

# The Rothschild Archive Trust

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# Introduction

Emma Rothschild, Chairman of the Rothschild Archive Trust

OVER THE FOUR YEARS since the Rothschild Archive Trust was established, the Archive has become a European and a global resource. It has provided access to a remarkable group of young and established scholars, who have come from many different countries, and who have studied different activities of the Rothschilds and their associates, in almost all parts of the world. There have been historians of France and Australia and Brazil, historians of zoology and historians of the American Civil War, economic historians and historians of architecture, historians of financial instruments and historians of 19th-century philanthropy.

The development of the Rothschild Research Forum ([www.rothschildarchive.org](http://www.rothschildarchive.org)), which is described below (p.22), is an important stage in the extension of the Archive's work. The Archive has also established excellent working relations with the Roubaix Centre of the Archives Nationales, and with the Jüdisches Museum and the Stadt- und Universitätsbibliothek in Frankfurt. For the Trust, this continuing effort to make connections and extend access is an essential response to the confidence placed in us by the organizations and individuals who have been so generous in their donations to the Trust of papers, artefacts, and financial support.

The Archive's central concern is with what Professor Fritz Stern, in the remarkable Rothschild Archive Lecture which we are honoured to publish in this issue of the Review, describes as "the myriad connections within a culture and among cultures." The economic and financial culture of the Rothschild family has been international, for as long as the historical record exists. But the Rothschild archives, as Professor Stern also observes, "show the interwovenness of life in many countries." They show the interwovenness, too, of family life and business life, of economic culture and the 'high' culture of painting, poetry, and philosophy. One of the most difficult challenges for historians, in a period of increasingly narrow specialization, is to convey the extent to which political history and financial history, French history and German history and Atlantic history, the history of art and the history of science were in the past interwoven, even in the 19th and early 20th centuries. The Rothschild Archive is one of the centres of research where these diverse histories, and these diverse, connected pasts are collected in one location. Our aspiration is, in Professor Stern's words, to be "magnificently alert." We are reasonably confident, at least, that we will continue to be the "opposite of anything parochial."

# Review of the year's work

Victor Gray, Director of The Rothschild Archive



*above*  
A commemorative medal for Béatrice Ephrussi (*née* de Rothschild), 1864-1934, issued by the Institut de France, the Académie des Beaux-Arts and the Fondation Ephrussi de Rothschild

*below*  
A cheque for one million Prussian thalers, part of the reparation payment by France to Germany in 1871

## Acquisitions

AFTER A YEAR DOMINATED by the arrival of large and significant collections – the papers of the Austrian Rothschilds returned from Moscow, papers of the French family from Château Lafite – it is perhaps no disadvantage to the process of listing and assimilating that this has been a year of smaller, though no less welcome acquisitions.

Since the destruction, in 1901, of the business papers of the Frankfurt Rothschilds following the closure of M.A. von Rothschild und Söhne, it has been the case that knowledge of the life and work of that branch of the family has been limited in comparison with their English and French cousins. German papers are therefore always much welcomed and the gift, this year, through the kindness of Baronin Nadine von Mauthner, daughter of Baron Albert von Goldschmidt-Rothschild, of a group of photographs and genealogical papers, has been a useful step in rebuilding our knowledge. By chance, some of the individuals featured in these papers are also present in another gift, a group photograph taken in 1922 in the Grüneburg in Frankfurt, the home of Hannah Mathilde, widow of Wilhelm Carl von Rothschild, on the occasion of her 90th birthday.

An equally generous gesture has been the deposit in the Archive by Mr Peter Schwabach, as descendant of the last proprietor of the Berlin bank of S. Bleichröder,





of a historically important document. Bleichröders acted as the Rothschilds' agent in Berlin and the two banks were both involved in arrangements for the payment of the reparations demanded of France by Germany at the end of the Franco-Prussian War in 1871. The document now in the Archive is a cheque for one million Prussian thalers made by the City of Paris through de Rothschild Frères to S. Bleichröder and destined for the coffers of the German government. This was but the first part of the sum due. France was ultimately to pay almost 5,000 million francs.

A high proportion of the enquiries received in the Archive relate to images and there have been some significant additions this year to the collection – which now totals almost four thousand. The Burial Society of the United Synagogue has this year made a generous donation to the Archive of a portrait in oils by Herbert Horwitz of Leopold de Rothschild (1845-1917), painted during his Presidency of the United Synagogue, from 1915-1917.

One of the most charming of Rothschild family groups is the watercolour by Richard Dighton of the family gathered for the wedding in 1826 of Anselm von Rothschild of Frankfurt to Charlotte, the daughter of Nathan Mayer. The acquisition of a pencil sketch of Nathan by Dighton, clearly made in preparation for the group, gives yet another variation to the huge and remarkably diverse range of images of the founder of the English branch. Another new piece, a cartoon of Amschel Rothschild facing insurgents in Frankfurt at the height of the 1848 disturbances (*Barrikaten-Szene am 18 September*) is one of a number of Rothschild-related items arising from the 'Year of Revolution', including pamphlets, broadsides and cartoons, which have lately been added to the collection.

Among other images acquired is a highly unusual miniature by L. Gilbert, dated 1833, of a figure in the costume of an Austrian Imperial messenger, carrying a letter addressed to 'Monsieur de Rothschild à Paris'. James de Rothschild had become Austrian Consul-General in Paris in 1821 and this image is a reminder of the traffic of commercial and political correspondence which must have been carried regularly between Vienna and the rue Laffitte.

Group photograph,  
at the Grüneburg,  
Frankfurt, the home of  
Hannah Mathilde,  
widow of Wilhelm Carl  
von Rothschild, 1922  
(The gift of Dame  
Miriam Rothschild)

## The Library

The building of a comprehensive library of books, pamphlets and periodicals relating to Rothschild subjects continues to be an objective. This year there have been a number of rare and unusual additions. Worthy of particular mention are the privately printed *Poèmes* by Philippe de Rothschild, published in a limited edition in Paris by Henri Javal in two volumes, 1950 and 1954, the first, *A l'aube d'une guerre*, illustrated by Mario Avati, leading French revivalist of the mezzotint, and the second, *Eclos à l'aube*, by Georges Arnulf.

*A manual of Judaism detailed in conversation between a rabbi and his pupil; being an introduction into the knowledge of the principles of the Jewish faith for the use of the juvenile members of that persuasion*, by Joshua Van Oven (1766-1838) was printed by Wertheimer in 1835 for sale at the Jews' Free School. It carries a full-page dedication to Mr and Mrs de (Nathan and Hannah) Rothschild. Van Oven, Physician to the Great Synagogue, had put forward detailed proposals for the development of the care of the Jewish poor and the Rothschilds had both given substantial and generous support to the school throughout their London years.

*Les Rothschild, une famille de financiers juifs au XIX siècle* by Edouard Demachy, published in Paris in 1896, appeared at the height of the wave of anti-Semitism which followed the Dreyfus affair and is an addition to the small collection of vituperative pamphlets and cartoons of the period collected together in the Archive.

*Pages détachées du cahier d'une jeune fille*, by Baroness Laura-Thérèse de Rothschild (1847-1931) was published by her in Paris in 1891 and reprinted, probably by her son Henri, in 1925. It is dedicated and addressed to her children and contains the text of a number of essays written by her at the age of eighteen, all of them reflecting the extreme piety and highly developed sense of morality which left a mark (and not always for the good) on the minds of her children.

The project to complete and publish a bibliography of publications by members of the Rothschild family is now well advanced and publication is expected during 2004. So far, a total of almost a thousand titles have been collected and described.

## Research Projects

Work has begun this year on the transcription of the census returns for the Rothschild households both in London and in 'Rothschildshire', the area of Buckinghamshire and west Hertfordshire where the Rothschilds built or acquired country houses during the nineteenth century. The work is intended to give a better idea of the size and structure of the households employed in the houses. The results will complement employment records where they are held and should give a new perspective on the relationship between the houses and the communities in which they were set. Work will be completed during 2003/4 and the results will be published on the Rothschild Research Forum.

Two major listing projects have been completed during the year. A sampling of the papers of August Belmont, the Rothschild agent in New York, has focused on the year 1861, the first year of the Civil War. The results form the basis of an article by Elaine Penn on page 25 of this *Review*.

Papers of the French Rothschild family, received in several consignments over recent years from Château Lafite have, during the year, been fully catalogued into a single comprehensive database. This catalogue is now accessible in both French and English.

The long-running project for the transcription, translation and eventual publication of the 20,000 Judendeutsch letters between the five Rothschild brothers from 1814 to 1868 is now

*opposite*

Miniature by L. Gilbert  
of an Austrian Imperial  
messenger carrying  
a letter addressed to  
'Monsieur de Rothschild  
à Paris', 1833





dealing with the period from 1826 to 1831. Meanwhile, a research assistant has now been engaged to explore the background to the correspondence for the period 1814-1818, which together form the projected first block of letters for Internet publication. The work will focus on identifying the individuals referred to in the letters and on setting the details recorded in them within the context of unfolding historical events. It is hoped that publication on the web will follow early in 2004.

The project achieved public profile in May 2003 with the publication of an article in *The Times* on the work of Mordechai Zucker, who is undertaking the transcription of the very difficult and idiosyncratic Judendeutsch. The appearance of the article gave rise to the broadcasting of a feature on the project on the TV programme *UK Today*, which is transmitted internationally.

A major new project on the history of Rothschild philanthropic and charitable activities across Europe will begin in 2004. An Academic Advisory Committee has now been appointed to oversee the project. It comprises Professor Peter Pulzer of All Souls, Oxford, Professor David Cesarani of the University of Southampton, Dr. Peter Mandler of Gonville & Caius, Cambridge and Dr. Rainer Liedtke of the University of Giessen.

## The Rothschild Archive and the Internet

The year has seen preparatory work for the launch of the Rothschild Research Forum, a new area of the Rothschild Archive website ( [www.rothschildarchive.org](http://www.rothschildarchive.org) ) which will be directed at those who have a current, ongoing research commitment to subjects related to Rothschild history. The Forum was launched in May 2003 and its progress, intention and content are described by Melanie Aspey on page 22 of the *Review*. Meanwhile, the Archive has affirmed its place in the overall network of British archives by taking part in the on-line catalogue project Access to Archives (A2A) which so far brings together the catalogues of the collections of some 300 archives in England, all of which can be simultaneously searched for content on any specific subject. The content of the *Guide to the Collections of The Rothschild Archive* has now been added to A2A, making them accessible, alongside several million other catalogue entries, to researchers across a whole range of subjects.

Anyone currently searching the name Rothschild on A2A ([www.A2A.pro.gov.uk](http://www.A2A.pro.gov.uk)) will find not only the entries in the *Guide* but a further 178 occurrences from 48 different archives as diverse as the Institute of Mechanical Engineers and the Shakespeare Birthplace Trust. The Rothschild Archive is, proudly, the first independent business archive to participate in the scheme.

## Research in the Archive

The number of research visits to the Archive has grown by some 40% during the year.

Among research focused on economic and political history during the year were projects looking at Rothschild influence in Russia, at the Russian pogroms, Brazilian and Argentinian loans from 1880 to 1913, Rothschilds and the American Civil War, Jewish business networks in Italy and the Rothschilds in Naples, British capital in Japan, Rothschild and Mexico from 1875 to 1890, American mining engineers in the Witwatersrand and Rothschild and Rio Tinto.

Research looking at the artistic engagements of the family embraced, among other themes, the English Rothschilds as collectors of art, Alfred de Rothschild's collections, Anglo-Jewish patronage of music in the 19th century and collections looted by the Nazis.

The Rothschild Archive provided materials for projects looking at socio-historical projects, including Belgian refugees in the Jews' Temporary Shelter in London during the First World War, Jewish involvement in that war and the philanthropic activities of the French Rothschilds.

Biographical research touched upon Baron Henri de Rothschild, Charlotte and Lionel de Rothschild, Moses Montefiore, the sons of Nathan Mayer Rothschild and Joseph Paxton.



## Research links

A continuing objective for the Archive is the development of our knowledge and understanding of the history of the Rothschild family and their businesses in France. During the year, Elaine Penn spent some time in the Centre des Archives du Monde du Travail (CAMT) in Roubaix familiarising herself with the archives of de Rothschild Frères which are held there. There is a firm intention to work more closely with CAMT in the future to look at the relationships between collections there and in London. One project now being investigated is the staging of a conference to explore themes common to the two archives.

Through the good offices of Professor François Crouzet of the Université de Paris-Sorbonne, an article by him describing the contents and services of The Rothschild Archive has now been published in the *Newsletter* of the Association Française des Historiens Economiques.

Developing contacts with the staff of Waddesdon Manor in Buckinghamshire have led to a growing understanding of common issues and specialisms, leading, in particular, to partnership on the building of the Rothschild Research Forum (see page 22) for the benefit of those studying the Rothschild art collections through Waddesdon and for others working in the Archive on other fields of Rothschild history. Contacts with and proposals for collaboration have this year been explored with the Wiener Library in London, RAF Halton (based in a former Rothschild mansion in Buckinghamshire), the Jews' Free School and the Jewish Museum Frankfurt.

Among lectures delivered by members of the staff of the Archive during the year were presentations to the Friends of Gunnersbury Park and Museum; the Conference of the European Association for Jewish Studies in Amsterdam; the European Association for Banking History and the Jewish Association of Cultural Societies.

Watercolour by R. Dighton of the Rothschild family at the wedding of Anselm and Charlotte, 1826, with original sketch for the head of Nathan Mayer (3rd from the right), *below*



# The historian and his debts

The fourth Rothschild Archive Lecture, delivered by Fritz Stern,  
University Professor Emeritus, Columbia University, New York, 28 May 2003



*opposite*  
“A great presence  
in Europe”:  
the Rothschild  
family arms, granted  
by the Emperor  
of Austria

ONE OF THE GREAT 19TH-CENTURY HISTORIANS, Theodor Mommsen, wrote: “The history of the House of Rothschild is of greater importance for world history than the domestic history of the State of Saxony; and is it a matter of indifference that it is the history of a German Jew?” You see the mark of a great historian: summing up in one sentence the key aspects – world history and German Jewry. By the early 19th century, the House of Rothschild was a great presence in Europe, a presence that had at its core financial power and intelligence, transcending every border, with a unique place in the world of art and social style as well. The dynasty had its origins in the ghetto of Frankfurt but flourished most especially in Paris and London, a tribute to the more congenial, more promising climate in England and in France. The Rothschild dynasty signalled the beginning of a new era in world history.

The thought of talking in an archive made me reflect on the place of archives in the historian’s life: how much we historians owe to archives, even those who never enter one. The thought of that first debt – the historian’s debt to archives – led me by easy association to consider all our other collective debts, the ones we historians tend to take for granted, the ones that don’t have to be repaid, because our benefactors are beyond reach. We should remember them and try to make sure that future historians may benefit from the same benign conditions. I don’t believe that is necessarily certain. As a child I escaped National Socialism and all my life I thought the world would get better and by and large it tended to. But that hope has grown dimmer in recent years. Historians are probably conscious more of the demands put on them than of the opportunities afforded them. I don’t mean to minimise these demands, or the sacrifices and the risks that any creative work entails. I appreciate Clio’s exacting standards as set by the great historians who have come before us.

