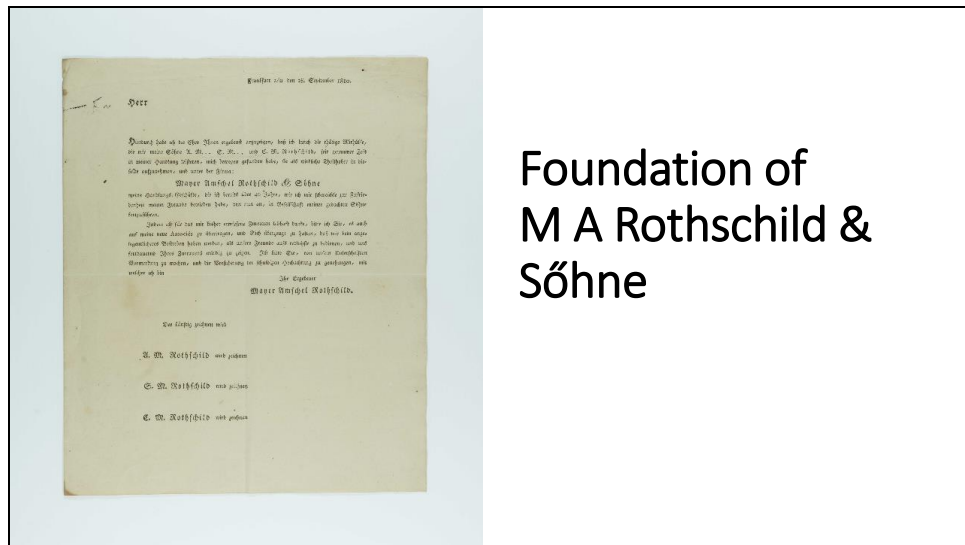


Jewish Museum Frankfurt

Items on loan from The Rothschild Archive, London

Internal



Foundation of M A Rothschild & Söhne

The oldest of the items loaned from The Rothschild Archive is a copy of the announcement on 28 September 1810 of the creation of the firm M A Rothschild & Söhne, by the signing of a partnership agreement on the previous day.

Mayer Amschel Rothschild (1744-1812), the ‘Founder’ of the Rothschild family businesses, was a self-made man, a resident of the Frankfurt Judengasse, a successful and trustworthy sole trader of over 40 years’ standing who recognised, towards the end of his life, that his reputation was an asset worth protecting. He did this by creating a business partnership with his sons which would enable the firm to thrive beyond his lifetime, building on his reputation from generation to generation. Partners could support each other through hard times, share talents and profits to the benefit of the business as a whole.

Three of his sons signed the first agreement: Amschel, Salomon and Carl. Nathan was already in London and James was too young to sign a legal document.

Mayer Amschel’s long-term vision is clear: Alexandre de Rothschild, the current chairman of Rothschild & Co, is the seventh generation of the family after Mayer Amschel. To put it another way, Alex is the great, great, great, great grandson of the Founder.

This example of the announcement has been part of the Archive’s collection since its establishment. The document, an unsigned specimen, forms part of a small collection of documents relating to the firm of M A Rothschild & Söhne which was assembled after the liquidation of the firm in 1901, following the death of Mayer Amschel’s grandson, Wilhelm Carl, the last male heir in the city.

Circular notice announcing the foundation of M A Rothschild & Söhne, 28 September 1810. RAL 000/87/1



Amschel Mayer
von Rothschild

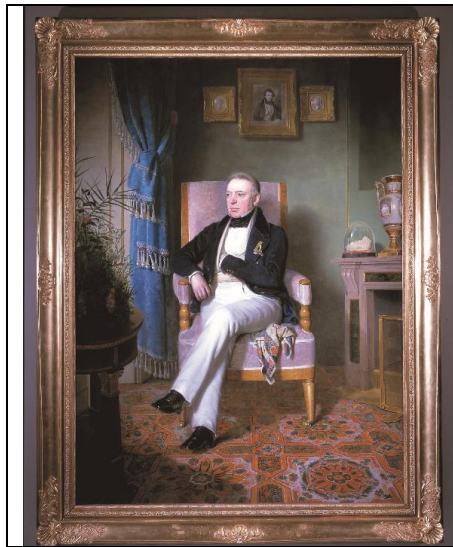
Amschel was the eldest of Mayer Amschel Rothschild's five sons. Born in the Frankfurt Judengasse in 1773, Amschel was taken into the family business aged about twelve and was soon travelling on behalf of his father to other trading centres of Germany. In 1814 Amschel spent an uncomfortable few months in Berlin, handling subsidy payments to Britain's allies during the Napoleonic wars, and was only too pleased to return to the orthodox surroundings of the Judengasse early in 1815. Like his father, Amschel was aware of the importance of titles and honours to the furtherance of business and was the recipient of several orders.

