s, the initial capital multiplied tenfold.¹¹ The good results of the company's first refinery turned out to be the stimulus for purchasing the petroleum factory in Braşov (today in Romania) in 1890, and the refinery of Count Larisch-Moenich in Oderberg (today Starý Bohumin in the Czech Republic).



The refinery today, with an annual refining capacity of 4.5 million tons of crude oil. Photograph by Zoran Žimirić.



The refinery's first smoke stack, built in 1883, was only taken out of commission in December 2003. It was accorded special protection by the Ministry of Culture of the Republic of Croatia. Photograph by Zoran Žimirić.

The emperor and king Franz Joseph I visited the Fiume refinery on 23 June 1891. His was the first in a line of famous names entered in the official record of the refinery's visitors. The Archduke Franz Ferdinand, the Archduke Franz Salvator and Princess Ann, Count Szécheny, Count Wickenburg, the Prince of Siam, Bey Saadi and others would follow.

The golden age of the refinery as a joint-stock company lasted until the mid 1890s. When large oil fields were discovered in Galicia, Fiume's geographical position ceased to be an advantage. The Galician fields were nearer to Hungarian and Austrian consumers, and so the great number of new refineries in that section of the empire reduced Fiume's significance. However, the precious processing experience from Fiume was not for a moment forgotten in the seat of the company: the Fiume refinery technical director was appointed head technical director of all the company's refineries. He transferred his expertise from the Fiume refinery directly to the facilities in Braşov and Oderberg. Moreover, in 1895, with the responsibility of modernising the facility in Braşov, Barač was set the task of rebuilding the refinery in Oderberg in order for it to reach the capacity levels of Fiume.

In the last year of World War One, 1918, the Creditanstalt would hold 15,703 of the company's shares, S.M. von Rothschild 14,437, and the Hungarian General Credit Bank 14,033. After the end of the war, in 1920 the company would become the owner of two more refineries, in Drohobycz (today in Ukraine) and in Budapest. These would be among the last business moves of the company. At the end of the year, its entire assets would end up in the hands of the Nederlandsche Petroleum Maatschappij Photogen Company from Amsterdam. The emergence of Photogen raises some questions, especially if one knows that it worked in Budapest, and at a curious address – Nádor utca 14, which had been the seat of the Hungarian General Credit Bank from 1913. Even more curious is the fact that the management board of Photogen consisted of the people from the management board of the bank. Was there a business trick behind the story of the transfer of assets to Photogen? The Netherlands was neutral in the war, so its assets, unlike those of Hungary, were not under the threat of seizure in payment for war damages. Was Photogen just a Dutch front for the Hungarian General Credit Bank, which was thus successfully protecting its assets?

Be that as it may, Photogen would prove to be only a temporary solution for Fiume. The post-war pressure exerted by the Monarchy of Italy to encompass Fiume within its territory was so great that it was decided to sell the refining facility to the war victors. Why was the city of Fiume so important to Italy? At the time the Italian oil market was in the hands of the American Standard Oil and the British-Dutch Royal Dutch Shell. To pull the country out of this kind of economic-political dependence, the Italian government decided it was necessary to start building its own oil industry, and such an industry could not exist without large crude oil processing facilities. After the Italians and the Hungarians, through Photogen, jointly founded Romsa (*Raffineria di Olii minerali Società Anonima*),¹² a joint-stock company, on 28 April 1922, the Italian side gained full shareholder control over the Fiume refinery the following year.

Photogen and Romsa are the names of companies associated with the beginning of the refinery's long odyssey, during which it operated for different owners, in different social systems and under different national banners. Its role was usually a crucial one. For example, the Italian government chose the Fiume refinery to be the 'nucleus of the Italian oil programme',¹³ and the national oil company Agip grew out of it in 1926. In other words, after having been the birthplace of the modern Hungarian oil industry, the Fiume refinery became the cradle of another European country's oil industry – Italy's. Ending up inside the borders of Yugoslavia after the Second World War, with its war wounds healed, the refinery grew to become the most important crude oil processing plant in the country. With a new facility just outside the city, at Urinj, it would reach a processing capacity of 8 million tons of crude oil per year. During the



Opposite
Milutin Barač (1849–1938),
the first director of the
refinery.
Heirs of Milutin Barač.

1990s, it would be one of the crucial factors in founding the independent Republic of Croatia, as the only domestic oil products supplier for the Croatian army and Croatian citizens during the Croatian War of Independence (1991–1995).

The steaming plants and the smell of freshly produced oil products at the Rijeka refinery today confirm that the story, begun on the same location in 1883, is still current. The historic facility of the Rijeka refinery, now under the name of INA Maziva Rijeka (a part of the Croatian oil company INA), is the third oldest working refinery on the continent. Interestingly, the Rijeka refinery and the second oldest European plant of the kind, the refinery in the Romanian city of Braşov (today the Lubrifin refinery) used to work as a single organisational unit in the time of the Budapest joint-stock company. The Fiume refinery director Barač was in charge of the technical condition of the Braşov facility as well.

Crude oil processing of such longevity is an extraordinary occurrence especially given the extremely turbulent historical circumstances under which the processing went on in Rijeka. Due to the constant border changes, the city and the refinery lived and worked in seven different states in the twentieth century alone. State replaced state as ruler in Rijeka – the Austro-Hungarian Empire, La Reggenza Italiana del Carnaro (the first fascist state in the world, founded by Gabriele D’Annunzio), the Free State of Rijeka, the Monarchy of Italy, the Third Reich, Yugoslavia (in its different forms, from the Kingdom of Serbs, Croats and Slovenes, to the Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia). Rijeka is today part of the Republic of Croatia. Not counting the smaller, local conflicts, the facility survived three devastating wars, paying the price in full – taking impacts from 260 airborne bombs weighing between 550 and 1100 pounds and the explosions of 23 torpedoes, activated as mines.

National banners, market terms, technological approaches to production and numerous other factors on which the working of the refinery depended were constantly changing throughout this time, yet some sections of the facility continue to testify to its early beginnings. The evidence? The first refinery’s smokestack built in 1883 and some oil containers from 1883 and 1884 are still where they were when Milutin Barač first saw them. These are living testimony which confirms that there is more left than mere paper, the text of a director’s notice of the first trial run of the facility over a century ago.

Véld Dekić, MA, is author of several archive and museum exhibitions, documentaries, and publications on the industrial and cultural history of Rijeka. His works include Crude Oil Processing in Rijeka 1882–2004 (Rijeka: INA, 2004), and Milutin Barač (2004). He works in the Corporate Communications Sector of the Croatian oil company INA.

NOTES

- 1 The present-day Rijeka was known, at the time of the construction of the refinery, as Fiume, and lay within the Hungarian domain of the Austro-Hungarian Empire. Today, Rijeka is part of the Republic of Croatia. When referring to the city before it took its modern name, this article will use its former name of Fiume.
- 2 Lajos Máté, *Fiume Abbazia – Crikvenica és a horvát partvidék (Kroatisches Küstenland)*, (Budapest, 1894), p.141. Also János Sziklay and Samu Borovszky, *Magyarországgal vármegyéi és városai: Fiume*, (Budapest: Appolo and Nyomdai, 1897), p.269.
- 3 Sandor Matkovits, *Magyarországgal közgazdasági és közművelődési állapota ezeréves fennállásakor*, (Budapest: Második reosz, 1897), p.156.
- 4 Sziklay and Borovszky, p.265. Also *Das Erdöl*, vol.III, (Leipzig: Verlag von S. Hirzel, 1911), p.46.
- 5 Magyar Országos Levéltár [Hungarian National Archives in Budapest], z 58, 361.t, vol.89, Köolajfinomító gyár részvénytársaság Alapszabályai (statutes of the Mineral Oil Refinery Company).
- 6 György Tallós, *A Magyar Általános Hitelbank (1867–1948)*, (Budapest: Közgazdasági és Jogi Könyvkiadó, 1995), pp.46–52.
- 7 Tallós, p.144.
- 8 Köolajfinomító gyár részvénytársaság Alapszabályai, pp.3–4.
- 9 Köolajfinomító gyár részvénytársaság Alapszabályai, p.10.
- 10 Državni arhiv Rijeka [Regional State Archive in Rijeka], JU-36, box 30, contains Glavan’s project and construction documents.
- 11 Béla Adamy and Andras Németh, *A Magyar Köolajfeldolgozóipar Története az államosításig, Az Országos Köolaj- és Gázipari Tröszt Feldolgozóipari Főosztály kezdeményezésére*, (Kézirat, 1968), p.27.
- 12 Državni arhiv Rijeka, PR-3, box 1077, written material prepared for the assembly.
- 13 *La Raffineria d’oli Minerali S.A. di Fiume nell’anno xviii*, (Rijeka, 1940), unnumbered pages.

Fabergé and the Rothschilds

Drawing on sources at The Rothschild Archive and at Wartski, the centre for Fabergé research, Kieran McCarthy describes the significance of Fabergé gifts as ‘social currency’.

Henry Bainbridge, the manager of Fabergé’s London shop, knew the Edwardian Rothschilds as ‘Their Exquisitenesses’. Their loyal and discerning patronage made them, after the Royal family, Fabergé’s most important English customers. Bainbridge established a close relationship with the family and tailored Fabergé’s work to reflect their interests. The pieces they acquired offer a glimpse into their lifestyles and relationships. From records in The Rothschild Archive it has been possible to study the family’s dealings with Fabergé and to identify a hitherto unknown link between a series of Rothschild purchases.

