

Introduction

Eric de Rothschild, Chairman of The Rothschild Archive Trust

During this year we have continued to welcome to our reading room in London many scholars from all over the world, some of them well-established in their field, others just beginning their careers. The diversity of their interests highlights the richness of our collections which have been built up over generations.

The archivists continue to promote the work of the Archive to special interest groups and to members of the staff of the bank. Colleagues from the National Railway Museum in York and the Natural History Museum in London and Tring visited the Archive to discuss collaborative projects which we hope will bear fruit in due course.

The *Review* demonstrates the diversity of work of the archivists and of visiting researchers. Articles by Victor Gray and Claire-Amandine Soulié show that the process of discovery and re-evaluation of our collections is an active part of our programme. Professor Tristan Platt explains how our documents can be used in conjunction with public records to offer fresh interpretations on trade processes. Anders Mikkelsen, who is working at the Archive on the Collaborative Doctoral Award Scheme of the Arts and Humanities Research Council, reports on the early stages of his research into the operation of the bond market in the nineteenth century. His research is supervised by Professor Richard Roberts of the Centre for Contemporary British History at King's College London, the Archive's partner in the scheme. Rachel Boak, a member of the curatorial staff of the Rothschild Collection at Waddesdon Manor, clearly demonstrates the success of the close working relationship that exists between the Archive and Waddesdon.

The collections continue to grow thanks to the gifts of members of the Rothschild family and the commitment of the Rothschild businesses to building the archives for the future. I thank them most warmly for their support. Particular recognition must be given to our staunch supporters, N M Rothschild & Sons, Rothschild & Cie Banque, les Domaines Barons de Rothschild (Lafite), la Fondation Maurice et Noémie de Rothschild and GFA Château Mouton.

This year, the archivists have been working hard to prepare for an exciting phase in the life of the Archive, as we move into the new premises of the London bank. This new building is the fourth to be occupied by the family on the St Swithin's Lane site into which Nathan Rothschild moved in 1809. The architect Rem Koolhaas has done a magnificent job in designing a landmark that the city and the family can be proud of, as well as multiplying by four times the square footage available. The Archive reading room has a prominent position in the entrance patio.

Finally I wish to record my thanks to the staff of the Archive for their invaluable contribution to the success of the Trust.

A selection of eighteenth-century mother-of-pearl buttons from Baroness Edmond de Rothschild's collection.

Waddesdon, The Rothschild Collection (The National Trust). Photography: Mike Fear © The National Trust, Waddesdon Manor