The most pious, cautious and conservative of his brothers, Amschel continued the family firm in Frankfurt after their father's death in 1812. Amschel married Eva Hanau on 16 November 1796 but their union produced no children, to Amschel's great sorrow. The sons of his brother, Carl, inherited the Frankfurt business from him. Although personally a modest man, Amschel recognised that he and his brothers could play a role in the Jewish community by reaffirming rights granted to them by Napoleon's regime, such as the purchase of land outside the Judengasse. In 1816 Amschel bought a garden on the Bockenheimer Landstrasse, traces of which can be seen in Rothschild Park. Subsequently he bought a house on the fashionable street, the Zeil.

In this portrait Amschel can be seen in older age, wearing a green coat and a white waistcoat and stock, with a ring prominently displayed on his left hand. He is wearing no orders or civil decorations, showing his humility. He is however noticeably holding a book, giving the impression of a learned man. His gaze is directed away from the viewer, suggestive of man without ego.

This portrait has hung at New Court for many years, displayed alongside portraits of the Frankfurt brothers.

Portrait of Amschel Mayer von Rothschild (1773–1855) by Abel Heinrich Seyffert (1768-1834), oil on canvas, framed in an elaborate gilt composition frame measuring 105 x 92cm. Seyffert's oeuvre also includes the Prussian Royal family and leading aristocrats. The Rothschild Archive has two other portraits by this artist in its collection: Friedrich Wilhelm III, King of Prussia (1820) and Karl August von Hardenberg, Prime Minister of Prussia (1820). NMR 146



Salomon Mayer von Rothschild

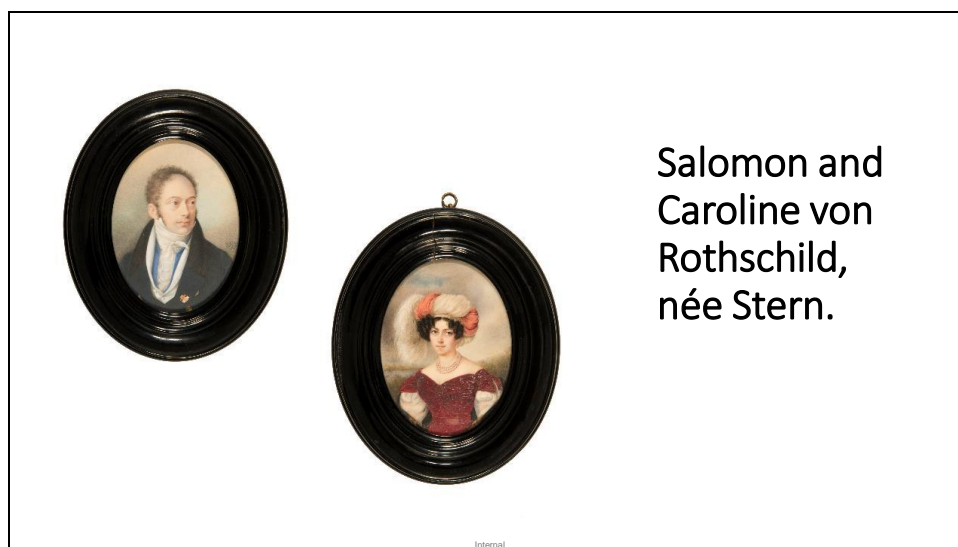
Salomon was born in the Judengasse in 1774, the second eldest son of Mayer Amschel Rothschild. He was the most well-travelled of the five Rothschild brothers; surviving letters from his wife, Caroline, protest that he was hardly ever home in Frankfurt. It is largely due to his diplomatic skills and friendship with Prince Metternich, Austrian Minister for Foreign Affairs, that the Rothschild family were ennobled by the Austrian Emperor.

Salomon funded the first major steam railway to be built in continental Europe, the Kaiser Ferdinand's Nordbahn, which opened in 1839. In 1843 he purchased the Witkowitz iron works in Moravia. Salomon did not find his Viennese base quite so congenial as his brothers' new homes. Prevented as a Jew from owning property in the city, he simply rented the whole of the Römischer Kaiser hotel, which became the base for the firm he founded in his name. After the revolutionary period of 1848 however, Salomon settled into his Parisian château Suresnes, where he died in 1855. His children and their descendants continued the family business in Vienna until its closure during the Nazi occupation. Salomon is Alexandre's great, great, great, great-grandfather through Salomon's daughter Betty.

Salomon was very conscious of his family's rise from the Judengasse and how the family should be represented and remembered. He commissioned more portraits of himself than any other family member and recorded the family's achievements in an archive that he created of important documents. In this portrait Salomon is surrounded by family mementoes; the pencil sketch of his brother Carl is today in the collection of The Rothschild Archive and the vases survive at Waddesdon Manor. Salomon has carefully crafted his image through his choice of clothes and by wearing his civil decorations and orders. The interior décor is sumptuous giving the impression of a man aware of his status.

This portrait is believed to have been sent in a consignment of items from Salomon's great grandson, Louis, from the Renngasse office in Vienna to his cousin Anthony in London in 1951. Since its arrival in England it has been in several locations but most notably displayed for many years in the general office of the second New Court. Some visitors may remember that in 1994 the portrait was temporarily loaned to the Jewish Museum Frankfurt for the Rothschild exhibition.