Peter Carl Fabergé, Goldsmith to the Imperial Court of Russia, took control of his father’s business in 1872 aged twenty-six. His firm is famous for, and his name synonymous with, luxury, largely because of the Easter Eggs he made for the Tsars. However, of the thousands of pieces his firm made only fifty were Imperial Eggs. The mainstays of the business were finely crafted *objets de vertu* in precious metals and hardstone. They were in high demand in Russia and the business became an unrivalled success, employing at its height over five hundred people with branches in St Petersburg, Moscow, Odessa and Kiev.

Fabergé’s work was just as fashionable in England and another branch of the firm, the only one outside Russia, opened in London in 1903. It existed ostensibly to serve King Edward VII and Queen Alexandra, sister of the Dowager Tsarina Marie Feodorovna, but quickly attracted a wider clientele. Its growth was largely due to two reasons. The first was Fabergé’s popularity at court. Edwardian Society centred on the court and the King and Queen’s patronage ensured Fabergé’s success. It made his work highly fashionable and brought it to the attention of the Edwardian elite. The King’s indication that if he were to be offered a gift it should be from Fabergé further guaranteed the demand for his work. The second reason why Fabergé prospered in London was the function his objects served for his English customers. Fabergé’s work, whilst costly, focused on craftsmanship and design over intrinsic value. When questioned on the role of precious materials in his work Carl Fabergé responded, ‘Expensive things interest me little if the value is merely in so many pearls or diamonds’.¹ The judicious use of valuable materials and its popularity at Court made Fabergé’s work ideal gifts, and as the exchange of gifts was an important element of Edwardian life, customers flocked to the London shop to buy gifts for each other.

The Rothschilds purchased Fabergé exclusively from the firm’s London branch. In all twenty-five members of the family were customers from its opening to its closure in 1917. This number includes members of the European branches of the family. The French Rothschilds made purchases from Fabergé in London and on the firm’s regular sales trips to Paris. However it was the English Rothschilds and in particular Leopold, son of Baron Lionel de Rothschild, who were the firm’s principal patrons. Leopold was introduced to Fabergé through his friendship with Edward VII, which had begun in their student days at Cambridge. Later, when Prince of Wales, Edward had attended Leopold’s marriage to Marie Perugia at London’s Central Synagogue in 1881. Although Leopold had an interest in Russian decorative arts fostered by a visit to St Petersburg and Moscow in 1867, he did not collect Fabergé for himself. Like the majority of Fabergé’s London customers, he and his family largely acquired Fabergé as gifts for others.

A gem set and enamelled smoky quartz cup in the style of the renaissance by Fabergé, 8.8cm., bought by Leopold de Rothschild from Fabergé’s London branch on 9 July 1912 and the fourth of the ‘Rothschild series’ of Fabergé pieces given by Leopold to his brother Alfred.
Wartski, London



Bainbridge emphasises the purpose of these purchases by commenting that when Mrs Leopold de Rothschild bought a piece for Leopold, 'like all good Edwardians, she made use of Fabergé objects for the purpose they were designed; in her case to say something to her husband'.² This is borne out by the Rothschilds' account books, which show that purchases increased significantly before Christmas.

To ensure that pieces intended for the Rothschilds were quick to sell Bainbridge instructed Fabergé's craftsmen to tailor their work to reflect the family's interests. Leopold's animals were modelled in hardstone and silver. Animal studies were a speciality of the firm and were often carved from Russian hardstones whose natural configurations mimicked the colouring of the animal's pelt. Variegated red cornelian was used for foxes and the shimmering grey of the volcanic glass obsidian for sea lions. The Royal and Rothschild families' animals were the only ones to be modelled by Fabergé in England. King Edward VII and Queen Alexandra's menagerie of animals at Sandringham were the first to be modelled. At the suggestion of Mrs George Keppel, in 1907 Fabergé sent sculptors from Russia to the estate to carve the animals in wax. The waxes were then returned to Russia and reproduced by the firm's workshops in hardstone or silver. As part of the commission the King's favourite horse, Persimmon, was cast in silver and mounted on a nephrite base representing turf. It was this study of Persimmon and the horse's connection to the Rothschilds that led to Fabergé's modelling of Leopold's animals. The King and Leopold were fierce rivals on the turf and the meeting of Persimmon and Leopold's horse St Frusquin in the Derby of 1896 was one of the most momentous races of the nineteenth century. The horses were half brothers sired by St Simon and the race was divided between them with St Frusquin the favourite. It began as expected and Leopold's horse led until the last furlong when Persimmon rallied dramatically and finished, to tremendous cheers from the crowd, a neck in front.³

Having supplied the study of Persimmon to the King, Bainbridge approached Leopold and suggested that as there was so little to choose between St Frusquin and Persimmon that St Frusquin be 'immortalised' also. Initially Leopold showed little enthusiasm and replied dryly, 'such a luxury is all very well for the King of England, I can't afford it'. Undeterred Bainbridge proposed the same to Mrs Leopold. Knowing of her husband's fondness for the horse and recognising the study's potential as a gift she agreed. With her help Fabergé's sculptors progressed from Sandringham to Leopold's Southcourt Stud to sculpt St Frusquin. It proved to be a difficult task, Bainbridge recounts how the horse was 'worth £60,000 and knew it'. He was temperamental and the slightest 'clanking' of a stable mate's chain set him off, making him impossible to model. The sculptor was as unpredictable as St Frusquin and when the horse was still he was 'tearing his hair' and refusing to work. Bainbridge calmed the horse by bringing his favourite companion to the modelling sessions. It was the stable kitten. He overcame the problems with the sculptor by enlisting the help of his friend the artist Frank Luitger⁴ and eventually the finished wax was sent to Russia. There it was cast in silver oxide and on its return to England was bought by 'Mrs Leopold in December 1912 for £110'.⁵ Leopold was thrilled with the study and on 9 December the following year acquired two bronze copies from Fabergé for £30.

Leopold's other passion was for stag hunting. He had inherited his family's enthusiasm for the sport and bred staghounds for the pack established by his father in 1839. Bainbridge and Mrs Leopold also arranged for two hounds from Leopold's kennels at Ascott House to be

A Fabergé invoice addressed to Mrs Leopold de Rothschild for a bell push and pencil dated 26 February 1914. The invoice reveals Fabergé gave discounts to the Rothschilds. The Rothschild Archive





Above

A silver and nephrite study of Persimmon by Fabergé. Persimmon was King Edward VII's favourite racehorse and won the 1896 Derby, beating Leopold de Rothschild's horse St Frusquin into second place. The Royal Collection © 2005, Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II.

Above, right

St Frusquin, a study by Fabergé in silver oxide presented to her husband Leopold as a gift by Marie de Rothschild. Private collection.

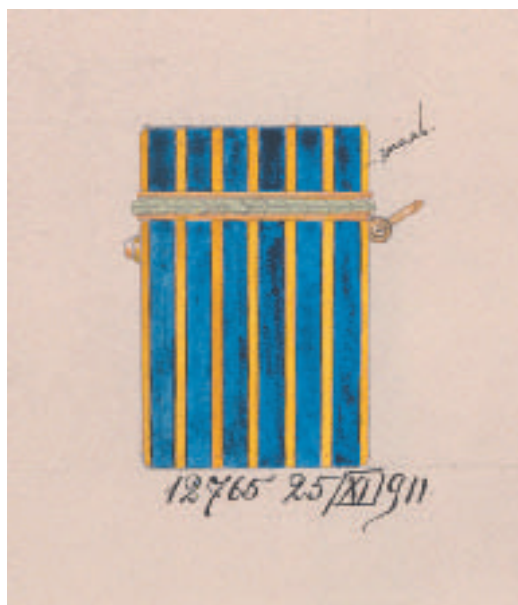
modelled. The first, named Herald, was carved in sardonyx and bought by Mrs Leopold in 1909. Leopold himself bought the second of the hound Harbinger, in 1912 for £36.⁶ Bainbridge also noted Mrs Leopold's fondness for her French Griffon, Pixie, and had her carved in chalcedony and mounted on a lapis-lazuli base. Mrs Leopold bought the study as soon as it was ready for £29 and kept it in the saloon of her Bedfordshire home Ascott House.⁷ Mrs Leopold later kept a pet Maltese terrier and Leopold bought a Fabergé carving of a Maltese terrier on 21 November 1916 for £18.