It is not surprising that we are more conscious of our labours and hardships than of the conditions that allow us to work in the first place. We remember the countless days and years spent in anguished composition. We remember Williams James’ proud boast, “I have to forge every sentence in the teeth of irreducible and stubborn facts.” I won’t speculate on our motives as historians or on our complicated psyches, but I want to recall all that is potentially put at our disposal, partly for prudential reasons that I have already mentioned; we may take for granted what we are given but it might at some later time be restricted or placed in jeopardy. Perhaps we should lament our deficiencies less and recognise our benefits more, and we should not slight what we owe to our culture, to institutions and to individuals.

I use the term ‘debt’ somewhat mischievously, especially, I suppose, in the surroundings of a great bank. Ours are debts that do not need to be repaid, they can not be repaid, they are, as the Preface to the Authorised Version of the Bible has it, ‘a debt of special remembrance and thankfulness’. The debts I talk about are ideal debts (an unusual category) except in the sense that our work should justify the confidence bestowed on us.

We may not realise the full extent of these debts, despite or perhaps because some time in the last century it became obligatory for most historians to add ‘acknowledgments’ to their

completed work, containing thanks to colleagues and institutions as well as to long-suffering spouses, to neglected children and to ever faithful dogs and cats. Having done that, most of us don't tarry over these debts, as gratitude is often pushed aside by anxiety over the work's reception. This, however, is a good occasion to reckon with our multiple gifts and dependencies.

It has been observed that in recent years some of our best historians seem to have become concerned more with potential profits than with virtual debts, eager for assurance in the form of the extravagant advances that ubiquitous agents ever so selflessly negotiate for them. Yet it is possible that Clio casts a sceptical eye on Mammonite devotion. I am not arguing against ambition and reward – anything to whip us to work. In 1782, Gibbon wrote to his stepmother, “My private life is a gentle and not displeasing continuation of my old labours and I am again involved, as I shall be for some years, in the decline and fall of the Roman Empire. Some fame, some profit, some assurance of daily amusement encourages me to persist.”

(It is the daily amusement that I envy.) I probably have an old-fashioned preference for Macaulay's celebrated ambition that his book should “for a few days supersede the last fashionable novel on the tables of young ladies”. He also hoped that his work would be put next to Thucydides, whom he thought the greatest of all. Quite a trick to try to attain Thucydides' level and please the ladies. Literary and pecuniary ambitions were one and the same for him; as a 28-year old he sketched ‘imaginary models’ for historians, adding, “a historian such as we have been attempting to describe, would indeed be an intellectual prodigy”. But even intellectual prodigies, to say nothing of ordinary workaday chaps, have needs and bear debts.

The greatest gift – but again not necessarily a gift in perpetuity – is the culture's recognition that there is an essential value in remembering the past. The centrality of secular history is of recent origin, part of the heritage we associate with the Enlightenment, that disposition of spirit that Emma Rothschild has so wonderfully captured as “a condition of the human mind, undepressed and unneglected” – the very words evoke nostalgia. By and large, in what we used to call the western world, we historians pursue the study of the past in a rigorous and scholarly fashion, aware that our moral engagement or presuppositions are likely to fortify or weaken the integrity of our craft. We are largely free of the most noxious forms of censorship and governmental intimidation (most cultures do not respect the right to that freedom). History by ideological dictate, by Marxism-Leninism or Germanic racism, once was rampant and has been overcome. But insidious pressures remain. Only in liberal societies do the words of the great F.W. Maitland apply: “an orthodox history seems to me a contradiction in terms”.

The pressure to rewrite the past, often a commendable and necessary task, may also encourage doctrinaire conformity or hegemonial striving. As the fine liberal American historian C. Vann Woodward warned when he called for a sense of irony in history: “the demagoguery, the cant and the charlatany of historians in the service of a fashionable cause can at times rival that of politicians”. In all societies passions and interests threaten to distort history, but in liberal societies such lapses are capable of correction and some approximation of the truth is demanded. We insist on evidence. If we fail, the fault is ours, not that of a commissar. Government intimidation and restrictive modes nonetheless pervade many societies. We are endangered by what John Stuart Mill called the ‘tyranny of the majority’. There are such things, even in free societies, as closed minds. I would remind you simply of historiography since 1945 in Japan,



which has not been able to deal with its past or, conversely, of the courage of young Israeli historians, writing of their country's origins and founding, some even nostalgic for Mandate days, but debunking all sorts of myths. That is a rare achievement. The past is always in danger of being bent to present-day commands of fashion. George Orwell knew that better than most when he invented the party's motto: "He who controls the present controls the past, and who controls the past controls the future".

The past is largely gone and it must be reconstructed, reimagined. Hence authentic texts and access to them are the elemental subsistence of historians. Without access to archival records, we flounder in uncertainty and myth and legend hold sway. Our efforts to approximate a truth about the past are difficult enough, but to be denied access to records or to face excessive secrecy and restriction on archives, especially for political reasons, is a crippling injury. I fear, that at least in the United States, the present tendency is to greater restrictiveness.

I mention these obvious points because the respect accorded history and the character of historical work are always in flux. In our present globalising circumstances, western historiography faces the need to understand the past of other cultures, whose views on the place of history and about preservation of records may be and probably are quite different from our own. So our reach needs to be greater than ever, while our grasp of traditional historical fields has become so narrow, so specialised, that our work often slights context and complexity. And history is also no longer restricted to print. History at the speed of television or film is usually history purged of complexity, yet history is drama – Shakespeare's, not Spielberg's. I am not arguing that written history should have a monopoly over the past, but it too needs to attract the attention of young ladies and also of ageing politicians, who increasingly try to justify questionable policies by making false or ignorant historical analogies.

Our first and greatest debt then is to the liberal spirit embodied in law and custom that allows for a more or less unfettered enquiry into the past. Only a liberal society will allow us to be free of prescribed orthodoxy or falsehood, will allow us to be free to make and correct our own idiosyncratic mistakes. I say all this out of concern that liberality in the age of fear and exploited fear is itself endangered. But our first tangible debt is to those associations and individuals who collected and preserved their records and made them available to persons with a legitimate interest in them. Archives are the fundament of our scholarship and even those who have never inhaled the musty air of old papers, who have never had the thrill of coming upon an astonishing original document, draw on the work of others who have laboured in archives and have benefited from the meticulous care of archivists.

The archive is the place where the historian lives simultaneously in the present and in the past. A hundred and eighty years ago, the Prussian historian Leopold von Ranke began to fashion the modern style of historical writing on his discovery of the State Archives of the Republic of Venice. Ranke has been much misunderstood and I should add that not all of his fifty-four volumes, written without the help of a computer, are based on extensive archival work, but all are marked by superb style.

Archives have an alluring charm that is hard to capture. They are the locale of authenticity, a tangible, physical representation of the past. A fine contemporary historian has written that "her one love affair that has continued without complication was with the archives". Another has said: "I first heard the voices of the dead in a poorly heated archive at the mouth of the Loire. These were voices that had remained mute until I rediscovered them and could give them life again through my own writing. This has inspired my work ever since." Many of us remember the often quite primitive rooms, themselves residues of some past, where we found and worked on the records of the past. We remember the exhaustion and exhilaration of going through stacks of ancient papers, often covered in forbidding handwriting. We remember all manner of discomfort.



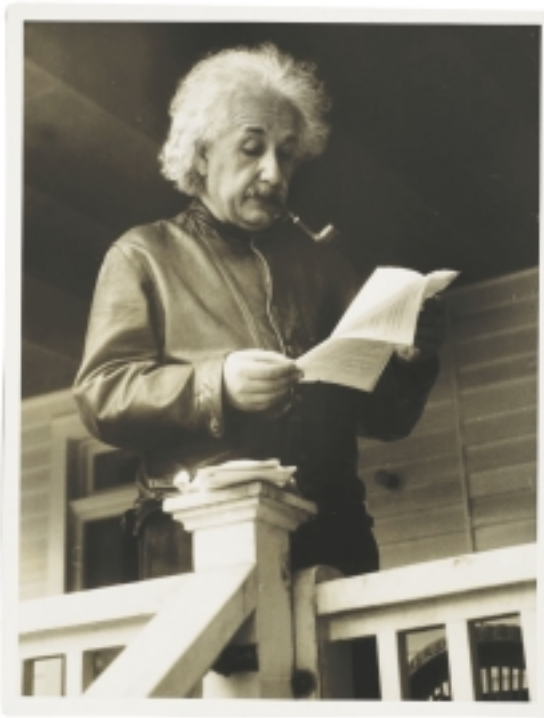
In the old days, before copying machines and sophisticated small cameras, one could only take notes and I remember relying on a four-colour pencil, using the different colours to signify an actual quotation, a paraphrase, a sudden insight to be thought about later, another source or book that needed to be consulted. Thrill and discomfort hedge an archive. The lucky discovery or more often a first intimation of some possible meaning: all that is forever memorable, even though the yield is often lamentably low.

Archives are treasure troves, but they can also be treacherous traps for historians. Treasure troves because they do contain genuine records of at least part of the past. Traps because they are such fun and allow for legitimate avoidance of real work, that is to say of writing. Archives supply diverse facts, presumably genuine ones, but facts as facts are dumb. They give hints that must be explored. Our task is to endow facts with meaning, with context, with life. And the archive is a trap because of the temptation to stay in them and to build only on facts. Put differently, archival finds are like presumptive findings of gold or oil which need to be extracted and refined. There is always the professional risk of empty veins or dry holes. But archives remain an Ur-text for the recovery of the past, almost always necessary and never sufficient. It is to weave the findings there into a comprehensible narrative, to understand the myriad connections among disparate events that is our job. For that we need help of a different kind. Great interpretive works can be written without archival research but they themselves rely obviously on the earlier literature which was grounded in archival work.

Some archives are valuable depositories, conserving and conservative. Others, and they of course are the most valuable ones, continue to be acquisitive, magnificently alert to what can be and should be added to them. I know this is superbly true of The Rothschild Archive; it is magnificently alive. It is true of the other archive I know well, which is the Albert Einstein Archives, now located, according to Einstein's last will, in Jerusalem.

I first came upon the Einstein archive in 1969 when it was housed, unsorted, in very old green filing cabinets in the attic (I seem to have a particular preference for attics) of the

“The archive is the place where the historian lives simultaneously in the present and the past.”  
The Reading Room of  
The Rothschild Archive



Albert Einstein:  
photograph from the  
collection of the  
Albert Einstein  
Archives at the  
Hebrew University  
of Jerusalem

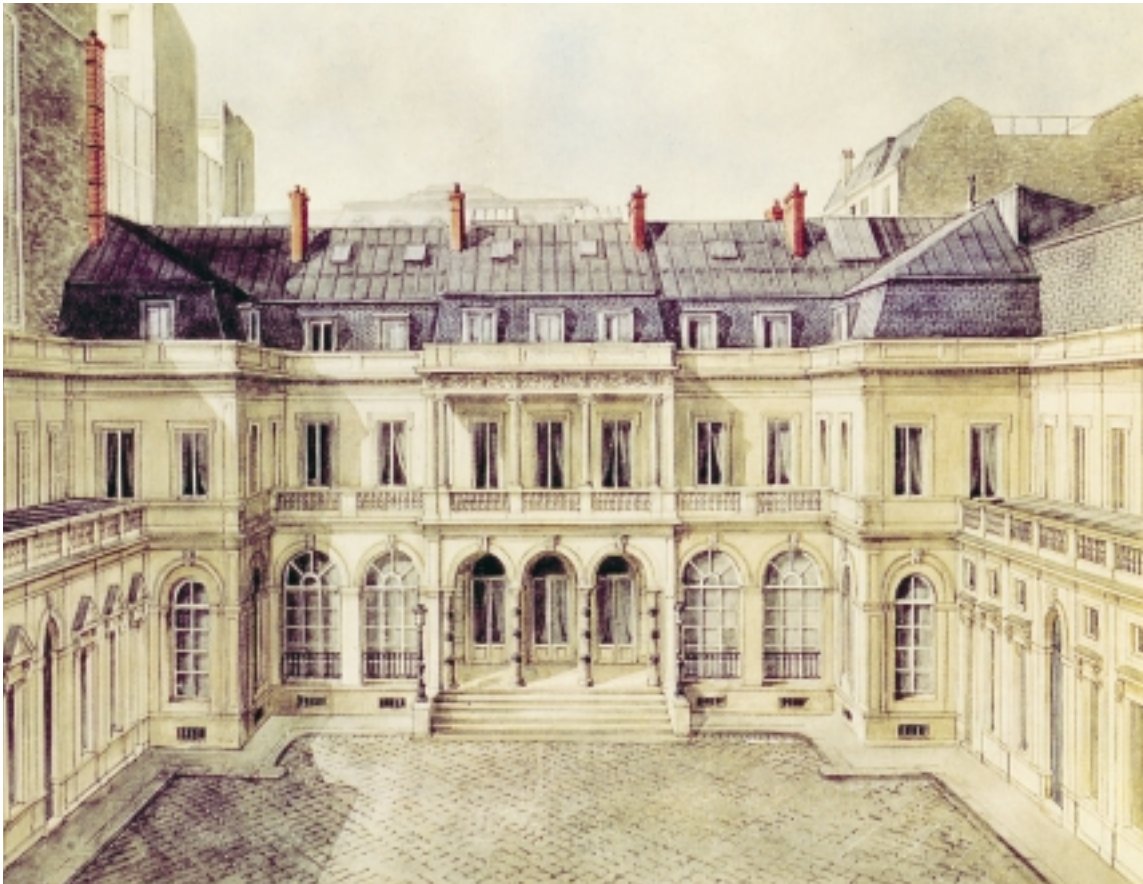
Institute for Advanced Study in Princeton. Then, in the mid-1970s, I read in that archive Einstein's unpublished and at the time largely unknown correspondence – correspondence that included his observations on political matters, as well as on Zionism, Palestine and other important matters. I had started hesitantly on a lecture on Einstein's Germany, with a conventional view of Einstein as a benign and kindly, saintly person, and I remember the surprise, having found two letters written to friends which had an extraordinarily wounding element to them, coming across a third instance and thinking this benign person did know how to wound people with intuitive precision. He didn't do it often, but, having suddenly come across this, I had to question and rethink my assumptions about the man. It did not change my admiration in any way; it complicated the story.

It is odd to think that Einstein exemplifies in his personality the same cosmopolitan, international character that defines the House of Rothschild. He was less rooted, though, and he could joke about his multiple loyalties. In 1919, when fame first engulfed him, he wrote to *The Times* of London, "Here is yet another application of the principle of relativity for the delectation of the reader: today, I am described in Germany as a German *savant* and in England as a Swiss Jew. Should it ever be my fate to be represented as a *bête noir* I should on the contrary become a Swiss Jew for the Germans and a German *savant* for the English".

The Einstein archives are the principal basis for the *Collected Papers of Albert Einstein*, one of the great publishing ventures of our time, with which I have been associated for some twenty years. Here are collected and edited papers of a solitary genius to whom this world fame came – at a time, I would insist, when the old bearers of fame had been weakened, almost destroyed, corrupted, bankrupted by the Great War. This scientist, who is now considered to be second only to Newton, began to have a worldwide reputation, on a scale unknown for a scientist before then. And he occasionally put that reputation, that fame, to the service of political and social purposes, in defence of the underdog, on behalf of what one might call the twentieth-century version of Enlightenment hopes for peace and justice.