Monumental portrait of Salomon Mayer von Rothschild (1774-1855) by Wilhelm Heinrich Schlesinger, 1838, oil on canvas in gilt composition frame, 290 x 239 cm. RAL 000/2216



Salomon (1744-1855) was born in the Judengasse, the second eldest son of Mayer Amschel Rothschild. Caroline (1782-1854) was the daughter of Frankfurt wine merchant Samuel Hayum Stern, whose descendants also left the ghetto and later became bankers. Caroline and Salomon married in 1800 and had two children: Anselm (1803-1874) and Betty (1805-1886). In the period of the Napoleonic Wars, Salomon spent many months away from Frankfurt travelling on business. By 1820 he had established the Viennese branch of the family partnership. It is largely due to his diplomatic skills and friendship with Prince Metternich, Austrian Minister for Foreign Affairs, that the Rothschild family were ennobled by the Austrian Emperor. After the revolution of 1848 Salomon and Caroline spent the remainder of their lives in Paris, close to their daughter, while the Viennese business was revived by their son and his descendants.

The Rothschild Archive possesses a small collection of letters written in Judendeutsch by Caroline to her husband when she and the children were in Frankfurt. Caroline was an astute commentator on current affairs, particularly Jewish emancipation. Salomon and Caroline are Alexandre's great, great, great, great grandparents through their daughter, Betty.

This portrait depicts Salomon wearing a black coat, white waistcoat tipped with blue, and a white cravat. Two orders, awarded for financial services, are clearly visible on the lapel of his coat. Caroline is depicted wearing a dark red velvet dress, feathered turban and pearl jewellery.

Portraits of Salomon (1774-1855) and Caroline von Rothschild née Stern (1782-1854) by Friedrich Johann Gottlieb Lieder, 1820-1830. Watercolour on board in ebonised wood frames. Lieder was a German painter who from 1812 worked in Vienna where he had great success as a portrait artist, especially during the Vienna Congress. He specialised in painting the high nobility and was created court painter by Friedrich Wilhelm III of Prussia during a stay in Berlin. This pair was acquired by the Archive in 2011 and were known to have formerly been the property of Elie de Rothschild (1917-2007) a descendant of the sitters. It could be inferred therefore that the pair was owned by Salomon and Caroline's daughter Betty. To our knowledge, this is the first time these portraits have been exhibited publicly. 21 x 18 cm. RAL 000/2061/2&3



This volume contains eulogies made during the funeral of Caroline de Rothschild née Stern (1782–1854), from Chief Rabbi Isidor and from the president of the consistorial committee, Albert Cohn, together with a reproduction of a tribute from *L'Univers Israelite*.

Caroline, originally known by her Hebrew name of Gelche, was the daughter of Frankfurt wine merchant, Samuel Hayum Stern. Her only brother, Jacob, founded the banking house Jacob S. H. Stern in Frankfurt in 1805, whose successors include Bank Stern and J. Stern & Co. Caroline and Salomon Rothschild married in 1800 and had two children: Anselm (1803-1874) and Betty (1805-1886). In the period of the Napoleonic Wars, Salomon spent many months travelling on the business of the family firm. By 1820 he had established the Viennese branch of the family partnership, which was revived after the revolution of 1848 by his son. Salomon and Caroline spent the remainder of their lives in Paris, close to their daughter, Betty.

The Rothschild Archive possesses a small collection of letters written in Judendeutsch by Caroline to her husband when she and the children were in Frankfurt. Caroline was an astute commentator on current affairs, particularly Jewish emancipation. Her writing makes clear that she is an accomplished woman, caring for the education of her children in a way which will prepare them for a life outside the confines of the ghetto.

Discours prononcés sur la tombe de Madame Baronne Salomon de Rothschild decedée a Paris le samedi 25 novembre 1854 et inhumée le mardi 28 novembre, Paris, black, velvet-bound volume, 23.5cm x 16cm embellished with the Rothschild family's coat of arms. RAL 000/2089/18



Nathan
Mayer
Rothschild

Internal

Nathan Rothschild, the third of Mayer Amschel Rothschild's sons, was the first to establish a branch of the family business outside Frankfurt. In 1798 he left Frankfurt and established himself first in Manchester, as a textile merchant, and then, after about a decade, settling in London as a banker. New Court, St Swithin's Lane, has been the address of the business that bears his name since 1809.