Fabergé's use of enamel is perhaps the most prized aspect of his work. Typically his pieces are decorated with unblemished and vibrantly coloured enamels. Fabergé also tailored his work to the Rothschilds by enamelling pieces with their blue and yellow colours. When the idea of using them came to Bainbridge he cabled Fabergé, 'Everything that has been made before now make in the Rothschild colours'.⁸ Fabergé responded by supplying a range of pieces including, to Bainbridge's astonishment, a motor mascot in the form of a bird with 'large diamond eyes' and wings that flapped when the car moved.⁹ Bainbridge intended the pieces to be bought as gifts for the family. However realising their value as Rothschild tokens the family acquired virtually all of them as gifts for others.¹⁰ Leopold bought the first of these objects enamelled in the racing colours, a pair of candlesticks, matchbox and bonbonnière on 7 December 1909 and they continued to be made until 1913. Bainbridge wrote that Leopold and James de Rothschild acquired all the pieces in their colours and that Leopold kept them to hand so that,

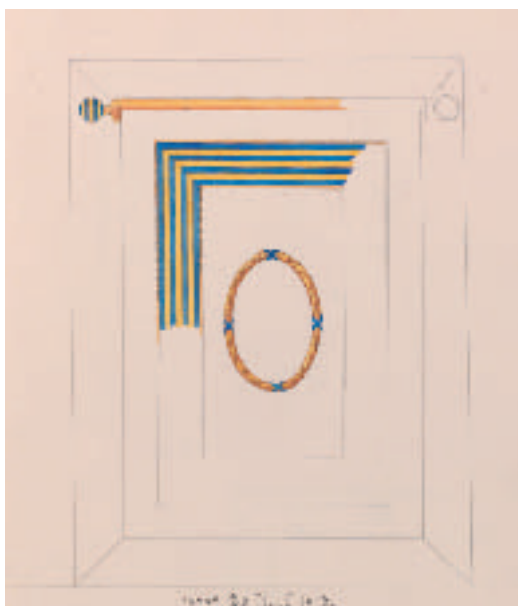
Whenever he wanted to say 'Good morning!' 'I like you!' or 'Don't bother me any more!' he simply slipped a dark blue and yellow Fabergé object into his friend's pocket.¹¹

However Leopold and James were not the only members of the family to purchase pieces decorated with the Rothschild colours. Surprisingly, perhaps, Alfred de Rothschild's natural child the Countess of Carnarvon, née Almina Wombwell, and her husband, the Egyptologist and alleged victim of Tutankhamun's curse, the fifth Earl of Carnarvon, bought two apparently identical bell-pushes and an India rubber holder enamelled with the colours.¹²

A single Fabergé frame in the Royal Collection is decorated with the colours of King Edward VII and it appears that the King's and Rothschilds' racing colours were the only ones ever to be represented in the firm's work.¹³



An enamelled gold and rose diamond mounted vesta case enamelled with the Rothschilds' racing colours, bought by Leopold de Rothschild from Fabergé's London branch in December 1911 and the design for the case from the Wigström design albums dated June 1911. Case: Photograph courtesy of A La Vieille Russie. Design: Private collection, photograph courtesy of Wartski, London



Left
A design dated July 1913 for a noteblock holder enamelled with the Rothschild racing colours, from the design album of Fabergé's Chief Workmaster Henrik Wigström. Private collection, photograph courtesy of Wartski, London.

Right
A design dated February 1912 for a hatpin enamelled with the Rothschilds' racing colours, from the design album of Fabergé's Chief Workmaster Henrik Wigström. Private collection, photograph courtesy of Wartski, London

Records in The Rothschild Archive have revealed a hitherto unknown link between a series of purchases made by Leopold. Between 1909 and the outbreak of the First World War he acquired an object from Fabergé every July. They were bought as gifts for his brother Alfred's birthday on 20 July. Alfred was a collector of Renaissance and eighteenth century works of art and Leopold chose Fabergé pieces that reflected his taste in antique goldsmiths' work. On 12 July 1909 he bought a Louis XV-style miniature escritoire for £150 15s. The desk appears in the inventory of Alfred's possessions compiled after his death in 1918.¹⁴ The inventory gives its location as the vitrine next to the fireplace in the private sitting room, adjacent to the bedroom, of Alfred's London home, 1 Seamore Place. It was later acquired from Wartski by Queen Elizabeth the Queen Mother and is now in the Royal Collection. On 10 July 1910 he purchased a model of a Louis XVI sedan chair for £146. This was kept in the same vitrine and is now in an American collection.¹⁵ On 10 July 1911 Leopold chose a Louis XVI-style gold box mounted

with moss agates and set with rose diamonds for £88. This box was displayed in the vitrine 'near the door' of the private sitting room in Seamore Place. Its description matches that of one later acquired by the Coca-Cola heiress Matilda Geddings-Gray, now in the collection of the New Orleans Museum of Art.¹⁶ On 9 July 1912 he purchased a neo-Renaissance enamelled and gem set smoky quartz cup for £75. It was kept in the vitrine of the telephone room at Seamore Place and is now with Wartski. The whereabouts of the last two gifts, a blue enamel frame bought on 13 July 1913 for £135 and a silver gilt mounted purpurine vase purchased on 13 July 1914 for £75 are unknown. Leopold also gave Alfred's daughter, the Countess of Carnarvon, at least one example of Fabergé's work. In December 1908 he bought her a hardstone Fabergé flower study in the Japanese taste, which cost £35. The Countess returned the flower to Fabergé in the New Year for a full refund.¹⁷

Leopold did not just reserve Fabergé gifts for his family. In 1911 he gave King George V and Queen Mary a display of his prize orchids from his glasshouses at Gunnersbury to mark their coronation. The flowers were presented in an enamelled gold mounted rock crystal Fabergé vase in the style of the Renaissance.¹⁸ Leopold's gardener brought the orchids to Fabergé's Bond Street shop and arranged them in the vase early on the morning of the coronation. Later it was taken to Buckingham Palace and placed on the Royal breakfast table.

The Rothschilds were discerning visitors to Fabergé's London shop and purchased some of the firm's most ambitious creations. Two such acquisitions merit special mention. On 23 December 1908 Leopold acquired a circular guilloché enamelled gold box with articulated painted ivory figures in its lid. The figures danced an African-American dance that parodied the American white upper classes called the 'cakewalk'.¹⁹ It is from the workshop of Fabergé's last chief Workmaster Henrik Wigström. Only a small number of boxes of similar inspiration were made and they are among Fabergé's most eccentric work. In 1908 Tsar Nicholas II presented a similar box with figures in Swedish folk costumes to Prince William of Sweden.



A Louis XV style enamelled gold miniature escritoire by Fabergé, purchased by Leopold de Rothschild from Fabergé's London shop in 1909 and the first of the 'Rothschild series' of Fabergé pieces given by Leopold to his brother Alfred between 1909 and 1914. The Royal Collection © 2005, Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II.



An enamelled and gem set gold mounted rock crystal vase in the style of the renaissance by Fabergé, given by Leopold de Rothschild to King George V and Queen Mary on their coronation day, 22 June 1911.

The Royal Collection
© 2005, Her Majesty
Queen Elizabeth II.

In December 1910 Leopold purchased another Fabergé rarity, a miniature-working model of a roulette wheel in steel blue guilloché and opaque white enamel, with a pearl ball.²⁰ It was one of only two known to have been made and was both a playful and symbolic piece. Leopold's contemporary, the King's friend and financier Sir Ernest Cassel, acquired the other. Sir Ernest identified his with the wheel of fortune and kept it as an emblem of the luck he enjoyed. Leopold gave his away, but its special significance could hardly have eluded him.

Interest in Fabergé has never been higher; its links with Imperial Russia and to the crowned heads of Europe increase the appeal of its work. Modern day interest in the firm's work is fuelled by a fascination for the firm's patrons. The Rothschilds' loyal and discerning patronage placed the family amongst Fabergé's most important customers. The extension of their taste for the finest antique goldsmiths' work to the twentieth century and Fabergé is an eloquent tribute to his craftsmanship and can only buoy the demand further.

Founded in North Wales in 1865 Wartski is a family owned firm of antique dealers, specialising in fine jewellery, silver and Russian works of art, particularly those by Carl Fabergé. Kieran McCarthy lectures and publishes widely on the history of the firm and on Fabergé.

NOTES

- 1 *Stolitzā y Usadba* [Town & Country], St Petersburg, 15 January 1914.
- 2 H.C. Bainbridge, *Peter Carl Fabergé: Goldsmith & Jeweller to the Russian Imperial Court & Principal Crowned Heads of Europe* (London: Batsford, 1949), p.89.
- 3 St Frusquin and Persimmon met three times; the Derby was Persimmon's only victory.
- 4 Bainbridge diplomatically does not name the first sculptor. He was Boris Frödman-Cluzel who previously worked on the Sandringham commission.
- 5 Leopold acquired two bronze copies of Fabergé's St Frusquin model on 9 December 1913 for £30 – not six as stated in H.C. Bainbridge, *Twice Seven* (London: Routledge, 1933), p.241. The date of modelling in 1908 and date of purchase in 1912 conflict with Bainbridge's assertion that Mrs Leopold ordered it as a gift for Leopold's birthday in 1912, op.cit. p.239.
- 6 Bainbridge says two further staghounds named Pilgrim and Harriet were modelled but there is only evidence for these two. Bainbridge, *Peter Carl Fabergé*, p.89.
- 7 Bainbridge makes reference to a carving of a Jersey Bull undertaken for Miss Alice de Rothschild. Although Alice was a keen livestock breeder no further record of this bull exists. Bainbridge, *Twice Seven*, p.168.
- 8 Ibid., p.229.
- 9 The Rothschild family's pioneering role in early motoring may have inspired this design. The car that won the Coupe Rothschild in Nice in April 1902 was coincidentally nicknamed 'the Easter Egg'.
- 10 Exceptions are a clock purchased by the American heiress Lady Cooper of Hursley on 10 December 1909 and a stamp box bought by a H.F. McCormick.
- 11 Bainbridge, *Peter Carl Fabergé*, p.84.
- 12 Bainbridge makes special mention of three pieces enamelled with the Rothschilds' colours: a large table cigarette box, a parasol top and a hatpin as big 'as a football'. Although a design for the hatpin exists no record of its sale has been found; the box Bainbridge says was acquired by James but Baron Albert de Goldschmidt-Rothschild bought it in July 1913 for £125 and the parasol top he wrongly recalls James not buying, as he did on 26 February 1913 for £120. Bainbridge, *Twice Seven*, pp.230–2.
- 13 The silver gilt frame enamelled with the King's red and blue colours is in the Royal Collection, RCIN 15168.
- 14 The Rothschild Archive London (RAL) 000/174.
- 15 A private collection.
- 16 <http://www.noma.org>
- 17 See illustration, p.41.
- 18 Bainbridge says the vase, costing £430, was specially made for Leopold. It however bears the mark of Fabergé's second Chief Workmaster Michael Perchin who died in 1903. Bainbridge, *Peter Carl Fabergé*, p.242.
- 19 The Rothschild box is an unusual example of the influence of American culture on Fabergé's designs.
- 20 The wheel passed to the collection of King Farouk of Egypt and was bought from the Egyptian Republic's sale of his effects in Cairo in 1954 by Wartski. It was then sold to Mrs Henry Ford II, of the automotive family. She liked it so much she took it on beach picnics near her home on the American East Coast to entertain guests. It is said that on returning home after one such outing she discovered the wheel had been left behind. She swung the car around and sped back to see, to her horror, that the tide had come in and washed it away.