Both the Einstein papers – and they include, I think, 40,000 manuscripts and papers – and the Rothschild archives show the interwovenness of life in many countries, life both sustained and affronted in those countries. The Kaiser's police shadowed Einstein, National Socialism made him a non-person and the FBI thought him a Communist and kept him under surveillance. That was his life.

Let me go back further. My own archival experience began in Paris in the archives of de Rothschild Frères in the rue Laffitte, where David Landes and I found business correspondence that became the basis for a book that I ended up writing about what I suppose could be called a Rothschild agent with considerable airs, Gerson Bleichröder, and Bismarck, Prussia's pre-eminent statesman of the 19th century. The business letters that we found in the attic in the rue Laffitte were just that: business letters. They occasionally had political notes attached to them as well, and those were the things that particularly interested me. As one who does not consider himself an economic historian, I was wondering, in my first few



days among the Rothschild papers, what I was doing there but, on the second or third day, among the thousands of bills of exchange, I found one from de Rothschild Frères to Bleichröder signed Cosima von Bülow (née Liszt) later to be Richard Wagner's mistress, even wife. Then I felt at home, since she was one of my cherished dislikes of the 19th century, probably one of the most loathsome women of that century, with a vigorous anti-Semitism. I thought it interesting that even she had trekked to the rue Laffitte.

Baron James was Bleichröder's lodestar, and for me he was an emblematic figure of this new world, perhaps *the* emblematic figure on the continent and seen as such not only by the political financial world, but by the poets and novelists, by Heine, Stendhal, Balzac. Baron James was a model for the rising world of bourgeois wealth and power. I came to think of him as being like the figure of Louis XIV as depicted in *The Charterhouse of Parma*, the ever-present, distant model.

If The Rothschild Archive in London had existed when I was working on Rothschild, Bleichröder and Bismarck, my book would have been hugely improved and vastly delayed. At some point you need to be able to stop, which is very hard to do. I found, as all historians do, that one archive leads to another. One day, I went from the rue Laffitte to the Quai d'Orsay, simply on a hunch - based partly on what I had found in the Rothschild papers and then in the Bleichröder Archive - that Bleichröder seemed to have been particularly close to one French Ambassador, the Comte de St Vallier (1878-1882). The Quai d'Orsay had published, at the end of the 1920s, the *Documents Diplomatiques Français 1871-1900*, including the reports of the French Ambassadors in Berlin. In their archive I asked, among

The offices of de Rothschild Frères in the rue Laffitte, Paris, which housed the archives until the 1970s



those gorgeously bound leather folios, for the ones having to do with St Vallier. I had no reason to think or expect that I would find anything, but I discovered that although the French had published very faithfully everything that St Vallier had written about foreign policy, all the reports he had written after his many intimate conversations with Bismarck about domestic policy had been omitted from the published texts. So it was that I came across one of those great undiscovered sources. It was a hunch that paid off, a great surprise and a tremendous revelation, because Bismarck actually unbuttoned himself to the French Ambassador, thinking, quite properly as the case shows, that he could count on the man's discretion.

I also needed access to Otto von Bismarck's private archives. I gathered respectable introductions to the grandson, Prince Otto von Bismarck, but to no avail. It is a long story which I will compress. It was only in 1961 that I gained access. A disloyal secretary somewhat indiscreetly explained to me that Bismarck had no intention of granting access, that he hated historians and feared them as potential denigrators. He did not care to know about his grandfather's financial records, he did not want me to look at them. The notion that the Iron Chancellor should have had an abiding interest in money for political and personal reasons and had a Jewish banker who served that interest, if at all true, was certainly not for public consumption. I finally gained access with what I can only call 'borrowed chutzpah', borrowed because it was David Landes who made the suggestion: "If you finally do get to see him" he advised me, "you only have a few minutes. You should start off by saying that you are writing a book on Bleichröder and Bismarck, that you have studied in the Quai d'Orsay and in the Banque Rothschild in Paris. Mention the other archives that you have been to, and add that you would regret having to say in a book which will appear in English and German simultaneously that the only archive that was closed to you was the Bismarck archive." Faced with that weapon, the Prince replied, "Who said it was closed to you? We must talk about modalities." We did. I was living in Paris at the time and he had delayed so long that it would have been hard for me to go to the princely estate near Hamburg. On the spur of the moment, I suggested using the diplomatic pouch of the American Embassy in Bonn to convey the papers to the American Embassy in Paris. Prince Bismarck was impressed by this possibility and he agreed. I had to rush to the American Embassy in Bonn and explain to a colleague: please would they accept the papers and send them by diplomatic pouch, etc.

That was one occasion. There was another time when I had to see the Prince five years later because in the meantime I had found out that there was another archive, separately kept, of nothing but Bleichröder material. Again I needed all sorts of means to get in. He said, when I met him, "You know you are always welcome, you don't need these introductions, but of course, I am very sorry there's nothing here, you won't find anything." But I knew exactly where to look, what barn, what attic and so on. So I asked him, "If I do find something, may I take it with me overnight to the hotel?" He agreed and the next morning reluctantly agreed for me to microfilm some of the letters. Well, some of the letters were of key importance. I cite this as an example of how far one has to sometimes fight to gain access.

From the Rothschild archives in Paris I went to many other archives including those of the Alliance Israélite in Paris, because Bleichröder for his own reasons, and in the service of the Rothschilds, mounted a campaign to force the newly created state of Romania in 1878 to grant civic rights to Jews, an early private initiative on behalf of human rights in a different foreign state. And I had to use subterfuges to gain access to the great archives of Imperial Germany which, at the time, in the 1960s and 1970s, were located in the then German Democratic Republic, where archival wealth co-existed with socialist drabness.

All in all I worked in nearly twenty archives, on two continents, and while the memorable task was the composition of the book, not the collection of the documents, the latter was a precondition for the former.

Well over 10,000 books have been written about Bismarck but I suspect mine may have been the only one that is based both on the Chancellor's archives and those of the Alliance Israélite. I don't mean to claim that they have equal importance, but the records of the Alliance Israélite sharpened my sense of Bismarck's views on the Jewish question, as it was called, and also made clear that even at that point, it was accepted by both sides, by the supplicants as well as by officialdom, that world Jewry was important and had a kind of power.

Archives are public and private, as are the universities that are home to so many of us. And here too there are many debts to record. Universities in the English-speaking world, and increasingly elsewhere, are of mixed parentage, relying on both state funds and private benefactors. Nineteenth-century American charity and higher education were seen as private domains, and if it hadn't been for some few captains of industry and banking, some of them labelled 'robber barons', our country would have been culturally impoverished. One of the first was J.P. Morgan, as an adolescent fascinated by European culture, which he steeped himself in. As an adult he determined to buy some of it for America. But the private initiative was especially important even before that, as Tocqueville recognised, in providing the cultural institutions that in Europe were supported by crown and state. So we have been the beneficiaries of what has been a particularly strong American habit already recognised by Tocqueville, of the private philanthropist promoting the public good, of fabulously wealthy men and their families, driven by various motives, religious and civic, determined that their money should, in the future, redound to the public benefit.

Today it is the great foundations which are the patrons of our age and many of us in universities are indebted in one way or another to Ford and Rockefeller, Guggenheim and Mellon, Carnegie and Nuffield, in particular for the fellowship, 'fellowship' in the United States signalling a kind of paid leave, at once a great opportunity for scholarly work and a recognition of it. The list of benefactors is relatively short, the list of recipients very, very long.

One of the most recent foundations and one of the richest is the MacArthur Foundation. John MacArthur said in creating the new foundation, "I figured out how to make the money, and you fellows, the Trustees, will have to figure out how to spend it." And what US philanthropy has achieved in education, medicine and welfare generally is extraordinary. But there is in all this the cunning of history that Ford and Rockefeller and Mellon and some of the others would not particularly appreciate: that we often promote the very opposite of what these founders might have supported. Laws, of course, also allow for the creation of tax-exempt foundations with nefarious interests, but that is a price one has to pay.

In the post-1945 world, even private universities have become dependent on public funds. Just as private universities in the past sometimes had to learn to bite the hand that fed them, going against the inclination of the donor, so in the United States today the universities have learned and must learn to bite the public hand – or more specifically the hand of government – which is increasingly sceptical of the value of liberal institutions, and increasingly does not feed them.

In the last century, but especially since 1945, various places for study, instruction and writing have been established. Institutes for advanced study and for interdisciplinary research exist, thanks usually to the generosity of foundations and sometimes government agencies. There too we find rewards and challenges, and there too chance often will have a major hand. The unexpected leads to new paths. I once suggested that a prize be awarded for the project abandoned in favour of doing something else while on leave at one of these institutions. Perhaps the mother of all these institutes is the Institute for Advanced Study in Princeton, founded by the Bamberger fortune of Philadelphia, where once I worked. These institutions are sometimes derided as affording the leisure of the theory class, but they are of inestimable importance in the scholarly life.



"Bleichröder's  
lodestar", Baron  
James de Rothschild



The Institute for  
Advanced Studies  
at the Hebrew  
University,  
Jerusalem.

Then there is the Institute for Advanced Studies in Jerusalem. The generosity of many Rothschilds in regard to Palestine and Israel is well known. As I wrote of Schama's *Two Rothschilds and the Land of Israel*: "The building of Palestine, as Schama shows, involved heroic work and horrendous fights which sometimes escalated from calumny to violence". The Knesset is monumental proof of Rothschild generosity, and on a smaller scale, but with equal vision, so is the Institute for Advanced Studies, entirely created by the Rothschild Foundation. Isaiah Berlin asked me in the mid-1980s to head a committee to examine the efficacy of what some people called a 'talk-shop'. We urged its continuance.

Archival digging, as I said, is but the beginning, though a historian's work is not and should not be neatly compartmentalised. Our next important debt is to research libraries. Ranke could still own most of the books he needed for his work, but we cannot. Our debt to them is incalculable as it is to librarians and archivists themselves, who know so

much more and guide us in what we do. They are part of what one might call the historian's infrastructure. Of course much of our operating procedure has been altered by new technologies, by the Web and the computer, by 'Googling', by instant electronic access to the Bodleian and all the other archives available on the Web, like this Archive and the Einstein one. Perhaps the future will see our successors sitting at home, post-modern monks and nuns, in family cells with their single laptops. I fear for such a world and not only out of ignorant Luddite sentiments. We owe so much to a collegial atmosphere for our work, even if it sometimes has more than a touch of malice to it. Each of us requires a particular mixture of companionship and solitude. Both are indispensable. For many of us, universities and libraries afford us communal stimulation, hearing the chance remark or finding the chance reference that sets us off in new directions. It is impossible to be self-generating all the time. Historians need instruction and inspiration and there is no recipe to tell you where to find it.

Daunting instruction comes from the masters of the past, most of whom, however stringent their conception of the historical discipline, believed also that history was a branch of literature. I have found inspiration in two distinct realms, in works of fiction and in a few important sociological texts. To understand the story of Bleichröder, or the story of German and German-Jewish scientists, works of the imagination and works of fiction are essential. Stendhal, Balzac, Trollope, Ibsen, Shaw, Fontane, Nietzsche, Thomas Mann, were essential, and so were Max Weber and R.H. Tawney. They all recognised, in one way or another, the psychic cost of Europe's transformation from an aristocratic to a mixed aristocratic-bourgeois society.

Of course, the two giants remain Thucydides and Shakespeare. They understood all the complexities of our existence, the greatness and the frailty of states, our own demons and our collective conflicts. There is nothing of fundamental importance that they didn't know.

I have listed some of the historian's debts, the elements in our working lives for which we should be grateful. I mentioned them *seriatim* but of course they constitute a seamless whole. They create the tangible conditions that are the necessary and ideal requisites of our work. I have probably omitted some, perhaps slightly over-exaggerated others, but

there is one indispensable condition and it is the least tangible one, and I repeat myself by saying, it is a liberal culture that allows for multiplicity of views and innovation, of controversy and commitment, that allows for the dispersion of all views. In such a culture there are contending fashions and conflicting moral priorities but no prescribed dogma, no censorship. Encouragement of humane scholarship comes in a variety of forms.

I know that important works of history have been written in repressive times, in exile or in hiding. I have immense respect for such work and hence we must have a deep regret that the authors had to wait for their audiences, or that they first found them in a foreign country. The threat of repression is common to all scholarship of course, but the depiction of the past being so closely related to the politics of the present, the writing of history becomes especially vulnerable to censorship. There is no country or nation that has not transgressed its own values or violated codes that we would like to believe are inviolable. There are temptations to excuse these failings and crimes and there are temptations to exaggerate them, to unmask them. Hence my insistence on the open critical society as a basis for our work.

In incurring all these debts, perhaps we historians are an expensive enterprise, but I hope that we are worth it, if in return we can approximate what actually happened in the past, if we offer varied perspectives about history's complexities for our fellow citizens, if we offer counter-arguments to the claims of legitimacy that powerful groups advance, repudiations of the fraudulent arguments and false analogies that politicians like to scatter about.

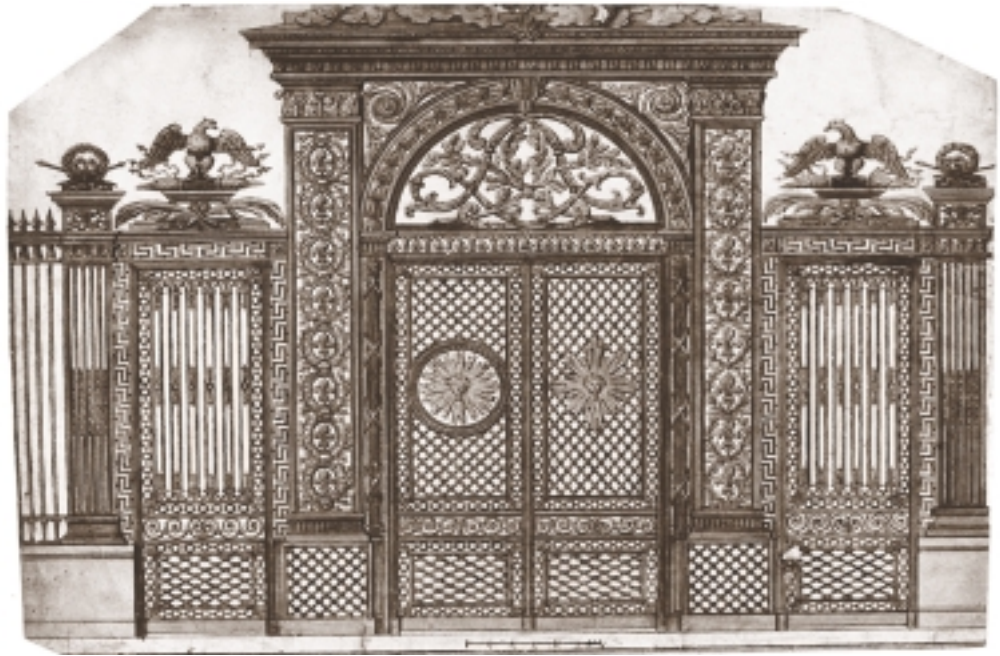
Let me end by reverting to one substantive element in the two archives I know best. Both the House of Rothschild and Einstein describe triumphs of achievement. In the first instance that triumph connoted economic mastery, power and cultural presence; in the second, power and imagination of the intellect and the prestige of science. In both instances the triumphs induced resentment and calumny. The Rothschild dynasty and Einstein did much for their fellow Jews, their tribesmen as Einstein preferred to put it, and they suffered from what I have called the anguish of assimilation. The history of triumph and ultimate tragedy is woven into their lives and the archives partially recorded them. What I gleaned from these sources led me to write, "The rise of German Jewry is one of the most spectacular leaps of a minority in the social history of Europe but their new prominence was painfully precarious and recalled Disraeli's desperate boast to young Montefiore, 'You and I belong to a race that can do everything but fail'."