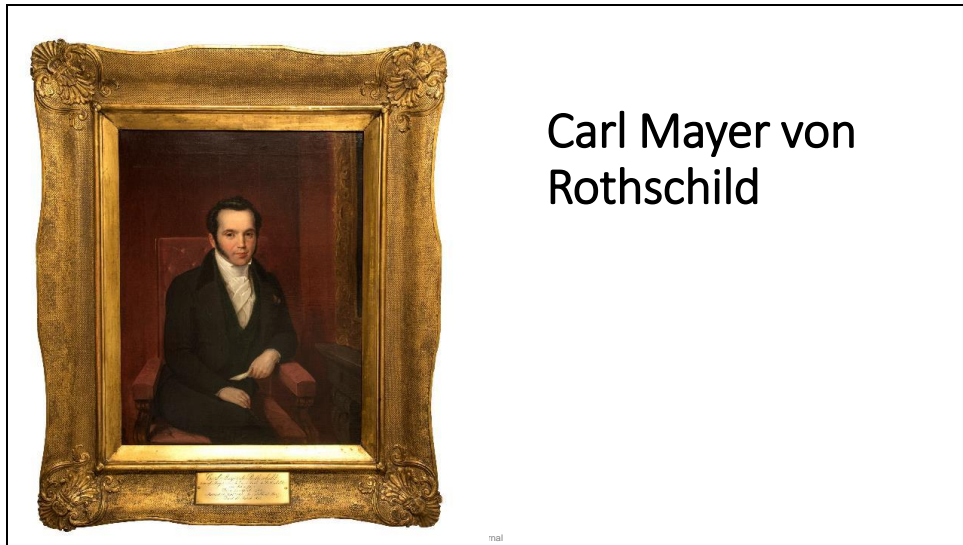
When he arrived in England Nathan Rothschild quickly made a name for himself as an innovator: a man who quickly understood how traditional methods of business could be transformed for the benefit of all parties. Together with his brothers he soon became a confidant of governments, especially during the Napoleonic Wars, developing a business in sovereign loans by the 1820s that far surpassed that of all competitors.

Nathan was fortunate to marry an accomplished woman from a leading Anglo-Jewish family, Hannah Barent Cohen. The education of their seven children was her domain, designed for them to become what Nathan never was: refined and sophisticated.

Nathan never lost his strong German accent, but at the time of his premature death, in Frankfurt, just a few days after the marriage of his eldest son, Lionel, he was described as an 'English gentleman.'

This image, showing him in younger years and embellished with a facsimile of his signature, was produced as a commemorative item the years after his death.

Nathan Mayer Rothschild (1777-1836), mezzotint after original by William Walker, 1837, in a veneered wood glazed frame, altogether 49 x 42 cms. RAL 000/668



Carl was born in Frankfurt on 24 April 1788 in his father's recently purchased house, the Grünes Schild. He was the fourth of Mayer Amschel Rothschild's sons, travelling extensively during the Napoleonic wars, acting as courier for the transfer of funds. In the early 1820s, Carl was dispatched to Naples to handle the family's business there, although he continued to visit Frankfurt for long periods. In Frankfurt he resided in a house at 31-33, Neue Mainzerstrasse. With his wife, Adelheid Herz, he played host to important political and society figures.

Carl formed the fifth Rothschild house at Naples under the name C M von Rothschild & figli, and under his guidance the firm arranged financing for the draining of the Tuscan marshes, public works in Sardinia and in support of the Papal States. After his death in Frankfurt on 10 March 1855, Carl was succeeded in the business by his son, Adolphe, while his sons Mayer Carl and Wilhelm Carl succeeded their uncle Amschel in Frankfurt. His daughter Charlotte married her English cousin, Lionel.

Carl's son Mayer Carl purchased the house at Untermainkai 15, a prime Frankfurt residential location. Known as the Rothschildpalais, it was chosen as the location for the city's Jewish Museum in the 1980s. Carl's son Wilhelm Carl was the last of the male Frankfurt Rothschilds; with his death in 1901 the Frankfurt bank closed. Carl's descendants were great benefactors to the city.

In this portrait, Carl is depicted in a black coat, white cravat and waistcoat, seated in red upholstered armchair with letter in left hand and to his side a mantelpiece with gilt frame of a painting or mirror on wall above. It is possible this portrait is one of the many copies made of a set of portraits of the five brothers painted by Moritz Daniel Oppenheim in 1836, shortly after Nathan's death. The originals are thought to be lost but several copies were known to have been made and distributed amongst the family. It has hung at New Court for many years, displayed alongside portraits of the Frankfurt brothers.

Portrait of Carl Mayer von Rothschild (1788-1855) after Moritz Daniel Oppenheim c.1836, oil on canvas work in a contemporary gilt composition frame with 'fishskin' ground, 58 x 50cm. NMR 182



Adelheid von Rothschild

Adelheid was the wife of Carl von Rothschild, the fourth of Mayer Amschel Rothschild's sons. The couple lived at 33 Neue Mainzer Strasse, Frankfurt, the house that Carl acquired in preparation for his marriage to Adelheid, a native of Hamburg, in 1818. Carl also built the G nthersburg Palais on the outskirts of Frankfurt. They married in the year that the Rothschilds issued their first major sovereign bond, to Prussia.

Carl's family raised some objections to the marriage on the grounds that Hamburg and Berlin families were not as orthodox as those in Frankfurt. Carl persisted, and wrote, "Well now, I have visited the Herz girl a few times. I find that she is the most suitable because she is acquainted with the ways of Frankfurt and with foreign ways."