An enamelled and gem set hardstone flower study by Fabergé, in the form of a spray of Japonica emerging from a hanaire bamboo flowerpot. In December 1908 Leopold de Rothschild gave his niece the Countess of Carnarvon a Fabergé flower exactly matching this description. Photograph courtesy of Wartski, London

Far-Sighted Charity: Adolphe and Julie de Rothschild and their eye clinics in Paris and Geneva

The centenary of the creation of the Fondation Rothschild, which between 1904 and 1920 erected almost 1,300 flats for poor families in Paris, coincided with the launch of the project on Jewish Philanthropy. Another centenary deserves commemoration.

In May 1905, the Fondation Ophthalmologique Adolphe de Rothschild established its eye clinic in Paris, where it is still active today. Klaus Weber, director of the research project, describes its creation.

The roots of the foundation of this institution had been laid years before by Adolphe Carl de Rothschild (1823–1900), in a codicil to his will dating from October 1886, expressing his wish that if the eye hospital he planned to create in Paris were not finished before his death then his widow Julie (1830–1907) should continue the work, modelling this clinic on his existing eye hospital in Geneva.¹ So, the Paris initiative was not even his first one in this field. What explains the Baron's interest in ophthalmology? Born into the family's Frankfurt branch, he became head of the Rothschilds' Naples business house, which was closed down in 1863 for political and economic reasons. It seems that he had never been particularly happy with his life as a banker, and soon bought himself out of the partnership altogether to the general disapproval of the rest of the family. Thereafter he dedicated his time to collecting fine arts rather than studying medical subjects. In the late 1850s he commissioned the building of a Louis XVI-style château, situated on the slopes of the northern fringes of Geneva, overlooking the beautiful lake and the Swiss Alps, which served as a fitting showcase for his extraordinary art collection. In 1868 he acquired a residence in Paris, in the elegant 8th arrondissement.

Thus the explanation for the medical whims of this *bon viveur* can only be found in a truly external factor: while enjoying the view from an open carriage window on a train journey to Geneva, he was injured by a tiny coal particle hitting his eye. In Geneva he sought the medical assistance of Dr Auguste Barde, to relieve him from this very painful injury. The young Geneva-born ophthalmologist, who had obtained his degree in Berlin and successfully worked in Paris before returning to his homeland, carried out a rapid and largely painless operation, successfully extracting the particle. It was this personal experience that motivated the Baron to establish in Geneva an eye clinic for indigent patients suffering from eye diseases or injuries.²

Dr Barde, who was already running his own – rather modest – ophthalmological clinic, was to become the medical expert and ideal partner for planning and carrying out this scheme. His own establishment boasted a modest five beds, but even so it had helped him to acquire expertise in this field, to the extent that he had already demanded that the Geneva authorities provide more advanced ophthalmological treatment for their citizens, stating that the existing general hospital would never be capable of providing such services. Furthermore, even his small institution already offered free treatment to poor patients, the clientele that the Rothschild clinic was to serve.³ The first major step for Adolphe was the purchase of two pieces of land in the neighbourhood of Le Prieuré, favourably situated between the main train station and the banks of Lake Geneva, for a total of c.30,000 Swiss francs. From there it was only a three-minute walk to the Quai des Pâquis (today Quai Wilson), with splendid views of the Lake and Mont Blanc. This neighbourhood was particularly designated as a residential area, thus the property contract

Julie de Rothschild and her husband, Adolphe (known to the family as 'Dolly'), the two benefactors of the eye hospitals in Geneva and Paris.
The Rothschild Archive.



prohibited the installation of any industry causing emissions of noise, dirt or other nuisances. As these restrictions applied to all the surrounding streets, a most advantageous environment for a clinic was secured.⁴

When it was opened on 5 October 1874 it provided 10 beds for male, and 10 for female patients. According to its statutes it offered free treatment and hospitalisation for needy patients, regardless of their religious or national background. A certificate issued by the patient's residential municipality was required as proof of indigence. Dr Barde was appointed medical director and served in this post until 1914. In 1887 the building was extended, to house a separate children's ward with 6 beds and a playroom, a thoroughly separate ward for patients suffering from contagious diseases, a large leisure room for convalescents, and several facilities rooms. Another smaller building housing new laboratories, the Pavillon Barde, was finished in 1900. Designed by the architect Charles Barde, brother of the ophthalmologist, it was situated on the opposite side of the surrounding garden.⁵ All the building, equipment and furniture had cost approximately 330,000 francs.⁶

Adolphe de Rothschild ran this clinic as a fundamentally private institution, paying for all the running and one-off costs from his private account, and requiring the medical director to report to him personally. He made all essential decisions himself, testifying to what extent many *belle époque* donors regarded private philanthropy as a truly private issue. Like the Paris housing scheme, this Geneva engagement certainly contributed to a positive public image of the Rothschild family. After all, it bore the very name: Hôpital Ophtalmique Adolphe de Rothschild. But this may have been just a minor factor. A number of contemporary documents do indicate the donor's indisputable affection for 'his' patients. Aside from the general funding budget he had established a smaller purse for extraordinary expenses, which he topped up from time to time. When individual cases required it he paid, for example, for the patient's travel expenses, or for the couple of nights he might have to stay in the Pension Vincent, opposite the hospital, whilst waiting for an operation. The statutes made sure that the dignity of the patients was maintained – which was far from the norm for poor inmates of nineteenth-century hospitals. Very often, they had to submit themselves for use as demonstration objects for students or visiting physicians, in return for low-cost, or even free treatment. Sometimes they even served as

veritable guinea pigs in tests of new methods of treatment. The choice of the poor was often between a risky treatment, or no treatment at all, simply because it was unaffordable. The Geneva statutes made it clear that medical demonstrations could be arranged only in exceptional cases, and never without the explicit consent of the patient. The strict rule preventing the medical staff from taking up a post as university chair holder protected the patients from the risk that their doctors might become all too ambitious in the field of medical research – and experimentation.⁷

When the Baron Adolphe died in February 1900, his Geneva foundation was a fully-functioning and well-established hospital. The annual figure of out-patients, some 1,100 during the first years, had risen far above 2,000 (more than 4,000 in the 1920s, and 6,000 in the 1930s). The number of annual hospitalisations, some 260 in the beginning, was now above 400, and more than 200 operations were carried out each year.⁸ Its medical standards and state-of-the-art equipment attracted patients not only from Switzerland, but also from France (in fact, about two thirds of them were French), Italy, Germany and other European countries. The expenses had always been covered from the donor's obviously inexhaustible fortune, while Swiss rigour in financial matters at the same time had monitored the costs so that they did not get out of control.

Nevertheless, his death caused a number of problems. Not only had no progress been made towards the creation of the Paris hospital, which was meant to become even bigger than the one in Geneva, but there were severe difficulties even in Geneva. Adolphe had wisely bequeathed to the hospital an annuity of 80,000 Swiss francs, and a capital of 525,000 francs. The return on the capital was meant to provide for contingencies and future modernisations or extensions. Yet having always been maintained as private property, the hospital had never become a legal entity in itself, and the death of the donor rendered it legally non-existent and the bequest invalid. The sum could be inherited only by his widow and universal heir, Julie. The solution chosen by Julie and her advisors was to form a charitable society named Fondation Adolphe de Rothschild, registered in August 1900. She then immediately donated the real estate and the buildings to this *société de bienfaisance*. Furthermore, she provided the foundation with 2,525,000 francs in Geneva municipal bonds at 4 per cent interest. The return on this capital corresponded to the 80,000 francs annuity plus the yield from the 525,000 francs that her late husband had intended to bequeath.

Once these issues had been settled how could Adolphe's widow, by then 71 years old, manage to create from scratch a hospital in Paris? Gifted with a strong will, and having preserved her mental capacities until the very end of her life, she actually achieved this task, with the committed and professional support of a small staff of highly skilled advisors: Georges Stantz, her late husband's secretary in Geneva, Frédéric Schneider, from the Paris bank de Rothschild

The eye hospital building, Geneva, in 1919 and 1970. Postcard: The Rothschild Archive. Photograph: Gertrude Trepper.



Frères, and Albert Surlanly, her own secretary in Paris. At the same time Schneider was involved with the creation of the Rothschild social housing foundation, and Stantz was the administrative director of the Geneva hospital.