Historians, as I have said, do not repay their creditors in currency, but express our thanks in acknowledgments, and I hope we do not forget just how fortunate we are. For myself I can't think of a better place to express my thanks and, by presumption, the thanks of many colleagues than to this audience in this very place, The Rothschild Archive, and to pay tribute to the generous vision of the Rothschild Bank in creating it.

The House of Rothschild, as I have said, has been a unique and embattled institution in the history of Europe's global expansion. The Archive bears witness to this expansion. It is the very opposite of anything parochial. Future historians privileged to work here can learn by Rothschild example about the breadth and totality of history, the myriad connections within a culture and among cultures. The Archive illuminates how life was lived, how men and women worked, what they thought, what they fought and what they gained and it touches on every issue of our own day from anti-Semitism to xenophobia. Nothing exists in some hermetically sealed sub-division of our imagination or academic discipline. Everything is related to everything else and light shines mysteriously from distant places. The Rothschild Archive might become as transformative for future historians as the Venetian archives were for Ranke and his successors. In that spirit, all thanks and all best wishes.

# The Rothschild Research Forum

Melanie Aspey, Archivist to The Rothschild Archive, describes the thinking behind a new approach to information exchange in the world of Rothschild studies



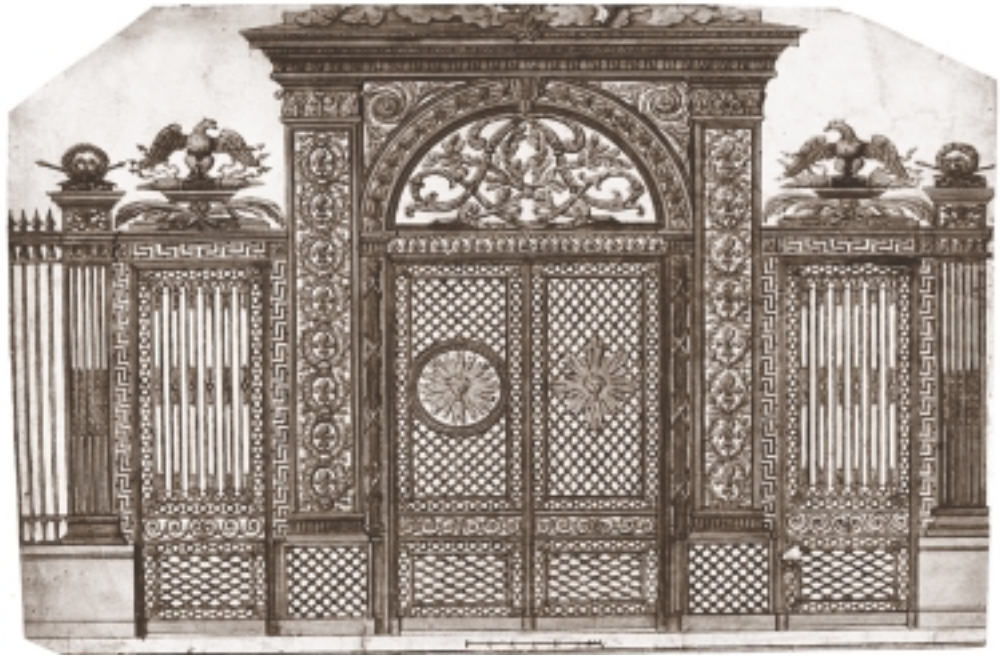
Anonymous design for a wrought-iron gate, French, late 18th century. From the collection of Edmond de Rothschild at Waddesdon Manor, featured in the Rothschild Research Forum

A CENTRAL AND PERSISTENT GOAL of The Rothschild Archive has been to function as an international research centre for the study of Rothschild history in its many forms, a hub of knowledge on research materials around the world and a link between those resources and the researchers who can interpret them. To this end, across the years, the archivists have made contact with other organisations – museums, archives, libraries, private collections – in order to build up information on sources that complement the Archive's own holdings. In some instances, photocopies or microfilm have been acquired and made available for consultation in the Archive's reading room.

Locating collections and making contact with custodians has become infinitely easier as information becomes more readily available through the World Wide Web. Similarly, the dissemination of the information gathered by the Archive can also be achieved more effectively now through the Internet. In May 2003, three years after the launch of the Archive's web site ([www.rothschildarchive.org](http://www.rothschildarchive.org)), a new web-based project – the Rothschild Research Forum – was launched to take maximum advantage of this new potential and to take The Rothschild Archive to new and wider audiences. In doing this, the Archive will work in a series of partnerships. Indeed, the very creation of the Forum stems from discussions between the Archive and colleagues at Waddesdon Manor, a former Rothschild property in Buckinghamshire which is home to the internationally renowned Rothschild Collection of furniture, porcelain, paintings and other works of art. While the Archive is at

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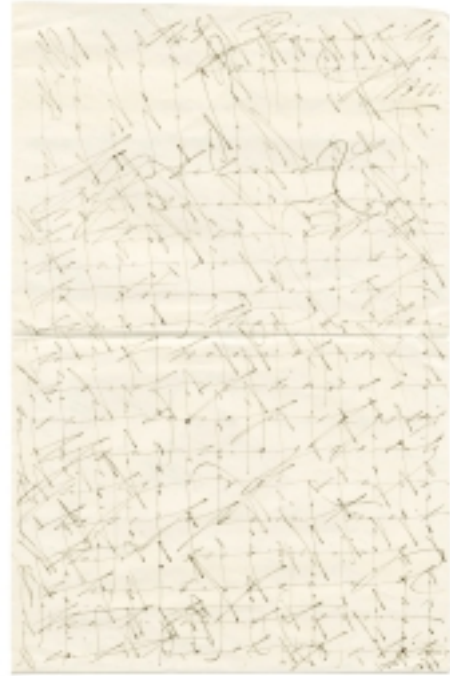
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heart a documentary resource and Waddesdon's collection is largely object-based, the distinction is not entirely clear cut. Furthermore, in many instances, an understanding of one collection can only be achieved by reference to the other. Documents may explain the acquisition or background of a particular painting or piece of furniture; the painting itself may define or explain a reference in a document.

The Forum has been conceived as a 'portal', a means of harmonising resources from a number of locations for the benefit of researchers, and of the archivists and curators working with them, creating a single source of information on Rothschild collections, wherever they may be and of whatever type. The partnership with Waddesdon Manor is seen as the first of a number, which will create a consortium of Rothschild resource-holders working together for a community of very diverse researchers. The Forum



is embedded in the existing websites of both the Archive and Waddesdon Manor ([www.waddesdon.org.uk](http://www.waddesdon.org.uk)). It is visible to all but accessible only to registered members. Restricting access in this way is simply an extension of the policy in operation for users of the Archive reading room, who are asked to provide two written references in advance of a visit. It was important to maintain this level of screening for a number of reasons, not the least being that the contributors of material, whether in the form of guides to sources, published articles or comment on the message board, could feel assured that other members of the Forum would treat the contributions responsibly.

The structure of the Forum has been designed to offer direct access to the documents published there from a number of points, the most immediate of which is the introductory page. The Rothschild world is first of all divided into four 'chapters': family, estates, collections and business, and each chapter might contain sources from all contributors. Each of the chapters is subdivided to make navigation easier, for example, 'Rothschild

*above*  
A cross-written letter from Charlotte de Rothschild, wife of Baron Lionel, whose letters to her son are being published in the Research Forum

*opposite*  
A silver gilt cup by Christian van Vianer from the collections at Waddesdon, described in the Forum



Family' contains sections of brief biographies, sources for the study of individuals and transcriptions and summaries of correspondence. Users can also browse through a chapter of contributions from each partner and from Forum members and view virtual exhibitions. The 'A to Z' chapter summarises all the contributions and there is a chapter of 'News' to alert Forum members to website updates and to events of interest such as the publication of new books.

Approximately 300 web pages have been published in the first three months since the launch. The pages range in size from a brief biographical sketch of a family member (150 words plus an image) or a timeline of Rothschild business involvement in a particular country, to a detailed summary of Rothschild family accounts in the Paris bank from 1870-1919 or a database of receipts for purchases made by Baron Lionel de Rothschild between 1852 and 1879.

The inclusion of a search button allows a rapid search through the entire site. A search for the term 'Louis XV', for example, produces a listing of 28 documents in which the term occurs. These include the receipts and accounts described above; the transcripts of letters of Charlotte, Baroness Lionel de Rothschild in 1866, commenting on furniture of the period that is to her taste (all from The Rothschild Archive's collections); inventories of various rooms at Waddesdon Manor in 1898 and 1922, Alice de Rothschild's notes on the provenance of the Waddesdon collection, a wine trail around Waddesdon (from Waddesdon's collections); and lecture notes on the Rothschild women as collectors. Thus not only is the source material for the acquisition of works of art fully searchable, regardless of the provenance of the finding aid, but descriptions and comment on them from the Rothschild owners can be placed alongside it, together with academic discussion.

Apart from such thorough coverage of the history of Rothschild collections, the picture of the various strands of Rothschild business is also being enhanced through the same simple search mechanism. A search for 'Mexico' will lead to relevant sources in the *Guide to the Archive*, to a list of key dates in Rothschild's business connections with the country; to the transcript of a letter from the agent, Lionel Davidson, giving his first impressions of Mexico in 1843; to letters from August Belmont in 1861 discussing a proposed US treaty with Mexico; and to others from Charlotte de Rothschild in London referring to the health and condition of the Empress of Mexico, then in Paris.

The members of the Forum (at the time of going to press they number well over a hundred) are drawn from all corners of the world and their interests stretch across the full range of Rothschild involvements and into many unforeseen areas. To date they include, for example, newspaper history (especially *The Times* and the relationship with the Rothschilds); the history of the Rothschilds in Frankfurt; Anglo-French relationships in the 19th century; Rothschild and 19th-century Brazil; cultural geographies of art collecting and the patronage of the arts; nineteenth century Anglo-Jewish History, specifically emancipation and identity development; the history of the Rothschild family and its connection with natural history.

Contributions to the Forum's Message Board also indicate the diverse nature of their interests. Commissions from Fabergé, Jewish emancipation, books written by members of the Rothschild family and looted art have all featured in recent months.

Researchers will always need to consult original material. Even a project as ambitious as the Research Forum can only serve to highlight important sources and to provide the answers to some questions in a virtual environment. The approach is clearly working: in the first month after the launch of the Forum, enquiries to the Archive increased from a previous high of 50 per month to 108.



Amschel, Charlotte and Evelina: three of the Rothschild family members whose brief biographies appear in The Forum



# “Interfered with by the state of the times”

Elaine Penn of The Rothschild Archive explores the outbreak of the American Civil War through the letters of August Belmont



AMONG THE MANY FASCINATING CHARACTERS who together made up the Rothschild family’s global network of business agents in the 19th century, few could rival in interest August Belmont. Better known in the United States as a politician and as a racehorse owner who gave his name to a celebrated New York racecourse, Belmont’s work for the Rothschilds has not received the attention it deserves.

Given that nearly 200 boxes of letters from the Belmont agency survive in The Rothschild Archive, covering the period from 1837 to 1922, there is much scope for research.

In order to give a taste of what is to be found among the letters, one sample year has now been analysed in detail. The choice of year was not easy, but in the end 1861 – the first year of the American Civil War – was decided upon as offering the possibility of discovering how well briefed the Rothschilds in Europe were as to the events unfolding across the Atlantic and whether their business could be seen to have been affected directly by the political events and subsequent conflict. The Rothschilds have often been accused of supporting the Confederate cause and of attempting to influence the British government in their favour. Would the Belmont letters confirm or refute the allegation?

*Wall Street, half-past-two o'clock, October 13, 1857*  
by James H. Cafferty and Charles G. Rosenberg (Courtesy of the Museum of the City of New York. Gift of the Hon. Irwin Untermyer)

August Belmont (1813-1890) had worked his way up through the ranks of clerks in the Rothschild Bank in Frankfurt when he was sent across the Atlantic in 1837 at the age of twenty-three. The plan was for him to travel via New York to Havana to investigate how the Cuban economy and the various Rothschild interests there were being affected by the Spanish Civil War. However, he arrived in New York, then in the middle of a financial crash, to find the existing representatives of Rothschild (J.L. and S.I. Joseph & Co.) had gone out of business. Using his own initiative he set up an office in New York and began to act as the Rothschild agent there. This behaviour was not initially welcomed by his employers who expected him to follow his orders to proceed to Havana. Although he eventually received word that the Rothschilds had agreed he should remain in New York and would receive a salary of \$10,000 a year, it set the pattern for a turbulent relationship between Belmont and the London and Paris houses of Rothschild. Belmont continually felt undermined and mistrusted by his European masters, whilst the Rothschilds felt he was rash and arrogant.<sup>1</sup> Nonetheless the Rothschilds realised the importance of having an agent based in the growing North American market, especially as none of the younger members of the family felt inclined to go there themselves.<sup>2</sup> Despite the reluctance from Europe, Belmont rented a small room at 78 Wall Street and began to speculate in cotton and securities. He purchased stock on behalf of N M Rothschild & Sons, handled bills and traded in tobacco, lead and quicksilver and handled the various government and railway bond issues for the Rothschild Bank made in the U.S.A. As well as making money for the Rothschild banks, Belmont became a rich man in his own right and soon began to move up the ranks of New York society, becoming Austrian Consul and then Ambassador to the Hague in 1853, and later becoming a leading figure in the Democratic party. As such he had a good vantage point from which to view the events of the American Civil War and its effect upon society, politics and business.

*opposite*

August Belmont and his wife Caroline in their carriage, 1854.