Adelheid spent most of her married life in Naples, where Carl established a branch of the family business around 1820. The couple supported and established many charities in the city, and were generous hosts at their house, the Villa Pignatelli, on the Riviera di Chiaia.

Adelheid was the mother of Mayer Carl and Wilhelm Carl, who took over the running of the Frankfurt house after the death of their uncle Amschel in 1855, the same year in which their father died. Another son, Adolphe, ran the house in Naples for a few years after 1855, closing it in 1863. Her only daughter, Charlotte, married her English cousin, Nathan's son Lionel.

This picture was owned by Charlotte: it was in the family's country house at Gunnersbury, in west London. Along with many family portraits it was sent to the London business house, New Court, after Gunnersbury was sold in the 1920s.

Portrait of Adelheid von Rothschild n e Herz (1800-1853) by Karl Hartmann, 1851. NMR 405



James de
Rothschild

James was the youngest child of Mayer Amschel Rothschild. He was born in the Frankfurt Judengasse in 1792, only six years before his brother Nathan left to further the family business. From the age of 19, James was in Paris co-ordinating the purchase of specie and bullion for Nathan. Remaining in Paris James founded the Rothschild firm of de Rothschild Frères in 1812. The House funded many loans to European governments and was instrumental in the development of railways in France and the rest of Europe.

In 1824 James returned to Frankfurt to marry Betty, the daughter of his brother Salomon. Once settled into married life in Paris, the couple entertained on a grand scale at their city residence, the château de Boulogne and Ferrières. James became the trusted adviser of ministers and kings. Contemporaries remembered his quick wit and strong German accent, both shot through with the occasional sharp-tongued comment. Devoted to Jewish causes, charitable endeavours and his extended family, his domination of the firm ended with his death in 1868 just months after realising his life's ambition of owning a premier cru vineyard, which was renamed Château Lafite Rothschild. James is the great, great-grandfather of Alexandre.

This portrait depicts James as a young man wearing a blue coat, white cravat and waistcoat, and his orders, awarded for financial services, are clearly visible.

It is possible this is one of the many copies made of a set of portraits of the five brothers painted by Moritz Daniel Oppenheim in 1836, shortly after Nathan's death. The originals are thought to be lost but several copies were known to have been made and distributed amongst the family. This item was acquired by the Archive in 2011 and was known to have formerly been the property of Elie de Rothschild (1917-2007) a descendant of the sitter. To our knowledge, this is the first time this portrait has been exhibited publicly.

Portrait of James Mayer de Rothschild (1792-1868) after Moritz Daniel Oppenheim, oil on canvas work in a contemporary gilt composition frame, 59 x 50cm. RAL 000/2061/4



Louise,
Baroness
Mayer Carl von
Rothschild and
her daughter
Adèle

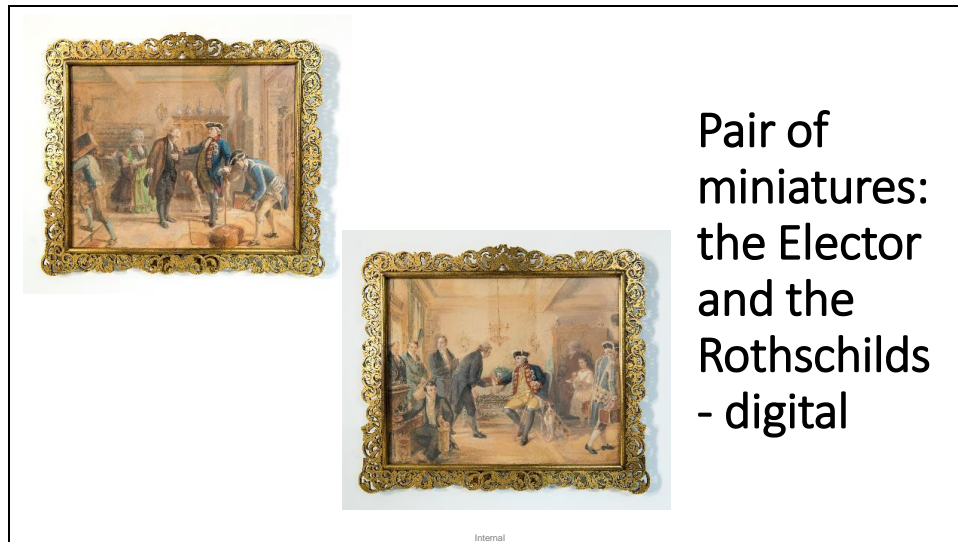
In a sense Louise is 'coming home': the youngest child of Nathan Rothschild of the London house married her Frankfurt cousin Mayer Carl von Rothschild in 1842 and set up home with him at Untermainkai, 15, the site of the Jewish Museum today.

At least three versions of this portrait by a favoured artist of the family survive. The portraits were commissioned to be circulated among family members and, in Louise's case, displayed in their homes in a 'Roberston, or rather Rothschild, gallery.'