Yet another factor has to be taken into account: Adolphe de Rothschild's last year of life and the time it took to carry out his bequest precisely coincided with the Dreyfus Affair that shook the entire French nation from 1894 to 1906. The French army officer Captain Alfred Dreyfus had been accused of spying for Germany, court-martialled and banished to the prison island Île du Diable, off the coast of French Guyana. Dreyfus had a Jewish background. Almost instantly suspicions spread that the whole trial had been fuelled by an anti-Semitism that was widespread within the army. Embarrassed by the official cover-up attempts, the writer Emile Zola spoke out publicly in 1898, in his famous open letter *J'accuse*, addressed to the President of the Republic. This only increased the tensions and caused many members of the nationalist, conservative and clerical parties to rally to the anti-Jewish party, with the slogan 'France for the French'. Sadly, even quite a number of Socialists and Republicans were keen to exploit the surge in anti-Semitism to their own advantage, echoing 'The Republic for the Republicans'. At the end of the day (a very long one, at that), the military could no longer conceal that the whole case was based on deliberately forged documents, and Dreyfus had to be released.⁹

During the years of the 'Affaire', the French Rothschilds, archetypal examples of the Jewish banking magnate, personally experienced the level of hysteria to which the masses could be stirred by prejudice and propaganda. Zola's letter was published on 13 January 1898, and immediately answered by hate-filled articles, not only in well-known anti-Semitic periodicals like *Libre Parole* and *L'Intransigeant*, but also by dailies like *L'Echo de Paris*, a rather mainstream paper. On 15 January thousands were on the streets of Paris, shouting 'Vive l'armée', 'Down with Zola!', 'Burn Dreyfus'. When they passed Rothschild private residences in the 8th arrondissement, 'Death to the Jews' was the cry. During the 1902 elections, slogans like 'Death to the Jews! Down with Rothschild' formed part of the right-wing campaigns.¹⁰ Hardly any of the private correspondence preserved at The Rothschild Archive reflects considerations related particularly to the 'Affaire', but it certainly had its impact whenever a Rothschild or other members of the French Jewish community were planning a charitable project that went beyond the limits of that community.

This had most certainly been the case with another clause in Adolphe's bequest, concerning the donation of one million francs for the pension funds for rabbis, and Calvinist and Catholic clergymen.¹¹ The biggest share of this sum was allocated to the Catholic clergy's pensions, at precisely the time that the clerical party was rallying the most fervent enemies of Dreyfus. The smallest share was for the rabbis. The 'Affaire' had not had any influence on Adolphe's plans for the Fondation Ophtalmologique, which had been initially conceived years before these events. But now, the creation of an important clinic in the heart of the French capital would serve as a far-reaching demonstration of Jewish commitment to the French nation and society at large. We may assume that this background further encouraged the donor's widow to pursue the plans. With her team of advisors she tackled the issues rapidly, and with vigour.

When creating a large medical institution, the first requirement is the land on which to build, in this instance at least 3,000 square metres. No easy task in a booming and buzzing place like Paris. Initially, Julie de Rothschild wanted the search to focus on the poorer eastern quarters of the city, where land prices would be lower. With work accidents being a major cause for eye injuries, this would further ensure that the hospital was situated amidst the targeted constituency, the labourers of the factories and workshops, and their families. At the same time extremely overpopulated and poor areas had to be avoided: municipal statistics on diseases and mortality of neighbourhoods like Neuilly and Billancourt made them unsuitable simply because of the implicit risk to patients and staff. For a while the provision of a dispensary service only was considered, with the hospital being built outside the city. The 12th, 19th and 20th

arrondissements proved to be the most suitable areas, but in the 12th there was already the Hôpital Rothschild with its hospice and orphanage.¹² Finally, by October 1901, two specific sites were under consideration: one in the rue Breteuil (20th arrondissement), the other in rue Manin (19th arrondissement). Rue Breteuil, which was never very much to Julie's liking because of the busy traffic surrounding it, could only offer 2,800 square metres, whereas in the rue Manin, a plot of up to 10,000 was available. It was the site of an abandoned quarry not yet swallowed up by the city's property market. The deal would have to be done with a number of individual owners, who were fortunately represented by the extant quarry company as one sole party. Its most attractive asset was the situation, in the eastern part of the city, but right opposite the large Parc des Buttes-Chaumont, which corresponded perfectly with Julie's concerns for a healthy environment.

It was one thing to spot a suitable site, quite another one to get it, and at a reasonable price. Everybody involved was aware that any potential seller would raise the asking price once he knew that the bidder was a Rothschild, whether the purpose be business or charitable. In any case a buyer looking for several thousand square metres in the heart of the capital would attract much attention in the property world. A middleman was instructed to open the bid at 30 francs per square metre, which was countered with a demand for 50. In the meantime, details about the bidders leaked out and the final deal could only be done at 60 francs.¹³ Given the general situation of the market, this was still a reasonable price.

For the larger Paris institution Adolphe had provided a sum of 1.8 million francs to build a hospital with 50 beds, and a capital of approximately 8 million francs, which would yield some 300,000 francs annually, to cover the running costs.¹⁴ His widow made sure that the entire layout of the hospital was designed for the maximum comfort of the patients, that no money was spent indulging the whims of ambitious architects, or on sumptuous dining rooms for the medical staff, but rather on achieving the latest standards of medical equipment and hygiene. The aim, Georges Stantz agreed, was not necessarily to have a large number of patients, but patients that were cured, even if that meant that hospitalisation might last many weeks.¹⁵ Julie further insisted that the Paris clinic was not to become a 'branch of the Medical Academy', and that it should absolutely not be dedicated to medical science, but exclusively to the optimum treatment and well-being of the patients, just like the Geneva hospital.¹⁶

Some of the medical and architectural experts involved in the planning tried to channel into the construction a part of the money intended as the foundation's capital, to make it even larger than the donor had conceived. Three architects had been asked to submit a draft proposal by April 1902: Chatenay, Peronne, and Ferdinand Martin, who had already designed the buildings of the Hôpital Pasteur. The results were anything but satisfactory. They either ignored budget limits, submitted plans for 94 beds instead of 50, or failed to take note of the size of the available land. Julie gave them short shrift.¹⁷ At the end of the day, it was Lucien Bechmann who conceived a building that makes most efficient use of the triangular shaped site.¹⁸ On 1 May 1905, the hospital opened its doors to a clientele that soon would pour in from all over world.

Sticking stubbornly to the terms of her late husband's will, Julie rejected her advisors' pleas to register the Paris institution from its very beginning as a charitable organisation. Rather, as in Geneva, she had it registered as her private property, making it liable to inheritance tax, and leaving it up to her successors to transform it into a charity of public utility. With aristocratic nonchalance, she insisted that as her late husband had always gladly accepted any tax demands, not only from the French state, so she and her heirs would do the same. Thus when she died in November 1907, the Paris hospital, worth some 1.65 million francs, was just one of a number of properties in her estate, alongside her Geneva and Paris residences.¹⁹ Her only surviving brother, Albert von Rothschild, inherited the hospital together with 150,000 francs inheritance tax on the building itself. Far more was due on the land and the capital. It was the responsibility of her executors to establish the status of public utility, granted in April 1907, thus preventing

A detail from the entrance to the Geneva eye hospital. Archives d'Etat, Geneva.



a similar tax falling on the heirs of Albert, by then a man in his sixties.

With 78 beds by 1914, the Fondation Ophtalmologique served as a military hospital throughout the First World War. The number of its services to outpatients, over 500 per day, meant it was Europe's, and probably even the world's, largest ophthalmologic institution by 1919.²⁰ It provided for up to 28,000 days of hospitalisation annually, and its patients came from places as far as Argentina, Egypt, Australia, Japan and China.²¹ This certainly would have pleased the late Adolphe de Rothschild, who had intended that his Paris clinic too should serve anyone, whatever their ethnic, national or religious background. In one aspect, the administrators did not stick to Julie's wishes. In spite of her explicit views on the matter, the hospital did not abstain from medical research. Even before 1914, laboratories were in place.²² The institution was to become one of the major players in the field of ophthalmic research. Its most outstanding achievement was perhaps the introduction of laser techniques, in 1978. Only a few years later, the first successful laser treatments of the retina were carried out there – nowadays a routine treatment all over the world.

Economically, both the Geneva and the Paris hospital did remarkably well for many years, even during the First World War and the difficult interwar period. The capital donated to them continued to yield profits that covered expenses, and it seemed as if the institutions really could be as 'perpetual' as the donor had intended them to be. Yet, in the 1970s and 1980s, rising costs for staff and ever more expensive technical equipment caused problems that could not be solved without co-operating with municipal and state health services. In Geneva, throughout the 1970s plans were developed for a new hospital building. They failed, mainly due to the difficulties of obtaining an adequate building site. In the early 1980s the Fondation started considering a closer collaboration with existing hospitals. In 1982, a partnership was initiated with the Clinique Générale Beaulieu. The Fondation would close down its own hospital, and contribute to the purchase of state-of-the-art equipment for the Clinique, which it does to the present day. The Clinique, in turn, would make available an operating theatre to the Fondation once every week, and hospitalise its patients. Since 1988, Adolphe's Swiss creation carries the

name Mémorial Adolphe de Rothschild. A similar development took place in Paris, where the hospital remained operative, but started to work closely with the Service Public Hospitalier and the Assistance Publique. Since 1990, it has been pursuing a wider diagnostic and therapeutic plan, including neurological surgery. At the same time the foundation's initial statutes have been maintained, testifying to the ability of adapting private philanthropic endeavours of the 1900s to the completely different socio-economic conditions of the 21st century.²³



Dr Klaus Weber is Director of the research project Jewish Philanthropy and Social Development in Europe, c.1800–1940: The Case of the Rothschilds and a Research Fellow at the Parkes Institute for the Study of Jewish/non-Jewish Relations at the University of Southampton and at Royal Holloway, University of London.