A painting by Wouterus Verschuur (Courtesy of the National Portrait Gallery, Washington DC)

The letters in the Belmont file for 1861 are arranged chronologically and take two forms which might be described as general business letters and private business letters. These categories are further described below. The number of letters for the year totals 553 and of this figure, 395 fall into the category of general business and 158 of private business correspondence. The chronological arrangement of the letters makes no distinction between the different types. Nearly all are written by August Belmont & Co. to N M Rothschild & Sons in London, although there are occasionally copies of letters forwarded by Belmont from other business agents in the States. Throughout the series there are also letters written by Belmont himself, including a small number of more personal letters during his travels in Europe (August left New York in July 1861 on a secret diplomatic mission as an unofficial US government representative, assessing European sympathies and returning to the States in the Spring of 1862.<sup>3</sup>) The letters from Europe touch upon various practical issues, such as the forwarding of copies of *The Times* and other correspondence on Belmont's behalf.<sup>4</sup>

The general business letters are routine correspondence, detailing the day's transactions. This category can be subdivided as there are several specific types of letters – predominantly those entitled 'Tobacco', and those entitled 'Drafts per Steamer'. The latter are usually one-page sheets, giving the name of the particular steamer to be leaving New York harbour that day and a list of the drafts Belmont has sent to London on board the vessel. The Tobacco letters contain detailed information about the markets in New York and Baltimore and about the crops themselves. This information includes weather conditions and, increasingly, the problems of cultivation due to the conflict. As the war progresses, the letters also report on the particular issues affecting the tobacco market, including the problems of supply from the secessionist states which naturally raises the price of the crop within the Union: "the tendency of prices is decidedly upward and the position of the article in view of the reduced production in Virginia, Kentucky





and Missouri.... likely to be the consequence of the war, is such that even in case of the re-opening of the ports and the re-establishment of peace no material decline in prices is expected.”<sup>5</sup> The letters often include a summary of detailed reports received from Mr. Garter (an unidentified correspondent, presumably acting as a cotton agent for Belmont in Baltimore) which describe at length the planting conditions throughout the country. The constant worry is over the effect the war will have on the tobacco market. In June there are reports from Virginia via travellers and newspapers which suggest that only one third of the usual tobacco crop will be raised there. A decrease is equally certain in Kentucky and Missouri. Maryland and Ohio will also plant less and be lacking in manpower for the proper culture and treatment of the crop.<sup>6</sup>

The letters report on political events affecting the tobacco market and a keen eye is kept on the actions of the tobacco-growing states as regards their loyalty to the Union: “Events in Kentucky are watched with anxiety and the probability of that State soon being involved in the Civil war is the principal reason of the advance [in the price of tobacco].”<sup>7</sup> The letters also detail the problems of lack of communication with the secessionist states and the disruptive effect this has on tobacco business. August Belmont & Co. constantly state that they have received no news from Richmond or New Orleans and express this strongly in August 1861, saying that they have nothing to report due to “the Government having strictly prohibited the conveyance of all letters and communications to and from the South.”<sup>8</sup> Even when news does occasionally reach the North, it is rarely reliable and it can often take considerable time for a particular piece of information to be verified. One fine example of this is the news of Jefferson Davis’ death, reported in September 1861. The rumours continue for over a week before they are finally quashed – all because of the complete stoppage of communication between the Union and the secessionist states.<sup>9</sup> Every so often the delay in the mail service causes a direct problem for the Rothschild banks. In October there is a query over some drafts which Belmont has passed to N M Rothschild & Sons for the account of the Paris House of de Rothschild Frères. Belmont explains that correspondence is “interfered with by the state of the times” and therefore he cannot be held accountable for transactions which cannot be advised of in time for action.<sup>10</sup>

The private business letters written by August Belmont & Co. are indicated as ‘Private’ at the top of the letter and are generally longer in content than the general business letters. It is in these letters that details are given about the progress of the war, along with the day’s business news. Generally speaking the information given about battles and strategies often merely describes and supplements official newspaper reports to which Belmont commonly refers. It is not clear how regularly the Rothschild banks in Europe received newspapers from the United States, nor whether Belmont’s letters reach them first with the ‘scoop’.

The private business letters seem to be written by a clerk at August Belmont & Co., possibly dictated by Belmont himself; at any rate, they are always in the same hand. They are supplemented by a smaller number of letters (54 in total) written in Belmont’s own hand. The contents and form of both types of letter are very similar – giving business information, followed by political news. Where letters exist for the same date, the information given is virtually identical and one cannot help but wonder the purpose of Belmont’s separate correspondence. Of equal interest is the fact that when Belmont leaves America for Europe, the private business letters do not change in terms of hand, tone or content. Were it not for details in a single letter from Belmont dated 4th July, stating that he is to leave on the *Persia* steamer on 17 July<sup>11</sup> and subsequent letters received from him from various locations in Europe, one would never actually know he had left America.

Both types of letter express Belmont’s opinions as to the conduct of the war on both sides, from a standpoint supportive of the Union. (The letters certainly repudiate any claims that the Rothschilds or Belmont himself actively supported the Confederate cause).<sup>12</sup> Both an anti-war



A selection of  
Belmont's letters  
to London

stance and a pro-Federal one are demonstrated. Initial letters express dismay that events have taken such a turn towards conflict: "Mad passion seems to direct the movements of the people in South Carolina and the indications are that the other Cotton states are rushing blindly towards the same infatuation."<sup>13</sup> The blame for the growing conflict is placed upon the political leaders of the South, most notably the Republicans who are accused of being "selfish and designing" and "who cannot be brought to look beyond their own partisan feelings."<sup>14</sup> Throughout the first few months of 1861, there are constant expressions of hope for a peaceful resolution. For example, a letter in reaction to the news that a provisional Confederate government has been formed with Jefferson Davis and Alex Stevens at its head, reads: "A better choice for talent, firmness and honesty could hardly be made, and they give strong hope, that further acts of lawless violence will be prevented and that a reconstruction of the old Union ... may in time be arrived at."<sup>15</sup> Belmont believes that the only way to avoid civil war is by an amendment to the constitution offering an acceptable compromise to the South, or by a peaceful separation, which can only be achieved by a convention of all the states. And right up to the last minute before the first shots are fired he continues to believe this is possible: "The Americans are ... a practical people, and although they have behaved in the present crises with a total want of foresight and patriotism, they will hesitate long before they plunge in to the horrors of a civil war."<sup>16</sup> Finally, in April 1861, the inevitable is admitted: "We have just seen a despatch from one of the Commissioners of the seceding states at Washington stating that their mission is closed, and war inevitable."<sup>17</sup>

Once war is officially declared, Belmont's efforts then turn to convincing the Rothschilds, firstly that there is no danger of the Union side losing, and secondly that the Rothschilds should use their influence to persuade the British Government to act as a mediator in the conflict in order to ensure an early end to hostilities. It is suggested that Lionel de Rothschild could use his political position to this end: "If by your influence with Lord John Russell and the other members of the Government you can aid in bringing the British Cabinet to take such a step you would be the instruments of preventing incalculable mischief and bloodshed. The Queen is so much respected and loved in this country, that her intercession by a special ambassador such as the Duke of Newcastle or Lord Elgin would certainly prove successful."<sup>18</sup> The background to Belmont's

position is of course a financial one – stock prices have fallen and the considerable anxiety over the uncertainty of a war makes buyers unwilling to part with their cash. All Southern stocks are now worthless: “For if a long and exhausting war should be the result of our political complications, the expenses of carrying it on would ruin the Southern States' credit and render their Bonds unsaleable.” Federal stocks are regarded as the safest, but it is deemed disloyal to sell them.<sup>19</sup> As the blockade of the Southern ports leads to a war at sea not only is the cotton business affected as prices rise due to the lack of available stock, but also other imports and exports carried by ship.

Belmont does not doubt that the North will win the war: “We have three times as large a population as committed and as brave as theirs, we have a navy and have money and credit, in which latter they are most sadly and justly deficient.”<sup>20</sup> But he is also sure that due to the determination of both sides the conflict will be a long one. Even after the disastrous battle of Bull Run, he believes that the North are not looking to compromise, that they feel strong enough “to put down the Rebellion and are determined to crush it out.”<sup>21</sup>

Belmont fears that the European powers might recognise the Confederacy and thereby legitimise its claim to independence from the United States. Concern over the position of England is expressed throughout the correspondence. Belmont, like many in America, is deeply alarmed by the tone of many of the English newspapers towards the conflict.<sup>22</sup> In May he writes regarding Queen Victoria's statement that Britain needs to remain neutral in the Civil War, saying that there is great disappointment and irritation at this as “people naturally compare the position, which England takes now against us to her stand during the Carlist War in Spain. Not for one moment did the British crown acknowledge Don Carlos in the light of a belligerent.” He also details how they have seen men and armaments, equipped by British subjects, leave English ports to assist the cause of Italian independence under Garibaldi and how the people of the USA had a right and hope for the same moral support.<sup>23</sup> Later there are accusations that England wants the war to continue: “leading people” are expressing the opinion that England intends to use its influence to “split up our old Union permanently, and establish 2 confederacies and thereby weaken us as a naval competitor.”<sup>24</sup> International disagreements threaten to escalate into war between the two countries when two representatives of the Confederate government on their way to England on an English ship are arrested by the captain of a Federal vessel. This leads in turn to a suspension of all gold shipments due to the precarious political situation.<sup>25</sup> Fortunately the matter is amicably settled by the diplomats but tensions remain high.

Descriptions of each battle or skirmish are given as they happen, detailing which side has taken the advantage and how it may have affected the final outcome. The viewpoint remains optimistic that a single great battle, in favour of the North, may end the war.

What emerges from the analysis of Belmont's 1861 letters is that the Rothschild banking house was well informed of events across the Atlantic. The letters give an account of the Civil War as events actually unfold, the writers often having to correct information reported in a previous letter which has subsequently proved erroneous. What they show clearly is upon what information the Rothschild banks were making decisions regarding their American stocks and business.

The Belmont letters – not only for 1861 but for the remaining years of the conflict – have the potential for a range of further detailed studies, for example of the effect of events on the fluctuations in price of particular commodities such as cotton, tobacco or breadstuffs throughout the period.

Equally, there must now be the expectation that for many of the significant events in American history during Belmont's lifetime, this series in The Rothschild Archive provides a new and as yet largely unexplored source of politically and economically well informed comment and reaction.

## ARCHIVAL SOURCES

**Rothschild Archive, London**

August Belmont & Co., General and Private  
Business Correspondence  
1837-1881 XI/62/0-32  
1881-1922 II/51/0-36  
August Belmont & Co., Private Business  
Correspondence  
1889-1920 II/55/0-25

**CAMT, Archives Nationales,  
Roubaix, France**

Dépêches Belmont, (ancienne cote 5L)  
1859-1863 (en déficit) 132 AQ 809

## Paiements

1894-1903 132 AQ 810  
1903-1909 (en déficit) 132 AQ 811  
1909-1918 132 AQ 812  
1918-1924 (en déficit) 132 AQ 813

## Dépêches ordinaires

1895-1901 (en déficit) 132 AQ 814  
1901-1906 132 AQ 815  
1906-1908 132 AQ 816  
1908-1912 132 AQ 817  
1912-1921 132 AQ 818

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1912-1922 132 AQ 29

Procès (manque de parti)

Correspondance, 1920-1923

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*Letters, Speeches and Addresses of August Belmont*  
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## NOTES

1. This is demonstrated in letters between the Rothschilds. In 1837, the news that Belmont has decided to remain in New York prompts Baron James to write "He is a stupid young man.... Such an ass needs to be kept on a short leash." (RAL/XI/109/J/J/37, James to nephews, May 25 1837). Comments of this nature were to continue throughout the years. In another series of letters, (XI/109/69B), written by Alphonse de Rothschild during his visit to America in 1848-9 he discusses the difficult relationship between Belmont and the London and Paris Houses of Rothschild.
2. See Ferguson, *The World's Banker*, 1998, p. 391 for full discussion of why the Rothschilds did not expand their business further into America.
3. Black, *The King of Fifth Avenue*, 1981, p. 208 and Katz, *August Belmont – A Political Biography*, 1968, p. 100. This incident is particularly interesting as no mention is made in any existing correspondence to the Rothschilds of the purpose of Belmont's visit. In fact the only letters which mention his presence in London are some written by Charlotte de Rothschild (1819-1884), which can be placed in the summer of 1861.
4. RAL XI/62/10B/188, August Belmont to NMR, 15 November 1861
5. RAL XI/62/10B/143, August Belmont & Co. to NMR, 11 October 1861
6. RAL XI/62/10A/299, August Belmont & Co. to NMR, 25 June 1861
7. RAL XI/62/10B/96, August Belmont & Co. to NMR, 3 September 1861
8. RAL XI/62/10B/85, August Belmont & Co. to NMR, 27 August 1861
9. RAL XI/62/10B/101 & XI/62/10B/106, August Belmont & Co. to NMR, 6 September and 10 September 1861
10. RAL XI/62/10B/158, August Belmont Co., 25 October 1861
11. RAL XI/62/10B/07, August Belmont to NMR, 4 July 1861
12. Ferguson, *The World's Banker*, 1998, p. 628
13. RAL XI/62/10A/08, August Belmont & Co. to NMR, 4 January 1861
14. RAL XI/62/10A/31, August Belmont & Co. to NMR, 18 January 1861
15. RAL XI/62/10A/81, August Belmont & Co. to NMR, 12 February 1861
16. RAL XI/62/10A/156, August Belmont & Co. to NMR, 2 April 1861
17. RAL XI/632/10A/163, August Belmont & Co. to NMR, 9 April 1861
18. RAL XI/62/10A/184, August Belmont & Co. to NMR, 19 April 1861
19. RAL XI/62/10A/199, August Belmont & Co. to NMR, 30 April 1861
20. RAL XI/62/10A/235, August Belmont & Co. to NMR, 21 May 1861
21. RAL XI/62/10B/86, August Belmont & Co. to NMR, 27 May 1861
22. RAL XI/62/10B/110 & XI/62/10B/136, August Belmont & Co. to NMR, 13 September and 4 October 1861
23. RAL XI/62/10A/245, August Belmont to Lionel de Rothschild, 28 May 1861
24. RAL XI/62/10B/132, August Belmont & Co. to NMR, 1 May 1861
25. RAL XI/62/10B/230, August Belmont & Co. to NMR, 18 December 1861
26. RAL XI/62/10B/147



# Aston Clinton House, Buckinghamshire

Diana Gulland, Archivist of the Buckinghamshire Archeological Society, charts the history of a lost Rothschild house



IN RESEARCH WHICH I HAVE RECENTLY carried out on the Lake family estates in Aston Clinton I have sought to lift the curtain of obscurity which has hung over the origins of the house which Sir Anthony de Rothschild and his family made their country residence from 1853 to 1923.<sup>1</sup> Material in The Rothschild Archive has proved invaluable in the search for the true story. Aston Clinton lies beside the A41 (formerly the Sparrows Herne Turnpike Road from Bushey Heath (Watford) to Aylesbury). The village, and most of the park of the former Aston Clinton House to the south of it, stands on the level, water-retaining surface of the Gault Clay. However the south-eastern margin of the park, where it was bounded by the Wendover Arm of the Grand Junction Canal, stands on the beginning of the better drained gentle rise into the Chiltern Hills. The church of St Michael and All Angels is between the A41 and the park.

The Lord of the Manor from 1760 to 1808 was Gerard Lake (1744-1808). He had a long military career in which he saw service in America, Ireland and India. He was elected as an MP for Aylesbury in 1790 and 1796. Raised to the peerage in 1804 as a baron, and in 1807 as a viscount, Lake took the title of 1st Viscount of Delhi, Leswarree and Aston Clinton. When Gerard Lake inherited Aston Clinton the manor house was moated and was located next door to the church of St Michael and All Angels. It later became a farmhouse known as Church Farm and was replaced by a larger manor house, built half a mile to the south east, close to what was to become the site of the Grand Junction Canal. The exact date of the new house, and who built it, are unknown but it was sometime between 1770, when Church Farm was still the manor house<sup>2</sup>, and 1793 when, on the plans for the proposed canal<sup>3</sup> a house was marked as 'seat of General Lake'. It is possible that Lake had planned to build a new house in 1785 when he applied to stop up a section of the lower end of the road, now known as Aston Hill, where it would have passed through the grounds of the proposed house.<sup>4</sup> There is evidence that George, Prince of

A drawing of the house from the sketchbook of Alice de Rothschild, c.1863. (Courtesy of the Rothschild Collection, Waddesdon Manor)

Wales, who was a close friend of Lord Lake, was using the house as a sporting residence between 1789 and 1792<sup>5</sup>. After Gerard Lake's death in 1808 his son Francis Gerard (1772-1836) inherited the title and the estate and used the house as his country residence. Francis died in 1836 without heirs and the title and estate passed to his younger brother Warwick (1783-1848). Either for family or financial reasons Warwick decided to sell the estate and put it up for sale in 1836<sup>6</sup>. The sale attracted the attention of the Duke of Buckingham and Chandos. At that time the estate was of 1,055 acres valued at £1,000 per annum, and was seen by the Duke as an investment to pay off debts. Due to the acute financial difficulties of the Duke the purchase could not be completed until he had sold the Norton Estate in Hampshire and it was not until 1838, after Warwick Lake had threatened to withdraw from the sale, that the purchase was finally concluded at £23,426<sup>7</sup>.