Adèle was the eldest of the couple's seven children, all daughters. She married her French cousin, Salomon James de Rothschild, and settled with him in Paris in a magnificent property on the rue Berryer which she bequeathed to the French state. The Hôtel Baronne Salomon de Rothschild has been used for cultural and social purposes ever since.

Louise and her daughters left their mark on Frankfurt through the many charitable enterprises that they established. The house on Untermainkai became the city's first free public library after the death of Mayer Carl; the Carolinum dental hospital, now part of the university, is named after Mayer Carl; the Clementine Children's Hospital was established by Louise after the early death of her daughter in whose memory it is named.

Portrait of Louise, Baroness Mayer Carl von Rothschild (1820 – 1894) and her daughter Adèle (1843 - 1922) by Christina Robertson, c.1844, oil on canvas, 74 x 60 cm including frame. NMR 755



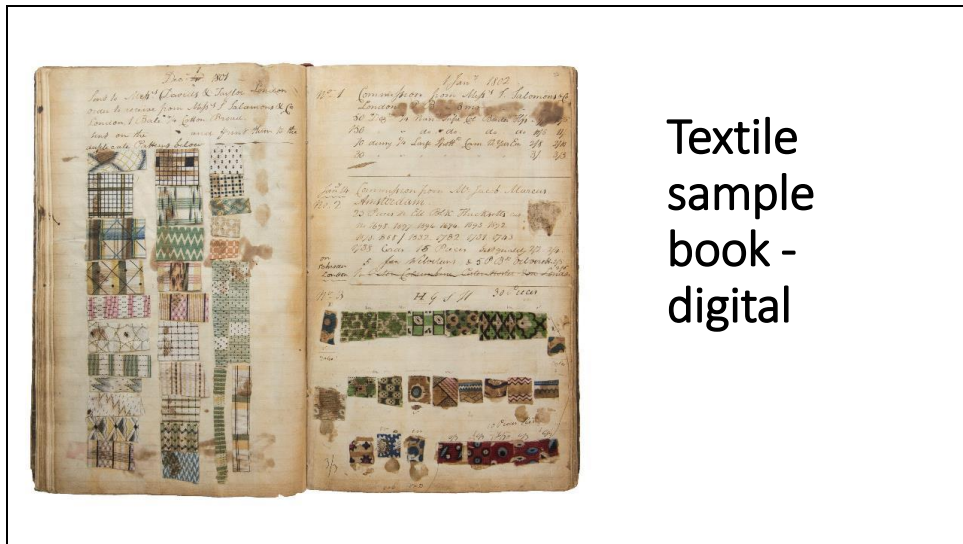
At the age of 20, Mayer Amschel Rothschild (1744-1812) established a business as a dealer in coins and bills, in Frankfurt's Judengasse. He won the patronage of the immensely wealthy Crown Prince Wilhelm I of Hesse (1743-1821), who had also earlier patronised his father. His coin business grew to include several princely patrons, and then expanded through the provision of financial services. In 1769, Mayer Amschel gained the title of 'Hoffaktor, managing the finances of Wilhelm I who became Wilhelm IX, Landgrave of Hesse-Kassel on the death of his father in 1785. In 1806, Napoleon invaded Hesse in response to Wilhelm IX's support for Prussia. On the advance of Napoleon's army, Wilhelm IX was forced to go into exile in the Duchy of Holstein. The dilemma of how to conceal his coffers from the occupying forces was solved by Carl Friedrich Buderus (1759-1819), his financial adviser, who recommended that all his stock be confided to the House of Rothschild because they were best placed to protect his funds, and he thus entrusted part of his vast fortune to Mayer Amschel Rothschild for safekeeping. Mayer turned to his son, Nathan, in London. Nathan invested £550,000 of Wilhelm's funds in British government securities and bullion. These investments proved extremely lucrative and, by the time Wilhelm returned from exile, had accrued considerable interest. The investments proved extremely lucrative, and the Rothschilds' reputation for trustworthiness and astute financial management was firmly established.

These miniatures were originally displayed in the vitrine in the second New Court building and have continued to be displayed in subsequent buildings. The original paintings are at Ascott, the home of Sir Evelyn de Rothschild. Another pair of miniatures are known to be in the Royal Collection of the UK, a gift of a member of the Rothschild family.

Moritz Daniel Oppenheim watercolours illustrating the traditional story of the founding of the Rothschild fortune. c.1850.

1. The Elector of Hesse entrusting Mayer Amschel Rothschild with his chests. It depicts the Elector and his servants in Mayer Amschel's home, where his wife, Gutle, and daughter, Henriette, are also present.