The Paris hospital adapts to the style of the 20th century and the ever-growing demand for space. Fondation Rothschild.

NOTES

- 1 The Rothschild Archive London (RAL) 58-1-641, containing three relevant codicils: 16 October 1886, 11 December 1890, and 22 December 1894.
- 2 Henri Vaucher, *Hôpital Ophtalmique Adolphe-de-Rothschild. Aperçu historique*. (Geneva: Kundig, 1982), p.11.
- 3 Ibid., pp.15–6.
- 4 Ibid., pp.19–20.
- 5 Ibid., pp.23–4, 30.
- 6 RAL OE 372.
- 7 Archives d'Etat de Genève (AEG), Archives privées, 45/17, Règlement du Corps médical de la Fondation Rothschild, 27 February 1917. Yet, staff members were allowed to teach at a university as 'privat docent', which was not remunerated and did not imply research work. Dr Barde did so at the University of Geneva, from 1876. When the Faculty of Medicine offered him a chair in 1891, incompatible with his post at the Hôpital Ophtalmique, he preferred to stay with the Hôpital. Vaucher, p.16.
- 8 AEG, Archives privées, 45/10, Hôpital Rothschild – Rapports médicaux. The generally dense statistical material actually suffers a gap for the years from 1895 to 1916. Therefore, the turn-of-the-century figures are estimates.
- 9 Pierre Birnbaum, *Le moment antisémite: Un tour de la France en 1898*, (Paris: Fayard, 1989), pp.9–13. Still, what Dreyfus was accorded in 1899 was less than a full pardon. Dreyfus was rehabilitated only in 1906.
- 10 Birnbaum, pp.68–9.
- 11 RAL OE 373, Julie to Frédéric Schneider, 5 July 1901.
- 12 RAL OE 373, Julie to Albert Surlanly, 9 July 1901, and her letter to Schneider, 16 April 1901; Dr Trousseau to Schneider, 25 September 1901; Schneider to Julie, 25 October 1901. One of the reasons not to build outside Paris was the specific point in Adolphe de Rothschild's will: he had wanted it to be created in Paris, and the city's authorities would have been entitled to insist on that.
- 13 RAL OE 373, Schneider to Julie, 31 October 1901, and their following correspondence throughout November and December.
- 14 RAL 58-1-643.
- 15 RAL OE 373, Julie to Scheider, 25 and 26 December 1901.
- 16 RAL OE 373, Julie to Surlanly, 9 July 1901.
- 17 RAL OE 373, Stantz to Schneider, 1 October 1901; Schneider to Julie, 4 April 1902; Julie to Schneider, 14 and 18 April 1902.
- 18 Pauline Prévost-Marcilhacy, *Les Rothschild: Bâtisseurs et Mécènes* (Paris: Flammarion, 1995), p.245.
- 19 RAL OE 381.
- 20 RAL 58-1-642, report from the medical director Dr Dupuy-Dutemps, May 1919. The report mentions the inevitable conflict between the intent to help as many people as possible, and to maintain the quality of service. Already measures were in place to admit only the needy.
- 21 RAL 58-1-642, annual reports, 1914–1920. Yet the total of non-French patients hardly exceeded a thousand per year.
- 22 RAL 58-1-642, report from the medical director Dr Dupuy-Dutemps, May 1919. Research was only halted during the war.
- 23 More information about the management of the foundations today may be found via the web site of Groupe LCF Rothschild www.lcf-rothschild.com.

Rothschild Reunited: The records of de Rothschild Frères at the Centre des archives du monde du travail

Amable Sablon du Corail, Johann Comble and Melanie Aspey
chart the progress of work on a major French archive.

The archives of N.M. Rothschild & Sons, the London branch of the business which form the core of the collection of The Rothschild Archive, have received no threat to their safekeeping and accumulation throughout the 200-year history of the bank. Aside from a period of a couple of decades when they were housed at a private Rothschild property in Hampshire they have always been on the bank's London premises. The records of the other family businesses have experienced rather different fates. The majority of the records of the Frankfurt bank were destroyed after the business was liquidated in 1901, together with those of the Naples bank, which had been transferred to Frankfurt after its closure in 1863 and the early business records of the Viennese bank. Some records were transferred to Paris in 1912, but they only survived a few years more. An archive of material collected by Salomon von Rothschild and augmented by his descendants survived this purge, only to be captured by the Nazis in Vienna in 1938. The eventual return of the records to the family was documented in a previous issue of this *Review*.¹

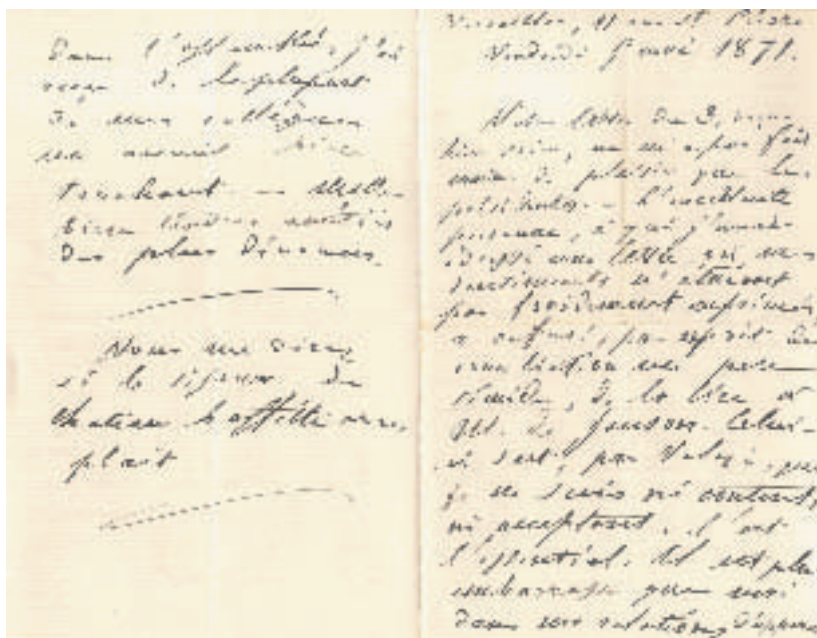
Records relating to the French Rothschild business have been available to researchers since the 1970s through the French national archives system and private family records have been available in London from the middle of the 1990s.² In 2004 the ownership of the business records was assigned to The Rothschild Archive by the Rothschild family, uniting intellectually not just the records of the French Rothschild bank with those of the family, but also the records of all the banking branches.

Bertrand Gille, the distinguished economic historian, who worked on the records of the French bank from the early 1950s also used them as the source for his authoritative history of the Rothschild business, which appeared in two volumes in the 1960s.³ He gave this assessment of the archives of de Rothschild Frères.

Aucun fonds d'archives économiques en France (pas même les archives de la Banque de France) ne possède l'intérêt que présentent les archives Rothschild.⁴

In subsequent reports about the archives, Gille expanded on his claim, identifying a number of major themes that could not be fully understood without reference to the Rothschild collection: the financial history of France; the financial history of Belgium; the history of railways in France and the rest of Europe; the history of the cotton trade in Europe in the nineteenth century; the competition between financial syndicates; French oil companies.

Gille's work took place against the backdrop of a veritable collecting frenzy of company archives which was first pursued in a systematic and consistent manner in France during the 1930s. After the Second World War this activity really began in earnest, notably thanks to the establishment in 1949 of a section for private and company archives within the Archives nationales; in less than eight years, it was to gather together over 65 collections and close on 40,000 articles. The emerging interest in the study of economic and social history (as typified in the popularity of the *Annales* school of thought in French universities) generated a pressing new public demand for access to company archives. The purpose of Gille's work was to



Letter from Changarnier to Betty, Baroness James de Rothschild, 5 May 1871, describing the situation at Versailles during the Paris Commune.

AN CAMT AQ 132.

prepare the documents for eventual deposit with the Archives nationales.

Gille began work just as the bank regained possession of its archives, which had been seized during the war by the occupying German authorities. An inventory drawn up on 1 December 1952 by the archivist then in post at the bank, although focusing more on famous autographs and attractive bindings than on the detailed structure of the collection, nevertheless provides information about the major groups. It would have been surprising if the sequestered documents had been returned without difficulties or losses, given the chaos inherently bound up with events of this kind; it is believed that this was the time when the correspondence received by the bank when it first began its operations, from 1813 to 1837, went missing.⁵ However, in the absence of any more formal proof regarding the cause of this highly regrettable gap in the archive, this still remains a matter of speculation rather than fact.

Nevertheless, the more significant losses to the archive are due to the destruction carried out by the bank itself in the course of its normal activities and operations. Despite the volume of transactions it carried out, de Rothschild Frères always remained a modest establishment employing a small staff (150 people around the year 1880). In this respect, it differs from other major merchant banks and deposit banks. An 1872 inventory reveals that the archives were then filling the bank's premises to the point where they were being stored in cupboards in the dining room.⁶ This state of affairs prompted a series of purges of documents, and these of course began with the oldest documents first. The correspondence sent prior to 1850, conserved in the form of registers of manuscript copies, and later in registers of letter-press copies, was therefore destroyed before the war, and it is not possible to specify either the precise date or the person responsible for those losses. In 1935, on the instruction of the bank's management, all the books of accounts from before 1931 were to suffer a similar fate. The first four ledgers, covering the years 1813–4, 1815–6, 1816 and 1817, had been saved from this cull and in 1952 were being kept in the strong-room of the bank's own archive department, but they cannot now be traced.