In the 1836 sale catalogue<sup>8</sup> the house was described as 'a shooting box' with extensive plantations, pleasure grounds and park, with shaded walks and fish pond. The house contained four best bedrooms and five secondary and servants' sleeping rooms. On the ground floor there was a 'cheerful' drawing room with a bow window and a dining room. There were servants' quarters and an enclosed yard with wash-house and laundry, a double coach-house, stables and loose box. Among other buildings were a blacksmith's shop, a forge and a carpenter's shop. Church Farm (the old manor house) was one of the farms included in the sale.

When the Duke's son, the Marquis of Chandos sold the estate in 1848 it was described as a valuable freehold and tithe-free estate, situated in a beautiful part of the County of Buckinghamshire consisting of the Manor of Aston Clinton. Included in the sale was a 'newly-erected and most desirable brick-built and stuccoed sporting residence, suited for a family of respectability, with offices, gardens, orchard, pleasure ground and small park, and the Home Farm, Church and Hill Farms, with suitable agricultural buildings, the whole estate about nine hundred acres'.<sup>9</sup> Kelly's Directory of 1854 refers to the Duke of Buckingham having re-built the house but as no evidence to support this claim has been found I suggested that he carried out repairs and made some changes to the layout of the rooms. The bedrooms and sleeping rooms described above had become six principal bedrooms and three servants' rooms. It still had a 'cheerful' drawing room with a 'window to the floor' and a dining room. The only addition to the description in the 1848 sale catalogue is a portico entrance. The small-scale plans that accompany both the 1836 and 1848 catalogues show an identical scatter of buildings on the site, and in the same location as those shown on the Enclosure Commissioner's Working Map of 1814.<sup>10</sup> Some changes to the layout of the grounds are apparent. The 1836 plan does not show the drive down from the Turnpike but the 1848 does, terminating at the largest building.



The Park and its settings in 1900. Ordnance Survey 25-inch map, 2nd edition (sheet XXXIV). (Courtesy of the Buckinghamshire Record Office)

Baron Mayer de Rothschild attended one of the many sales of the Duke of Buckingham's estates in October 1848.<sup>11</sup> The Aston Clinton estate was due to be the principal property for auction at £25,000 but was withdrawn. When the estate came up for sale again in July 1849<sup>12</sup> the Rothschilds had discussed a possible purchase within the family. They agreed however to offer no more than £26,000, as "It is not like a fancy place" and should be treated as an investment only.<sup>13</sup> There is evidence to suggest that it was Lionel de Rothschild who made the purchase<sup>14</sup> although it was his brother Sir Anthony<sup>15</sup> who decided to make it his country home. Sir Anthony finally moved into it in 1853, once the pressures of the London and Paris banking houses allowed,<sup>16</sup> with his wife Louise (née Montefiore) and their daughters Constance (b. 1843) and Annie (b. 1844). Later, Constance wrote that her father had been fortunate to find a small country house in Aston Clinton, formerly the home of the Lake family.<sup>17</sup> This, of course, is further evidence that the Duke of Buckingham had not demolished Lord Lake's house.

The smallness of the house, which Lady de Rothschild particularly found unsuitable, prompted Sir Anthony to obtain tenders for enlarging it. He employed George Henry Stokes, Sir Joseph Paxton's son-in-law, as architect and George Myers as builder just as Mayer de Rothschild had at Mentmore a few years earlier.<sup>18</sup> Tantalisingly no plans or drawings of Aston Clinton House and the proposed extensions have been found but a copy of an Indenture and Specification of 1855,<sup>19</sup> and accounts from George Myers for 1856-1857,<sup>20</sup> all in The Rothschild Archive, describe in detail the work carried out. Some suggestions have been made in the past that the house was demolished at this stage and a new one built but the Indenture proves the supposition to be false. The Indenture states that "all the old works of every kind interfered with by the alterations to be made good in all respects; the old portion of the building to be thoroughly repaired...". By 1856 alterations to both the interior and exterior of the existing house had begun in order to accommodate the extensions. Alterations were made to the eaves of the old house to form new cornices; a parapet was added; the roof leaded, and air flues added under the house. Doors in the old building were rehung, floors repaired, woodwork repainted. Chimney stacks were changed in size and position and the exterior walls were cemented. Alterations to the old porch were made, steps were added to the outside of the drawing and dining room windows and inside the house some of the rooms were converted. The extensions added included what was described as a 'Billiard Room building', a new dining room, new offices and a new conservatory. The sum of £5,179.11.8 appears on one of the accounts from Myers which may be the total amount for the contract; however an invoice dated 1857-1859 from John Lee, Surveyor, to Sir Anthony<sup>21</sup> states that an agreement had been reached with Mr. Myers on a reduction in the schedule of prices, due to the fall in the cost of materials, but no amended figure is given. A drawing by Alice de Rothschild shows the front of the house in the 1860s after the alterations and extensions were completed.<sup>22</sup>

George Devey took over from Stokes, from 1864 to 1877, the continuing works of improvement to the mansion and designed various cottages and the park gates.<sup>23</sup> Sir Anthony died in 1876 and in 1877 Constance married Cyril Flower and they made Aston Clinton their home during the autumn and winter. Lucy Cohen refers to the reorganisation of the stables and the building of an additional wing by Cyril Flower but gives no date or source. It may have been sometime during the late 1870s or early 1880s when this work was carried out.<sup>24</sup>

Towards the end of the 19th century the old manor house, Church Farm, was demolished and a kitchen garden created on its site. Alice de Rothschild's 1863 drawing of the view towards the church, from the grounds of Aston Clinton House, is perhaps the only surviving illustration of Church Farm.<sup>25</sup> The 1877 Ordnance Survey map shows buildings still at Church Farm but by the 1900 Ordnance Survey map the site had been cleared to make way for the kitchen garden with its extensive range of glasshouses and living quarters for staff. The kitchen garden is described in the 1923 sale catalogue<sup>26</sup> as being in a high state of cultivation and including a fig house, vinery, peach and cherry houses.

*opposite*  
*The gardens, Aston*  
*Clinton, 1854,*  
 by William Callow,  
 drawing master to  
 Constance and Annie  
 de Rothschild.  
 (Courtesy of  
 Buckinghamshire  
 County Museum  
 Service: 1945.223.63)





Aston Clinton House, the south-east front (facing the canal) and north-east side, 1956. (Courtesy of English Heritage, National Monuments Record)

By the time the Rothschilds sold the estate in 1923 the house had grown from its humble origins to a classical mansion with seven reception rooms, billiard room, ball room, 13 principal bed and dressing rooms, 17 secondary and servants' bedrooms, four bath rooms and complete domestic offices. There was stabling for 32 horses and two lodges had been built. The sale catalogue is illustrated with pictures of the sumptuous interior of the house and the formal gardens.

After the death of Lady de Rothschild in 1910 Aston Clinton reverted to the Rothschild Estate and Lionel's three sons, Nathaniel (first Lord Rothschild), Alfred and Leopold jointly inherited the interest. Constance and Annie remained in occupation and kept the estate going until the 1st World War, when it was given over to the Commanding Officer of the Twenty-first Division, then encamped on the Halton estate, and it was finally sold in 1923. By this time Lionel's three sons had

died and the Hon. N. Charles Rothschild, Nathaniel's son, had inherited the estate. However he died in October 1923 and the sale was dealt with by his executors<sup>27</sup>. Dr. Albert Edward Bredin Crawford purchased the house and grounds (only) for £15,000. Dr. Crawford was a schoolmaster and used the house as a school for backward boys. Evelyn Waugh was a master at the school for a short time from 1925 and in his diaries referred to it as "an inconceivably ugly house but a lovely park" and "a house of echoing and ill-lit passages and a frightful common-room".<sup>28</sup> The school did not prosper and by 1932 the house was on the market again. The general remarks in the sale catalogue of that year describe it as eminently suited for a club, school or institution.<sup>29</sup> A valuation list of 1934, updated to 1954, shows the changing fortunes of the house over the twenty years. It lists the owners as Howard Park Hotel, E.K. Cole (Echo Radios), H.M. Treasury, Thames Side Development Properties Ltd. and finally Green Park Hotel.<sup>30</sup> A brochure for the Howard Park Hotel advertised "A week-end spent in these luxurious quiet surroundings is well spent, and the hours will slip by ... broken by an occasional dance in the wonderful oak ballroom ..."<sup>31</sup>

In 1958, The Department of Transport proposed a route of a southern bypass to Aston Clinton traversing a section of the park. In part the proposal was rejected because of the environmental damage to the park.<sup>32</sup> However an alternative fate for the house was not far away. Buckinghamshire County Council acquired the house and park in three lots from 1959 to 1967.<sup>33</sup> The house was demolished and Green Park Training Centre built in its place. Today nothing remains of the former mansion; the only reminder of its existence is the balustrading which once encircled the garden at the front of the house. The wooded parkland is still there and features of the formal gardens can be found among the undergrowth.

Photographs taken before demolition, for the National Buildings Record,<sup>34-36</sup> afford a chance to look at the exterior of the house in detail and to come to some conclusion about the location of the original 18th-century house. It could not have been part of the south east front, facing the canal, because, at that time, there was no access from that direction. On the north west frontage, facing the village, the square extension on the right-hand side was a later addition to the house by the Rothschild family. That leaves the portion projecting forward from the conservatory on the north east corner of the house. Its architecture was different to that of the rest of the building, it faced the village and would have been in the right position for the old carriage drive from the Turnpike. A large bow window opened onto a flight of steps out onto the grounds, which, as we have seen, were added in the 1850s. A projection can be seen on the north east side with a flight of steps. This may well have been the old entrance and I suggest that it marked the limit of the 1850s house and that the remainder of that wing, coming forward to the south east front, was added by Sir Anthony.

NOTES

1. Gulland, Diana. 'Aston Clinton Manor House: from moated site to classical mansion.' *Records of Buckinghamshire*, Volume 43, 2003, pages 195-207.
2. Hertfordshire Record Office: D/EB 1430 T4/2. Aston Clinton Deed, 30/6/1770.
3. Buckinghamshire Record Office: P/U/A 9/2. Plan to make navigable the proposed cut or feeder from Wendover to the summit level of the Grand Junction Canal at Bulbourne, c. 1793-4.
4. Buckinghamshire Record Office: Q/SO/22 Quarter Sessions Minute Book. Mids. 1787-Epiph. 1790.
5. Buckinghamshire Record Office: D/X/17/1. Colonel's from Michaelmas 1789 to March 1792. Account book of wood supplied to people in Aston Clinton and surrounding area from woodlands on the Lake Estate, 1789-1792.
6. *Bucks Chronicle*, Volume XXV, No. 1268, 22 October 1836.
7. London Metropolitan Archive: ACC/262/62/1 and 2. Minute books of the Proceedings of the Trustees of the Duke of Buckingham, 1836-1839.
8. Huntington Library, California: STG Manorial papers Box 20, folder 13. Particulars of sale of Aston Clinton, 1836.
9. Huntington Library, California: ST maps and plans. Box 7(9). Particulars of sale of Aston Clinton, 1848.
10. Buckinghamshire Record Office: Church Farm, (immediately south of church) and the new mansion house (immediately north of canal). An extract from the Enclosure Commissioners Working Map 1814, surveyed by John King of Winslow. Reduced from the scale of 3ch = 1 inch.
11. *Bucks Chronicle*, Volume 1, 21 October 1848.
12. Huntington Library, California: STG Manorial Papers Box 20, folder 13, particulars of sale of Aston Clinton, 1849.
13. Rothschild Archive: XI/109/72/3. Letter from Frankfurt addressed to Mayer de Rothschild from Lionel de Rothschild, 23rd September 1849.
14. A deed of 1854 (Buckinghamshire Record Office BAS 666/28), between Lionel de Rothschild and the Rector of Aston Clinton, refers to the purchase of buildings which Lionel wished to demolish to improve the approach to his house and pleasure grounds at Aston Clinton. A further deed of 1859 (Public Record Office MAF 11/8 1542), again between Lionel and the Rector, refers to a part of Parsonage Lane allotted to Viscount Lake under the Aston Clinton Inclosure in the occupation of Sir Anthony de Rothschild. Two later documents in The Rothschild Archive help to confirm this assumption. One dated 20 November 1877 (RA 000/53/1) granted a life interest in the estate to Louise (Sir Anthony's wife), in accordance with an agreement arrived at between Lionel and Anthony on 1 August 1875 (RA 000/107).
15. Anthony Nathan (1810-1876), second of the four sons of Nathan Mayer Rothschild, younger brother of Lionel and a partner in NM Rothschild & Sons from 1836. Granted a baronetcy in 1847, which passed, on his death to his nephew, Nathaniel Mayer de Rothschild.
16. Wilson, Derek. *Rothschild: a story of wealth and power*. Revised edition, Mandarin Paperbacks, 1994. Chapter 12, page 160.
17. Battersea, Constance. *Lady de Rothschild: Extracts from her notebooks with a preface by her daughter*. Arthur L. Humphreys, 1912, Chapter 1, page 10; Chapter 2, page 24.
18. Paxton, Stokes and Myers had previously worked together on the mansion, village and park at Mentmore, 1850-1855, for Mayer de Rothschild and then on Ferrières for James de Rothschild 1854-1863. Paxton and Stokes worked at Prégny for Adolphe de Rothschild, 1858-1864. George Myers worked for the Rothschilds for 20 years from 1853 to 1873. He worked on houses for them in Piccadilly and its hinterland, including a mansion for Lionel de Rothschild at 148 Piccadilly in 1863. Also for Lionel, improvements and extensions at Gunnersbury, 1860-1870. He continued working for Mayer at Mentmore, adding and improving, until his retirement in 1873. In 1866-1870 he was the contractor for the Evelina Hospital in London, which was built with funds from Baron Ferdinand in memory of his wife Evelina.
19. Rothschild Archive: 000/891. Draft Indenture and Specification between Sir Anthony de Rothschild and George Myers, 1855.
20. Rothschild Archive: XI/2/0 and XII/41/1 Myers Accounts 1856-1857.
21. Rothschild Archive: XII/4/1 Invoice from John Lee to Sir Anthony de Rothschild 1857-1859.
22. Waddesdon Manor: Rothschild Family Trust, 146.1997. Main front of Aston Clinton. From Alice de Rothschild's sketchbook. c. 1863.
23. Allibone, Jill. *George Devey: Architect, 1820-1886*. Cambridge, Lutterworth Press, 1991. Devey was also the architect for lodges, stables and riding school, cottages and farm buildings at Mentmore 1860-1872; Master's house and Rectory, Cheddington for Hannah de Rothschild and Lord Rosebery 1877; conversion of farmhouse at Ascott for Leopold de Rothschild 1873-1887; with George Myers, on houses at Halton and Tring 1873-1878 for Baron Lionel de Rothschild; The Pavilion at Eythrope 1876-1879 for Miss Alice de Rothschild; alterations to the King's Head, Aylesbury for Sir Nathaniel Mayer de Rothschild 1879-1880; and the erection of the Literary Institute at Aylesbury for Lord Rothschild 1879-1880.
24. Cohen, Lucy. *Lady de Rothschild and her daughters* 1821-1931. John Murray, 1935, page 100.
25. Waddesdon Manor: Rothschild Collection (Rothschild Family Trust). Vue du Parc, Aston Clinton – 146.1997. From Alice de Rothschild's sketchbook. 1863.
26. Buckinghamshire Archeological Society. 947/40. Aston Clinton Estate. Catalogue of mansion and estate by direction of N. Charles Rothschild, 1923.
27. Rothschild Archive. H & J L/164. Executors of the will of Hon. N. Charles Rothschild deceased to Horwood & James re Mr. A.E.B. Crawford's mortgage of Aston Clinton House, Park & premises resulting from 1923 sale. March 1924.
28. Davie, Michael, editor. *The diaries of Evelyn Waugh*. Penguin Books, 1979, pages 216 and 224.
29. Buckinghamshire Archeological Society: 1997/85. Aston Clinton Park Estate. Sale 1932 by direction of the Mortgagees.
30. Buckinghamshire Record Office: DVA 1/2 Aylesbury Rural District Council Valuation List 1934.
31. Local Studies Library, Buckinghamshire County Council: L384.36. Howard Park Hotel. Tariff and services, n.d. (Photocopy).
32. Department of Transport. *A41 trunk road proposed bypass of Aston Clinton. Description of preferred route*. Bedford, Departments of the Environment and Transport Eastern Regional Office, 1985.
33. Bruton Knowles, Surveyors. Personal communication.
34. English Heritage. National Monuments Record. Aston Clinton House showing the SE front (facing the canal) and the NE side. 1956.
35. English Heritage. National Monuments Record. Aston Clinton House showing the NW front (facing Aston Clinton village) and the SW side. 1956.
36. English Heritage. National Monuments Record. Aston Clinton House showing the NW and the NE side. 1956.