2. The return of the chests to the Elector of Hesse. It depicts the five sons of Mayer Amschel returning the chests to the Elector. Mayer Amschel's widow, Gutle, and their daughter, Henriette, are also present. RAL 000/2336



Textile sample book - digital

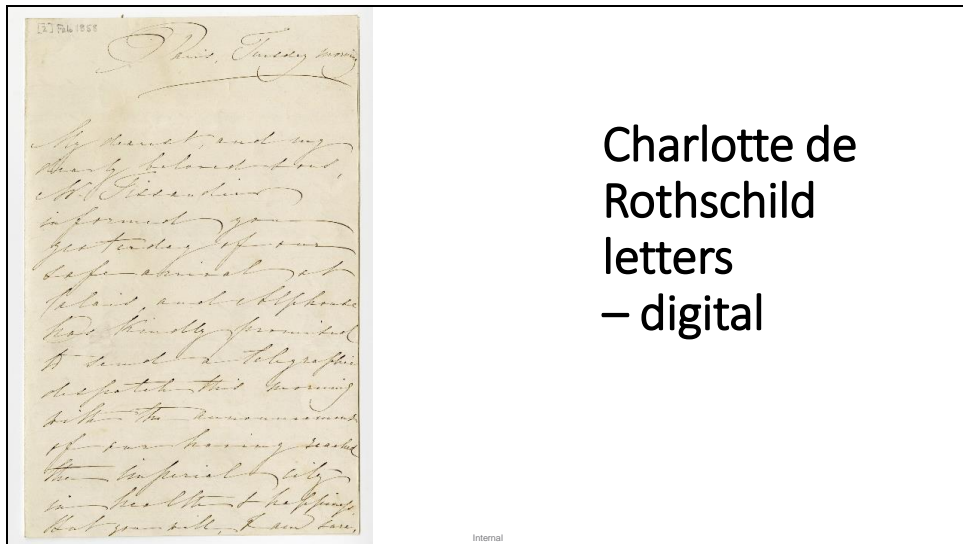
A single volume known as 'The Cotton Book', is a textile order book of Nathan Mayer Rothschild (1777-1836), June 1801-July 1804, containing samples of cloth pasted into a small volume, which served as a reference to clients orders from his early years in Manchester. The book records orders from textile manufacturers, mostly in the Glasgow and Paisley areas, and commissions for the supply of cloth, from his father in Frankfurt and a wide range of merchants in London, Amsterdam, Rotterdam, Paris, Lyon, Nancy, Metz, Hamburg, Leipzig, Strasbourg and Salzburg. Attached are nearly a thousand samples of cloth, covering the range of fashionable materials: muslins, muslinettes, quiltings, dimities, velveteens, sallampores, jacconets.

Nathan Mayer Rothschild acquired his first Manchester premises in 1799, having left Frankfurt the previous year. He lived in Manchester for a decade, revolutionising the burgeoning textile trade through his use of ready cash to buy up large quantities of materials and his reliance on a network of family and friends to ship Manchester goods throughout Europe. Nathan established Rothschild Brothers in 1799 as commission agents to coordinate the supply of British textiles to the continental market for his father's account. He built up an impressive reputation as a successful merchant operating on the principle of high turnover and modest profits, taking advantage of the opportunity to bypass the middlemen and purchasing textiles direct from the manufacturers.

Nathan probably registered as a merchant in London in 1804 and by 1810 N M Rothschild & Sons was established at New Court. When Nathan moved to London, the Manchester business was taken over by one of Nathan's clerks, Joseph Barber, and the company finally ceased trading under the Rothschild name in 1811.

The original item is rarely exhibited and has been digitised for a wider audience to experience.

'The Cotton Book', RAL 000/2337



Charlotte de Rothschild letters – digital

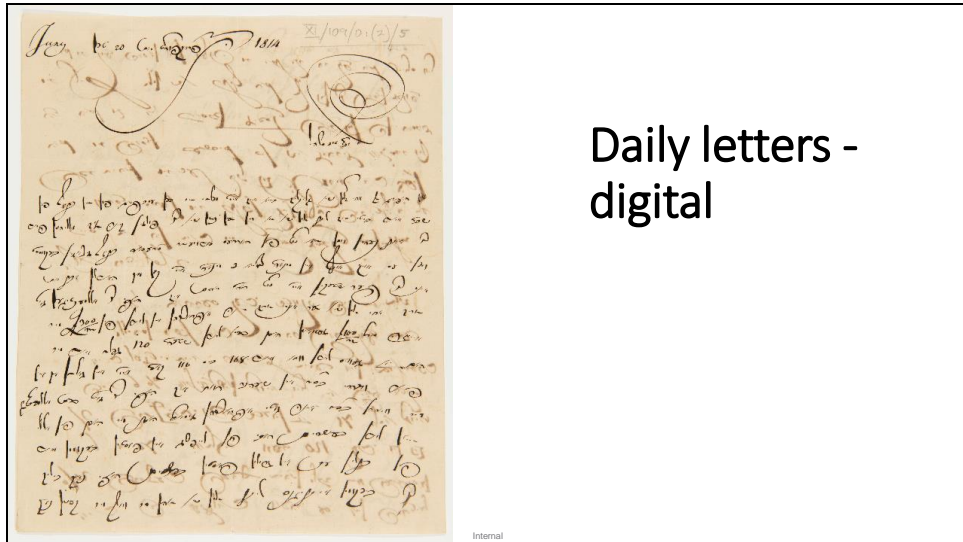
Charlotte de Rothschild was the sister of Mayer Carl and Wilhelm Carl, who led the Frankfurt business until its liquidation in 1901, on the death of the latter.