Gille began by developing a classification system which, in its key aspects, has been retained to the present day. Three main groups of documents lie at the heart of his system: business files, outgoing correspondence and correspondence received. To this can be added the smaller collections which make up the archives for the bank's legal department and documentation

department and, lastly, the collection from the Commissie en Handelsbank (the Rothschild agency in Amsterdam), whose archives for the period up until the war were transferred to France in 1951. Gille then began to draw up a detailed inventory of the business files, outgoing correspondence and correspondence received from agencies and other branches of the business. Appointed to various other posts, Gille never had the time to complete his work, which was only resumed after an interval of nearly 20 years.

The contract for depositing the archives of de Rothschild Frères with the Archives nationales was officially signed on 28 June 1972. The collection, which in the meantime had found a temporary home in storage in the cellars of the Bibliothèque historique de la ville de Paris, could then be transferred to the Archives nationales, moving first to the Centre des archives contemporaines in Fontainebleau, before the part of the collection already classified was transferred to the Centre historique des archives nationales in Paris. The move of this part of the archive was made in response to pressure from readers at the Archives nationales who were keen to make use of such rich documentary sources; this demand was also behind the resumption of work to classify the archive, in the early 1980s.

Isabelle Guérin-Brot, the curator responsible for company archives, directed the major part of these efforts at the correspondence received, at the point where Gille had left off. She secured funding from the Rothschild bank for a temporary archivist, Madame Fontfrède, who accomplished a remarkable feat in working her way through several thousands of boxes in less than two years, from 1981 to 1983; but even she did not reach the end of this mass of material which took up more than 350 continuous metres of shelf space. In 1996, the company archives department was disbanded. The Centre des archives du monde du travail, (or CAMT), the latest offshoot of the Archives nationales, had been based in an historic former cotton mill in Roubaix in Northern France from 1993 and it inherited the Rothschild materials. It is to be hoped that this, the sixth move, heralds a period of stability.

In 1999–2000, the archives of the documentation department and the legal department were catalogued, under the direction of Armelle Le Goff. After this, there remained the matter of preparing inventories for the archives of the Commissie en Handelsbank, the current accounts and accounting documents for de Rothschild Frères from 1811, miscellaneous supplementary materials for the elements already catalogued and, last but not least, a very large number of letters received from a wide variety of correspondents. The work carried out by Johann Comble, an archivist funded for a period of fifteen months by the Institut Alain de Rothschild has at last seen a project which has stretched over fifty years and more brought to a close in 2004–5.

At the end of this description, perhaps slightly meticulous in its attention to detail but necessary for a good understanding of the general structure of the collection, it seems fitting to review the main groups of documents mentioned earlier, both to point out their interesting features and to explain how they have been catalogued.

Business files

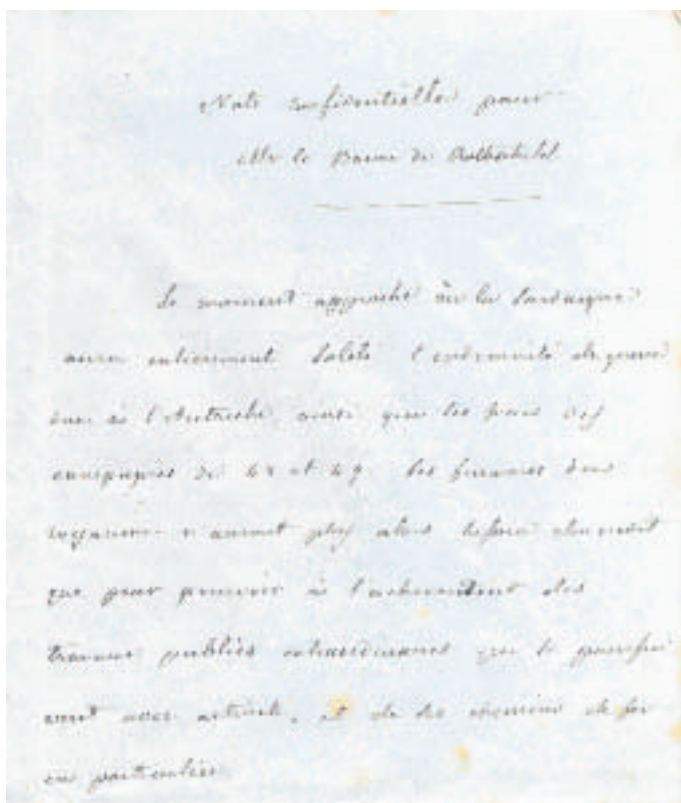
Catalogued by Bertrand Gille, by major area of activity for the Bank (public loans, petroleum, metals, etc.), their origin is not always easy to determine, but in most instances these are information notes, reports, original agreements and contracts, and other reference documents put together by senior staff and partners of the Bank. Although it is possible to find some very old items in this collection, particularly material relating to state loans, for the most part they date from after 1870. The variety of items contained in the files in relation to particular aspects of business, makes them the most consulted section in the collection. In addition to the dossiers catalogued by Gille, others have been retrieved in the latest cataloguing phase, together with a series of registers of loan issue notices and notices for the issue of bonds and shares (1870–1940).

Outgoing correspondence

This section comprises twenty-four series⁷ of registers of letter-press copies, classified in chronological order, the sheer quantity of which (over 4,700) frequently deters researchers from tackling them. However, there is an index of correspondents at the end of the volume which greatly simplifies the work of research, even though this may sometimes mean working one's way through considerable numbers of registers.

Correspondence received

The vast majority of this correspondence had been catalogued in chronological order relatively thoroughly by the bank's staff. Only the correspondence received and handled by the English office and the commodities office constitute two specific sub-classifications, which have naturally been preserved in their original grouping in the inventory. This sea of material made research difficult, so Gille devised a classification system that distinguished between the Rothschild houses and agencies, regular correspondents – principally banks, authorities and companies in close contact with de Rothschild Frères – occasional correspondents, and individuals holding an account with de Rothschild Frères. The regular correspondents were then broken down by country, with each country having a particular sub-classification.⁸ This method, which has made it possible to rapidly make available to the public a large part of the correspondence received, did however have its limitations, which became apparent at the time when the classification work was resumed in 2003. The scope of the task which remained to be tackled, made all the more complex in that the correspondents were vast in number and by the fact that it was not always easy to distinguish individuals from small banking establishments, stockbrokers and others, justified a change in the method of classification. The archivists decided to classify in alphabetical order all the remaining correspondents, no longer making arbitrary distinctions, up until 1869 (the year after the death of James de Rothschild), and then to adopt the broader chronological classification already in place.



Confidential note
from Cavour to James
de Rothschild, undated,
concerning a railway loan
that the kingdom of
Sardinia hopes to issue as
soon as the reparations due
to Austria following the
1848–9 war have been paid.
AN CAMT AQ 132.



Main entrance to the CAMT, Roubaix, the former Motte-Bossut cotton mill.

AN CAMT.



Right
The reading room at the Centre des archives du monde du travail.

AN CAMT.

Legal department

Individual files for loans, advances, transfers of stocks and shares, and particularly papers relating to inheritance, make up practically the entirety of this group. Ranging widely in importance and interest, the documents set out a procession of the bank's clientèle over nearly a century, with a fair representation of fashionable society of the time.

Documentation department

Established at the start of the twentieth century, this department gathered together a wealth of economic and financial information on every subject of greater or lesser interest to the bank, notably on French and foreign companies listed on the Bourse or other stock exchanges.

Accounts

It is this area which has been the focus of the greatest – and the most innovative – part of the work recently carried out by Johann Comble. In fact, in the absence of the bank's main ledgers, what remains are fairly complete series of bundles of current accounts and franchisee accounts, dating back to the first years of business for the Rothschilds in France. Of particular interest are bank statements for de Rothschild Frères relating to their partner branches in Vienna, Frankfurt, Naples and London from 1827 on, and those for their agents and regular correspondents from 1818 onwards. These are generally monthly or quarterly statements. In the absence of general balance sheets, the reconstruction of which would be a hazardous business, it is therefore possible to evaluate the volume of transactions involving de Rothschild Frères in the European markets, and to know with whom and how the bank placed the bonds issued on behalf of the French or foreign governments.⁹

Charitable foundations and Jewish associations

This series of several boxes provides evidence of the bank's financial involvement with a large number of welfare organisations originally set up by the Rothschild family (e.g. Fondation Edmond de Rothschild pour le développement de la recherche scientifique, la Fondation Rothschild pour l'amélioration des conditions de l'existence matérielle des travailleurs, Hôpital Rothschild), or with bodies to which it simply made a contribution. Many associations supporting Jews returning to Palestine are featured here, although the details are scattered widely throughout the documentation.

Commissie en Handelsbank (Coha Bank)

This establishment took over from Auerbach as the company's representative in Amsterdam after 15 July 1926. All the accounts have been preserved: the main ledger, the account book, together with the correspondence sent and received between 1926 and 1940. The complexity – especially in view of the growing number of accounting transactions from the nineteenth century onwards – makes these documents accessible to researchers only with some difficulty, but they nevertheless constitute a valuable testimony to the working methods and types of transactions carried out at that time by the Bank.

With the completion of the cataloguing work a new phase in the development of the archives can begin. Researchers now have access to a fully catalogued collection, enabling them to exploit the sources more effectively. The catalogue that is available in hard copy at the CAMT¹⁰ will soon be accessible through the Rothschild Research Forum,¹¹ so that researchers can carry out preparatory research at their desks before travelling to Roubaix.