# Nathan Mayer Rothschild and Brazil: the role of Samuel Phillips & Co

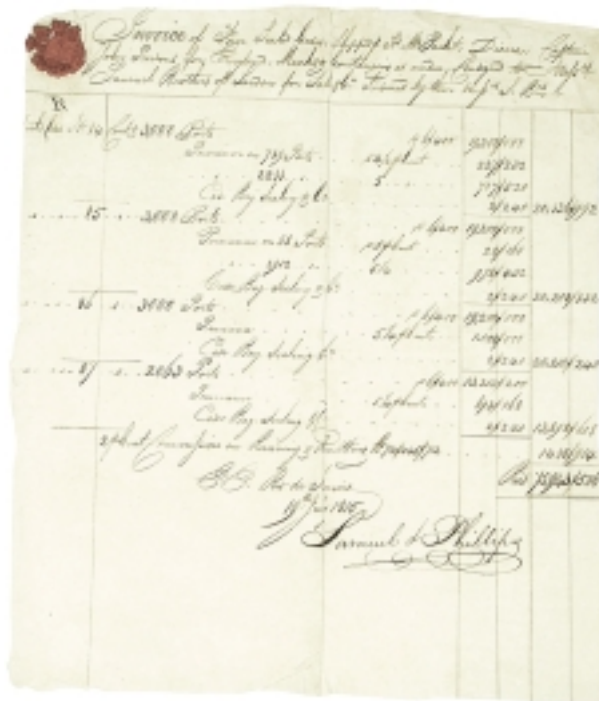
Roderick J. Barman looks at the ups and downs of Nathan Mayer Rothschild's relationship with his agent in Rio de Janeiro

ON 18 JUNE 1812, JUDITH COHEN, newly married to Moses Montefiore, wrote in her diary: "This evening also we passed with my sister Hannah [Rothschild], and found Esther and Samuel there, who had the kindness to conduct us home in their coach, it being rainy weather". Hannah, Judith and Esther were all daughters of Levi Barent Cohen, about whom much has been written.<sup>1</sup> But who was 'Samuel'? The answer to this question throws considerable light both on the linkages existing between Nathan Mayer Rothschild, Hannah's husband, and the Jewish business community in England and on how those linkages enabled him to establish business connections with Brazil.

Until the middle of the eighteenth century the Jewish community in Great Britain was largely composed of people of Sephardic origin, originating in the lands around the Mediterranean. From the early 1740s onwards several thousand Ashkenazim, natives of central and eastern Europe, came to Great Britain. Among these migrants, many of them poor and ill-educated, was Moshe ben Zanvil Pulvermacher, born in the town of Krotoschin, south-east of Pozen, then in Prussian Poland. In England, where he arrived early in the 1760s, aged about 18, he became known as Moses Samuel. He steadily built up his fortune as a merchant, settling in the East End of London. Pious and respectable, he became a leading member of the Great Synagogue, being chosen a Parnas (Warden) in 1795. He married Esther Phillips, and the couple had some ten children.

The eldest son was Samuel Moses Samuel, the 'Samuel' who was married to Esther Cohen. Samuel and his four brothers all seem to have become merchants, at first in partnership with their father. In 1805 the London Post Office Directory records the firm of 'Moses Samuel and Sons' at 1 Hammet Street, in the Minories, Tower Hill. The family's standing was attested by the marriage in 1802 of Hannah Samuel to Solomon Cohen, the eldest son of Levi Barent Cohen, and that of Samuel Moses Samuel to Esther Cohen in 1803. When Moses Samuel retired from business and settled in Bath, his sons continued the firm as "Samuel Brothers, African Merchants" at 1 Hammet Street. However, S. M. Samuel also ran his own business. In February 1812 he supplied his brother-in-law, Nathan Mayer Rothschild, with 26<sup>1/2</sup> dozen of 1804 vintage Port, 10 dozen of mature Madeira, one pipe (barrel) of Madeira, one child's crib, "Bible & Prophecies with Annotations & Commentaries" bound in thirteen volumes, and one "Compleat Sett of Festival Prayers". The bill for these heterogeneous items came to £245 – 5s – 4d.

The port and madeira that S. M. Samuel sold to Nathan Rothschild indicate that both he and the firm of Samuel Bros. were trading with Portugal and its colonies. It was precisely this connection and a willingness to exploit new business opportunities that explain the creation of the new firm of Samuel & Phillips. Late in 1807 the French armies invaded Portugal, until then neutral in the Napoleonic wars. Instead of attempting to resist the invasion, the Portuguese royal family, the court and the government boarded a fleet in Lisbon harbour and sailed across the Atlantic to Rio de Janeiro, which became the capital of the Portuguese Empire. Brazil



An invoice for cases of gold coins ('Ports') shipped to England by Samuel & Phillips on the packet *Diana*, 1815

ceased to be a colony and its ports were thrown open to trade with friendly states, above all with Great Britain. Among the English merchants who established themselves in Rio de Janeiro in 1808 were Denis (David) Moses Samuel, a younger brother of S. M. Samuel, and Alfred (Abraham) Phillips, the nephew of Esther Phillips Samuel.

The firm created by two young men (Denis Samuel being aged 24 in 1808) prospered. By 1812 its business was so considerable as to require the presence in Rio of a third brother, James Samuel. On 21 September, James wrote from Portsmouth to Nathan Mayer Rothschild. Acknowledging receipt of a letter addressed to Samuel & Phillips he remarked: "I shall feel happy in the pleasure of seeing you previous to my Departure which expect daily with best wishes to M<sup>rs</sup> R, yourself & Family." In fact, business between Rothschild and Samuel & Phillips was already under way. At the start of October, the Rio firm purchased 133 "Ports," gold coins, to the value of £303, dispatched to London in a tin canister "for Acc<sup>t</sup> & Risk of M<sup>r</sup> N M Rothschild". At the end of December, Samuel & Phillips dispatched 19 bars of gold, worth £1525. It was at this time that Rothschild began to supply cash to the British armies on the continent. Brazil, with its gold mines, was a good source for the specie he needed. To pay for the shipments made by Samuel & Phillips, Rothschild sent the firm bills of exchange drawn on British and Portuguese merchants at Rio de Janeiro. Each transaction was separate and self-liquidating.

By the middle of 1815 Samuel & Phillips had become Rothschild's corresponding agent in Brazil, maintaining a standing account for transactions between the firm and Rothschild, an account balanced at the end of the calendar year. From the surviving correspondence it is clear that Denis Samuel was the dominant figure in the firm. He was without much culture or education, his writing style and spelling being erratic at best, but he was energetic, shrewd and without much scruple. He cultivated close contacts with government officials at Rio, particularly those of the Treasury, keeping open house for them and quietly providing them with a share of the profits. In February 1816 Denis Samuel commented to Nathan Mayer about "Our Govt. Business which in a great measure is in our hands". Two months later, he sent to Rothschild a bill of exchange drawn by the Portuguese Treasury at 70<sup>1</sup>/<sub>2</sub>d per Milreis, 3<sup>1</sup>/<sub>2</sub>d above the prevailing rate of exchange, making a "gain, fully 5%".



In its dealings with Rothschild, Samuel & Phillips was deferential and compliant. The firm was always “gratified” and “honoured” to receive Nathan Mayer’s letters and to accomplish his orders. “The handsome manner you spontaneously offer your colossal guarantee of our firm is indelibly marked in our mind.” The firm suffered Rothschild’s rebukes meekly, always yielding to his desires. At the same time, it was constantly trying to obtain from Rothschild inside information and increased favours. The business relationship was one in which Samuel & Phillips shipped specie and gold dust and collected bills drawn on Rio which Rothschild had discounted, remitting the profits in the form of good bills to England. The business was mutually profitable and grew in size and intensity in the decade after 1815.

In the middle of 1818 Alfred Phillips returned home to England where he married his cousin Rebecca, one of Moses Samuel’s daughters. He took with him the firm of Samuel & Phillips, which conducted business from 8 South Street, Finsbury. At Rio a new firm, Samuel Phillips & Co. was created, with James Samuel being admitted a partner. (This change has understandably been the cause for much confusion, not just to historians but to contemporaries as well, particularly since the “Samuel” in “Samuel Phillips & Co.” was and is frequently assumed to be a first name.) A further change occurred in June 1820 when Joshua Samuel, yet another of the brothers, arrived in Rio to work in Samuel Phillips & Co. A personal letter he sent to Nathan Mayer Rothschild makes plain the close relationship existing between the two men. “With best respects to Mrs. Rothschild, yourself, and family in which I beg to include the respectable family of the Montefiores [Judith and Moses] & the circle round your hospitable table.” In another personal letter of 29 January 1821, announcing that ill health made necessary his brother James’ return to England, Joshua Samuel referred to “the lovely ladies,” words written discreetly in Judendeutsch [German in Hebrew characters], who “are to be found only in name” at Rio. Joshua understood Nathan Mayer Rothschild’s temperament, as a remark in a letter of 19 October 1822 shows: “Our Mr. Josh Samuel tells us Mr. Rothschild was in one of his best & merry humour[s] when he dictated his memorandum on the Pre<sup>m</sup> of the Bahia Bills.”

Rothschild’s brother-in-law, Samuel Moses Samuel, was never, it would appear, a partner in either Samuel & Phillips of London or Samuel Phillips & Co. of Rio, but the two firms maintained close links with him both as an individual and as a senior partner in the firm of Samuel Brothers. In 1820, when the Rio firm drew a bill of exchange in favour of the Portuguese Government for £14,500 on Samuel & Phillips in London, it specified S. M. Samuel as payer “in case of absence”.<sup>2</sup>

Events in Brazil during the 1820s favoured the firm of Samuel Phillips & Co., causing it to flourish as never before. When the king of Portugal was forced to return to Lisbon in 1821, after an absence of fourteen years, he left behind his elder son Pedro as Regent of Brazil. Growing fears that Portugal would attempt to make Brazil once again a colony led to a declaration of independence late in 1822 with the Prince Regent becoming Emperor Pedro I. Samuel Phillips & Co. maintained close personal relations both with the Imperial family and with the new nation’s cabinet ministers. Early in 1824 Woodbine Parish, the first British envoy to Argentina, arrived at Rio de Janeiro on his way to Buenos Aires, and the firm reported to Nathan Mayer Rothschild: “Mr. Parish handed us also your kind introductions & we tendered him our Services & table with invitation to meet the minister of state with some of our particular friends.”

The finances of the new Empire were shaky at best, and Samuel Phillips & Co. showed themselves eager to gain profit from this embarrassment. As early as October 1820 the firm had suggested to Rothschild the arrangement of a government loan at 9 to 12% interest. “We should not hesitate our taking a large share [*sic*]. Your sentiments would much oblige us upon this Subject.” They renewed their urgings on the subject in March and August 1821. But Nathan Mayer refused to bite, as the firm acknowledged in March 1822. “We have made due note of your declining any share of a Loan should we make such contract! You certainly must be the most able Judge upon this head. All we have to



assure you is if such is effected by us the basis will be solid & as far as human foresight can go the payment secured by the Revenues our residence of 15 years has made us equal to select.”

The first Brazilian government loan was not in fact launched on the London market until the start of 1824. Samuel Phillips & Co. knew exactly what then transpired, as the firm’s letter of 18 November shows. “The Loan having been made for One Million at 75 p. Cent & having been at a Discount of 3 p C<sup>t</sup> is much liked here, the Contractors taking the option within 4 months to take [a] million more [at] 83 & four months after that period the remaining Million [at] 87, but as it’s most likely they will not fulfil the first part of this agreement it becomes annulled & in that event perhaps you may be induced to arranged with Brant & Gameiro [the Brazilian envoys in London] to retrieve their Credit and that of their Government by contracting for the remainder.” In January 1825, Nathan Mayer did step into the breach and had no difficulty in selling the second placement of two million pounds. Rothschild became in effect the Brazilian government’s agent, paying the semi-annual dividends on the loans and acting as banker for the Brazilian envoy in London.

Bond for the £2million loan to the Brazilian government, 1825, issued by NM Rothschild

Since the Brazilian government had raised the 1825 loan in part to pay off its debts in Brazil, it needed to draw on the capital held by Rothschild. As Samuel Phillips & Co. reported in March 1825, "It is very probable the Gov<sup>t</sup> Drawings on your goodself may pass our Hands." In fact, from March to August 1825 the firm provided the government with over £200,000, being reimbursed mainly by bills of exchange drawn by the Brazilian Treasury on Rothschild. The size of these transactions testifies to the resources and the standing of Samuel Phillips & Co.

The year 1825 saw a change in the firm’s management in Brazil. Denis Moses Samuel who had been ill returned to England on the April packet boat. In London, he assumed the direction of Samuel & Phillips. To assist Joshua Samuel and his brother James (returned to Rio with restored health early in 1824) there came out to Brazil John Samuel, a son of Phineas Moses Samuel, another of the brothers. John Samuel was then very young and he only began service as a confidential copy clerk in July 1826.