She was born in Frankfurt and married in the city in 1836, aged 17, to her English cousin Lionel. Within a month of their marriage Lionel had become senior partner in the London business with his brothers after the unexpected death of their father Nathan, who fell ill while attending the celebrations, never again leaving the city.

Charlotte excelled in the role allotted to her as a Rothschild wife and mother. She oversaw the education of her five children, helping them to fulfil their roles in turn; she hosted countless dinners and soirées, designed to bring together leading members of society from all walks of life; she engaged in educational and welfare activities, not just as a funder but as a practitioner. In so doing she helped raise the profile and enhance the good name of her family.

What marks out Charlotte from her sisters-in-law and cousins is the rich correspondence that she left behind. Just three of her letters have been selected by the Jewish Museum from hundreds of potential examples. Despite their intense focus on the minutiae of life, Charlotte's sharp intellect shines through. Reports of travel, family relationships, charities, social events, fashion, art, patronage, in short all aspects of the lives of the Rothschild family are conveyed in these letters to her son, Leopold. Their openness, their vivacity and insight bring the family to life.

Digital exhibit: examples of the letters of Charlotte, Baroness Lionel de Rothschild (1819-1884). RAL 000/84



Daily letters - digital

The letters between the five sons of Mayer Amschel Rothschild, cover (with some gaps) a huge historical timespan from, broadly, 1811 to 1868 and touch upon many major events in European history. The final phases of the Napoleonic Wars, the arrangement and financing of post-War Europe, the revolutionary years of 1830 and 1848 and the American Civil War are among the many significant moments which touched the Rothschild family and to which their letters bring new and important disclosures. The series of letters addressed to Nathan Mayer Rothschild (and his sons) by his four brothers in Paris, Frankfurt, Vienna and Naples, are seen as central to an understanding of Rothschilds' business in the nineteenth century and to the relationship of the brothers to the leading European financial and political figures of the period.

Among regular information on the European markets and family matters, new revelations, from highly informed and interested parties, are given on many of the major events of the period, the emergence of new national identities and the personalities of crowned heads and statesmen, aristocrats and bankers from virtually the whole of the European stage. Letters were exchanged among the brothers on an almost daily basis to ensure that the precise arrangements for mutual co-operation laid down in the partnership agreements between them were sustained and that the advantages of up-to-date market information were exploited to the full. The network of couriers maintained by the Rothschilds ensured swifter delivery of information than was available to almost anyone else in Europe.

The use of Judendeutsch (essentially, German words written in Hebrew script though with many idiosyncrasies) and the additional security of private code names, ensured that the sender could be forthright and unrestrained. For this reason, the letters are often far more revealing, both of the character of the writers and of those about whom they are writing, than comparable series of correspondence of the time. The Judendeutsch letters are scattered among some 142 boxes of correspondence in The Rothschild Archive in London, amounting to some 20,000 letters in all.



Rothschild hospitality – re-creation

When, in November 1821 the Imperial Austrian Chancellor, Metternich, received an invitation from Amschel Rothschild (1773-1855) "to take soup with him" at his house in Frankfurt, he little expected the magnificent banquet which awaited him. It was a clear token of the Rothschilds' ascent in the financial and social worlds.

Food was, in fact, to become both a love and an important weapon in the Rothschild business armoury. In 1826, James de Rothschild (1792-1868), similarly demonstrating his newly won position in Paris society, took on the great chef Antonin Carême, formerly employed by the Prince Regent, by Talleyrand and the Tsar of Russia. Lady Morgan, an Irish novelist, visited James in 1829 and was overwhelmed by the elegant modern simplicity of the meal - "no high-spiced sauces, no dark-brown gravies, no flavour of cayenne and allspice" but "distillations of the most delicate viands, extracted in silver dews, with chemical precision". Carême named a soup, 'Potage Lady Morgan', in her honour and several of his recipes bear the name Rothschild.

Magnificence and scale needed the best chefs and the best technology. Rothschild kitchens were among the finest and best equipped to be found. At Ferrières, the kitchens were detached from the main building to reduce the risk of fire - but were connected by an underground tunnel along which ran a small railway to carry the dishes on heated trays from kitchen to table.

In Frankfurt, Mayer Carl von Rothschild (1820-1886) was a discerning collector and by the time he died his collection was so vast it took up an entire house. A large part of this collection consisted of gold and silver plate made in Augsburg and Nuremberg in the 16th century of which there were more than 400 items. The collection included drinking vessels, jugs, cups representing women, birds and cherubim, as well as ewers and chalices. These items would have made spectacular centrepieces during formal dinners. During Mayer Carl's lifetime the collection was on display to the general public every Sunday. Today we have on display a selection of items on loan from the Rothschild & Co pantry, which continues the tradition of fine dining and hospitality in true Rothschild style.

Single dinner setting including wine and water glasses, silver flatware and wine decanter. 20th century. RAL 000/2588 & 000/2599.