Such rich collections – the archives in London and Roubaix – deserve greater scholarly use and the archivists in both locations are keen to promote these sources. As a first step towards fulfilling this ambition, a series of joint ventures is planned, the first of which will be a colloquium on a theme that is comprehensively represented in both collections: Rothschild investment in eastern Europe. The colloquium will bring together researchers who have worked on the records of de Rothschild Frères and N.M. Rothschild & Sons furthering yet more the spirit of cross-Channel collaboration.

Amable Sablon du Corail, conservateur du patrimoine, has special responsibility for the direction of work on the Rothschild papers at CAMT; Johann Comble, undertook the final cataloguing of the collection at CAMT; Melanie Aspey is Director of The Rothschild Archive, London.

NOTES

- 1 Victor Gray, 'The Return of the Austrian Rothschild Archive' and Melanie Aspey, 'Salomon's Archive', in *The Rothschild Archive Review of the Year April 2001 – March 2002*.
- 2 Records previously stored at Château Lafite were returned in 1993, (The Rothschild Archive London [RAL] 000/929) and records looted from the family by the Nazis were returned in 1994 (RAL 000/796: 58-1).
- 3 Bertrand Gille, *Histoire de la Maison Rothschild, Tome 1: des origines à 1848* (Geneva: Librairie Droz, 1965) and *Tome 2: 1848–1870*, (Geneva: Librairie Droz, 1967).

- 4 RAL 000/929: OC554.
- 5 From this period, only a few fragments for the years 1811, 1815 and 1816 remain (Archives nationales, Centre des archives du monde du travail [AN CAMT], 132 AQ 17–20).
- 6 AN CAMT 132 AQ, being catalogued currently.
- 7 By correspondent (Belmont, N. M. Rothschild, etc.), language area (French, German, Italian, etc.), or department (subject-matter, commodity, etc.).
- 8 1P, France, 2P, Germany, etc.

- 9 The finding made by Jean Bouvier in 1967 no longer holds true: 'It thus remains impossible to produce a translation in accounting terms of the activities of the Paris Rothschilds.' Quoted in translation from Jean Bouvier, *Les Rothschild* (Paris: A. Fayard, 1967), p.89.
- 10 www.archivesnationales.culture.gouv.fr/camt
- 11 www.rothschildarchive.org

Principal acquisitions

1 April 2004 – 31 March 2005

This list is not comprehensive but attempts to record all acquisitions of most immediate relevance to research. Some items listed here may, however, be closed to access for some time and for a variety of reasons. Researchers should always enquire as to the availability of specific items before visiting the Archive, quoting the reference number which appears at the end of each paragraph.

Records of N.M. Rothschild & Sons

Records of the Private Accounts Department, 1922–1975.
(000/1399; 000/1421)

Miscellaneous files relating to the work of the Archives Department of N.M. Rothschild & Sons, 1965–1989. The collection includes prospectuses of issues handled by N.M. Rothschild & Sons and de Rothschild Frères and copies of speeches made by partners in the London bank.
(000/1435)

A collection of photographs commemorating the final sessions of the daily gold fixing, which took place at New Court from 1919 to 4 May 2004. The photographs feature representatives of N.M. Rothschild & Sons and the Bank of England, and of other participating houses, all of which are successors to the original members of the market.
(000/1404)

Records of de Rothschild Frères

A collection of letters, approximately 1,000 in total, written to de Rothschild Frères by various merchants and businessmen in the years 1854, 1856, 1857 and various years between 1861 and 1869.
(000/1531)

Two letters to Baron James de Rothschild from Cavour (n.d.) and Thiers (1839); one letter to Alphonse de Rothschild from Niel (1868).
(000/1402)

Twelve bills of exchange, drawing on accounts at de Rothschild Frères, including signatures from August Belmont, Nathaniel Davidson and Scharfenberg & Tolmé.
(000/1490)

Rothschild family

File of letters, drafts of documents and publications relating to affairs in Hungary, from the Treaty of Versailles to 1932. The papers appear to have been assembled by Rozsika Rothschild, to whom some of the letters are addressed.
(000/1384)

Correspondence and papers relating to the career of Edmund de Rothschild. The collection includes the diary of a round-the-world trip beginning in 1939; letters home from his travels, 1938 onwards; certificates, awards and testimonials granted throughout his life; correspondence from notable individuals.
(000/1505; 000/1532)

Stud Record Book, 1905–1932, together with information regarding pedigrees and registration of various horses belonging to Alphonse von Rothschild (1878–1942).
(000/1396)

Photographs of Mount Meru Hospital, Arusha, Tanzania, with foundation stone, 1926, recording funding from the Alfred de Rothschild Bequest (the stone was laid by Lady Rees, wife of Sir Milsom Rees, Alfred's executor).
(000/1390)

Letter from Alfred de Rothschild to 'Robson', 10 April 1902, referring to Colonel Cooper and the rearrangement of Alfred's drawing room at Seamore Place.
(000/1518)

Collection of watercolours, pencil sketches and photographs, probably from the family of Evelina Behrens née Rothschild. The watercolours and sketches are believed to be by Emma von Rothschild (many bear her initials or signature). Several also bear place names: Dresden, Baden and Gotha. Dated items range from 1860–1866. Subject matter includes rural scenes and buildings. The photographs date from c.1900 and include images of Lord Rothschild and Peggy Behrens.
(000/1528)

Copies of documents in the Royal Commission for the Exhibition of 1851 relating to the Rothschild family: correspondence between Lord Esher and Norman Shaw re the purchase of 185 Queen's Gate by Edmond de Rothschild for the foundation of a Maison de l'Institut de France, London, 1919; page from Accounts for the Royal Commission for 1855, with signature of Lionel de Rothschild.
(000/1445)

A collection of material relating to the life of Benjamin Davidson, Rothschild agent and cousin, and his family. The collection includes a pocket book kept by his brother noting Benjamin's movements in 1847–1848 and major events such as the abdication of Louis Philippe; an agreement between Davidson and N.M. Rothschild & Sons regarding the ownership of property in San Francisco; letters patent creating him a Chevalier of the Order of Santi Maurizio e Lazzaro, together with accompanying correspondence, 19 December 1864; letters patent creating him Italian consul in San Francisco, signed by Victor Emanuel, and Cavour, 23 March 1857; transparency and print of Davidson's bank in San Francisco, taken from the original daguerreotype photograph. (000/1419)

Artefacts

Commemorative medal with bust of Nathan Mayer Rothschild, 1836. Bronze, 5.2cm dia. The medal was struck in 1836 to commemorate the death of Nathan Rothschild. The obverse shows the head of Nathan, facing right with the inscription: NATHAN. MAYER. ROTHSCHILD PUB. BY HYAM HYAMS. The reverse is inscribed: NUMMIS MAXIMUS REPERITUR; OB JUL. XXVII MDCCCXXXVI. (000/1447)

Circular silver token granting free transport on the Lombardy and Central Italian railway, c.1860s. On the obverse a decorative locomotive engine, engraved by Desai-de-Roquelay, and the text: SOCIETA DELLE STRADE FERRATE DELLA LOMBARDIA E DELL'ITALIA CENTRALE. On the reverse an inscription: MR LE BARON LIONEL DE ROTHSCHILD. (000/1494)

Silhouette of Nathan Mayer Rothschild, standing, facing left, with top hat and cane, painted on glass in oval gilt metal frame. (000/1507)

Photograph on glass, hand painted, of Alfred de Rothschild standing in the winter garden at Halton. (000/1516)

Bamboo riding crop, with ivory foot. Gold band engraved 'Alfred de Rothschild Halton Tring'. (000/1516)

Publications of the Rothschild family

L'Inoublié, Hélène de Zuylen de Nyevelt, (Paris: E. Sansot & Cie, 1910). Limited edition, number 3 of 10. (000/1424)

From January to December, Charlotte de Rothschild (London: Longmans, Green & Co., London, 1873). (000/1450)

Collection of 11 catalogues of master drawings exhibited by Kate de Rothschild, 1974–2003. (000/1489)

The Schizophrenia Research Fund, Miriam Rothschild, ([Schizophrenia Research Fund]: [c.1970]). (000/1496)

Printed material

Original cartoon by SEM, featuring *inter alia* Henri de Rothschild, Alphonse de Rothschild and his wife, Leonora, Camille Blanc, Gordon Bennett and Lord Savile. (000/1398)

Printed sale catalogue: *Vérzeichniss der ausserlesenen und hochstanebnlichen Thalersammlung des zu Halle verstorbenen Hofraths David Samuel von Madai ...*, (Hamburg, 1788). With flyleaf inscription, signed 'M.W.' identifying the book as the property of Mayer Amschel Rothschild and the interfoliated annotations to be in his hand. (000/1428)

Der Baron Rothschild: Reisen, Jagden, Menschlichkeiten by Forstrat Gruenkrantz (Munich: Verlag für Kulturpolitik, 1924), an account of Baron Nathaniel von Rothschild (1836–1905) and the family's hunting grounds in Austria. (000/1454)

Le Journal Illustré, 8 September 1895, featuring an article about the assassination attempt at de Rothschild Frères, 'Un Attentat chez M. de Rothschild', illustrated by Henri Meyer. (000/1485)

Chromolithograph of Baron Lionel de Rothschild (1808–1879), head and shoulders, facing left. (000/1527)

Poster in memory of Edmond de Rothschild (1845–1934) produced in Tel Aviv one month after his death. (000/1530)

Memorandum and Articles of Association of the Jewish Colonization Association, 1891. (000/1530)