By the time of his return to London, Denis Moses Samuel was a wealthy man. He took up residence in Hanover Terrace, designed by John Nash on the western side of Regent's Park. Even more successful was Samuel Moses Samuel who at the start of the 1820s had moved his office to Freeman's Court, Cornhill, by the Royal Exchange and very close to New Court. S. M. Samuel purchased about this time 29 Park Crescent, designed by John Nash, which still stands, facing onto the Marylebone Road and Regent's Park. In Boyle's Court Directory for 1829, both brothers were entitled "Esq." Contributing to this new social status were the tightened bonds between Nathan Mayer Rothschild and S. M. Samuel. In November 1826, Samuel Phillips & Co. wrote from Rio: "We have to thank you for your communication of the intended Marriage of our Brother S. M. Samuel's Daughter Henrietta to Mr. Worms & hope every good may attend them as well as yourself & Esteemed family." Solomon Benedict Worms, the son of Nathan Mayer's sister, Jeannette, had been brought over to England and educated there by his uncle. The wedding took place in July 1827. Seven years later, in December 1834, Denis Moses Samuel, then aged fifty, married his niece, Amelia, the youngest of S. M. Samuel's three daughters.

The letters that Samuel Phillips & Co. sent to Nathan Mayer Rothschild in the later 1820s suggest a subtle change in the relationship. The information given is quite sparse and summary and the tone adopted far more equal. The firm in Rio was now paying, it is fair to infer, as much or more attention to its financial and commercial dealings with Samuel & Phillips. In 1826 the Rio firm's attempt to take three quarters of the profit from a bill of exchange for £10,000 drawn on Rothschild by the English envoy to Brazil so displeased Nathan Mayer that he noted on their letter: "Cannot allow this, I must have the whole amount." He refused to accept the envoy's bill until Samuel & Phillips had endorsed it over to him. The changed circumstances perhaps explain why, at the end of 1829, Rothschild selected as his second corresponding agent in Rio de Janeiro Leuzinger & Co., a branch of an established firm of the same name in Paris. Leuzinger & Co. were not only as deferential in their letters as Nathan Mayer could desire but supplied him, each month, with copious information on the financial, commercial and political situation in Brazil.

The element of tension existing in the relationship between Samuel Phillips & Co. in Rio and Rothschild helps explain the train of events that led at the end of 1831 to Samuel & Phillips replacing Nathan Mayer Rothschild as the Brazilian government's financial agent in London. During the late 1820s the financial situation of the Empire of Brazil grew more and more shaky. It experienced great difficulty in finding the funds necessary to meet the dividends payable on 1 April and 1 October on its sterling loans. On more than one occasion Rothschild made up the necessary amount out of his own resources and he grew accustomed to dunning the treasury boards in the ports outside of Rio de Janeiro for their allotted contributions to the dividend payments. He seems to have lectured the Imperial government on its duties and reproved it for failure to meet them. In May 1829 Samuel Phillips & Co. reported "the intimation we made to the minister of finance, of what you were pleased to state to our Mr. Denis Samuel on the departure of Packet on 7 March 'that but for his information on the state of this country you would not have paid dividends 1st April last' & we hope nothing had occurred at the departure of the Packet on 27th same to alter your determination".

In April 1831, a political crisis forced Pedro I to abdicate. He sailed for Europe, leaving as emperor his son, then aged five. Pedro I's political opponents took control of the government. Samuel Phillips & Co. profited from this change. Not only did the departing emperor give the firm his power of attorney to manage his financial and personal affairs in Brazil, but the firm, having done many favours for the politicians now in office, possessed open access to them. The most able and strong willed of the politicians was Diogo Pereira de Vasconcelos, named Minister of Finance in July 1831. Vasconcelos was determined to ensure that the finances of Brazil would henceforth be properly managed and that sufficient funds would always be on



Rio de Janeiro in the  
19th century

deposit in London well before the due date for the payment of dividends. He so informed Rothschild and sent him both detailed information and specific instructions on the subject.

Vasconcelos wrote in Portuguese and the use of this language may explain why Nathan Mayer Rothschild paid little attention to the Minister's letters. He clearly believed that political disorder and financial crisis would result from the new state of affairs and so he continued to press the local treasury boards to make large remittances direct to him. His letters to the Brazilian Minister of Finance provided little information on the amount of funds Rothschild held in London but contained many exhortations about the necessity of Brazil fulfilling its international commitments. Vasconcelos' letters make patent his impatience and rising anger at both the tone and the content of Rothschild's correspondence. Nathan Mayer paid no heed to these danger signals. As 1831 drew to a close, Vasconcelos took action. On 24 December Samuel Phillips & Co. informed Rothschild:

"We ought to communicate to you that in a Conference we had with the Minister of Finance S<sup>r</sup> Vasconcelos he represented he felt exceedingly hurt that you did not treat the Brazilian Minister well, even so far as to refuse taking his Bill for trifling amounts. That has made him, added to the following reasons, suspend the government's transactions with you & finding his fixed *rezolução* [resolve] thereupon if we did not accept same to adopt some other measure, we thought it proper to accept of same, also alledging [*sic*] the irregularity of your sending accounts & A/C, so much so that the Government are ignorant of the actual state of their Funds in the hands of the Contractors; withal it appears they intend to continue paying the Dividends as usual & that positive Orders went to all the Provinces, to make remittance & also make efforts to do the same from hence."

What Samuel Phillips & Co. did not specify in their letter to Nathan Mayer was that henceforth the Minister of Finance would use Samuel & Phillips to handle the government's funds in London and to sell the diamonds, dye woods, cotton and other commodities it sent to Europe. The letter of 24 December implies that the Rio firm exerted no influence on Vasconcelos but simply accepted his decision, given that he would otherwise choose some other firm of merchants to handle the government's business in London. A Portuguese merchant, writing at Rio on 12 January 1832, offered a very different interpretation of the situation, that of the cuckoo in the nest:

"How is it that the firm of Samuel Phillips, represented here by a drunkard who does not know how to talk in any language, has not only served the ex-Emperor, regaining for him all the pieces of property he desires, but as his attorney is demanding large sums from the State?! And, with the abolition of the Treasury Agency in London, and removing the sale of the diamonds

and Brazil wood from the hands of the envoys in London, the firm has been asked to sell these products and also to act as Treasury Agent from now on. All this is the result of keeping every day open house, serving no more than half a dozen dishes, and of finding cash with which to make loans to public figures desirous of making a show but without the income to do so.”<sup>3</sup>

It is patent that Nathan Mayer Rothschild did not believe and could not credit how he had been treated. He wrote in wrath to Samuel Phillips & Co. who replied on 26 April with a smooth putdown: “We have to regret it did not afford you satisfaction our communication respecting our conference with the Minister of Finance, we have only in conclusion to state it was at his instance we made it you, & we have nothing to comment thereon. We have no doubt from the exertions made here the Dividends were paid by you as usual on 1 April instant.”s Even more galling to Rothschild’s pride must have been the letter sent by Samuel & Phillips of London on 31 August 1832: “We beg to inform you that on Friday the 7<sup>th</sup> Sept<sup>r</sup> next we shall hold at your disposal the Sum of Thirty three Thousand seven hundred & fifty Pounds for which amount £33750 we request you will hand us your receipt in Trip<sup>te</sup> stating its application to be on account of the Imperial Brazilian Loans for Dividends due on the 1st of October ensuing.”

Rothschild acted as though he had not been supplanted. He continued to harass the local treasury boards to make direct remittances to him of their quota of funds to pay the loan dividends. He bombarded successive Ministers of Finance with protests, projects and complaints against Samuel & Phillips’ conduct. The Ministers’ replies, always courteous and considerate, were unyielding. None of them would consider reversing Vasconcelos’ decision. By the middle of 1833 Rothschild had come to appreciate that Samuel & Phillips’ status as Brazilian government agent in London was unassailable. He resolved to end Samuel Phillips & Co.’s role as his corresponding agent in Rio. Using a failure on its part to conform to his instructions in drawing a bill of exchange on him, he ordered it to hand over the substantial funds it held on his behalf to Leuzinger & Co. and to Finnie Brothers. “We cannot but be sensible to these changes,” Samuel Phillips & Co replied, “& trust any incident of business will not deprive us the honor of your friendship which you were pleased to uphold with us as for times long past.” The letter is in the handwriting of Joshua Samuel, who some twenty years before had formed part of “the circle round your hospitable table”.

Nathan Mayer Rothschild never, to his dying day, acknowledged that he might have been responsible for losing the financial agency. In April 1836, he told a special envoy of the Brazilian government that it “had been unjust towards him, perhaps because of the circumstances of the moment, but that he would not hesitate now to lend with the same good will and liberality he showed in former times, provided the government espoused sound principles, that is, if it scrupulously fulfills the contracts it makes, the only way to possess credit”.<sup>4</sup>

Three months later, Nathan Mayer died at Frankfurt and with him ended any element of personal animosity, if such existed, against Samuel & Phillips. The mourners at Rothschild’s funeral included, as *The Times* reported, members of the various branches of the Samuel family. In Rio de Janeiro Samuel Phillips & Co. continued to prosper. The firm’s great achievement was the successful launching of a Brazilian government loan for £400,000 on the London market in 1839. The British envoy in Rio characterised Samuel Phillips & Co at the end of 1839 as “a great Commercial, or rather Financial jewish [*sic*] House in London and here, long connected with this Government in most of its operations.” A month earlier, he had commented: “the Influence of the House of Samuel and Company is very great in this Country, and they make unscrupulous use of the thorough knowledge they possess of the venality of the Brazilian Representatives and Public Servants.”<sup>5</sup>

In reality, Samuel Phillips & Co. had reached its apogee. At the end of 1839 James Samuel returned permanently to England, leaving the firm under the management of his nephew John Samuel. Political developments in Brazil brought the replacement of Samuel & Phillips by the

firm of Goldsmid, King and Thompson as government agents in London. This change does not seem to have greatly affected the Rio firm's fortunes. John Samuel possessed excellent connections with the political and social elite of Brazil. From 1841 to 1843 Samuel Phillips & Co. served anew as corresponding agents in Rio for N M Rothschild & Sons. Finally, in 1851, after a quarter century's residence in Brazil, John Samuel decided to return to England. With no member of the family to succeed him, he put the Rio firm into liquidation.

In London Samuel & Phillips continued to carry on business until the death of Denis Moses Samuel in August 1860. After his return, John Samuel, whose niece Juliana Cohen married Mayer de Rothschild, was a frequent visitor to Mentmore, Mayer's residence in Buckinghamshire, and he sometimes lunched with Lionel de Rothschild at the City of London Club, Old Broad Street. John Samuel may have played a role in N M Rothschild & Sons' securing appointment in 1855 as Brazilian government agents in London. He certainly used his family connections to persuade NM Rothschild & Sons to act as the issuing house for the shares of Brazilian railway companies of which he was a director.

The longest lived of the Samuel brothers was, paradoxically, Samuel Moses Samuel, the oldest. He did not die until 1873, aged 99, leaving a fortune of £500,000. Neither his son, George, nor Denis Moses Samuel's two sons, Frank and Arthur, showed the least interest in the world of commerce and finance. John Samuel who never married lived on until 1887. By then the two firms of Samuel Phillips & Co of Rio de Janeiro and Samuel & Phillips of London were no more than memories. In contrast, NM Rothschild & Sons continued to flourish like a green bay tree.

#### NOTES

The main sources for this article are in the Rothschild Archive: XI/38/215 Boxes A and B, Samuel Phillips & Co.; XI/65/0A, 2B, and 3A, Correspondence with the Brazilian Government; XI/38/167A, Leuzinger & Co.; and XI/112/ Box 11 1812 K-Z, General Correspondence. Also used, from the Arquivo Histórico do Itamarati, Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, is the Arquivo Particular do Barão de Penedo, Lata 911, Maço 01, Pasta 17, letters of John Samuel. Information on members of the Samuel family and their activities comes principally from Lucien Wolf, *Essays in Jewish History with a memoir* ed. by Cecil Roth (London: Jewish Historical Society of England, 1934), Cecil Roth, *The Great Synagogue, London, 1690-1940* (London, E. Goldston, 1950), Malcolm H. Stern, *First American Jewish Families: 600 Genealogies 1654-1988* 3rd ed., updated and rev. (Baltimore MD: Ottenheimer Publishers, c1991), and the London Directories, held in the library of the Institute for Historical Research and in the Guildhall Library. All other sources cited have been footnoted.

1. Diary entry for 18 June 1812 transcribed in Lucien Wolf, *Essays*, p. 245. On Levi Barent Cohen, see Louis Loewe, *Diaries of Sir Moses and Lady Montefiore* (London: no publisher, 1890), v. 1, pp. 1-2, Lucien Wolf, *Essays*, pp. 234-39 and Lord Justice [Lionel] Cohen, "Levi Barent Cohen and some of his descendants," *The Jewish Historical Society of England Transactions*, Sessions 1945-1951 v. xvi, pp. 11-23.
2. Arquivo Nacional da Torre do Tombo, Lisbon, Portugal, Arquivo do Ministério dos Negócios Estrangeiros, Caixa 173, n. 66, Viscount of São Lourenço to Samuel Phillips & Co., Rio de Janeiro, 3 February 1821.
3. "Cartas de João Loureiro escriptas do Rio de Janeiro ao Conselheiro Manuel José da Costa e Sá," *Revista do Instituto Historico e Geographico Brasileiro* tomo 76, parte II (1913), 392. By 1831 the financial agent in London was no longer the Brazilian envoy, as Loureiro assumed, but NM Rothschild.
4. Draft letter of the Marquis of Barbacena to Diogo Antônio Feijó, Rio, June 1836, transcribed in Antonio Augusto de Aguiar, *Vida do Marquez de Barbacena* (Rio de Janeiro: Imprensa Nacional, 1896), p. 950. Known as "General Brant" prior to receiving his title of nobility, Barbacena had been one of the two Brazilian agents in London who negotiated the loan of 1824 and 1825.
5. National Archives, Public Record Office, Foreign Office series 13, Brazil General Correspondence, v. 154, William Gore Ouseley to Lord Palmerston, n. 86, Rio, 9 November 1839, and William G. Ouseley to William Fox Strangways, n. 2, Rio, 21 December 1839.

## “A pair of every species”

Victor Gray follows a trail from the Walter Rothschild Zoological Museum in Tring back into the wilderness of northern Australia



THERE CAN BE LITTLE DOUBT of Walter Rothschild's place in the pantheon of 20th-century naturalists. The sheer statistics of his lifework leave one amazed: a collection of some 2,000 mounted mammals and a similar number of birds, with two million butterflies and moths, 300,000 bird skins and 200,000 birds' eggs; more than 1,700 scientific books and papers published; more than 5,000 new species of animals described.<sup>1</sup>

Over some four decades, Walter and his two scientific colleagues, Ernst Hartert and Karl Jordan, laboured daily in the museum which Walter set up in the grounds of Tring Park, the family home in Hertfordshire. Yet they were but the hub of a huge network of contacts throughout the world. Each one of the hundreds of thousands of specimens that earned its place in the Museum had been tracked down in often hostile conditions and found its way to Tring by a slow and tortuous route.

Recent contacts with the Western Australia Museum in Perth have brought to light, through the help of the Librarian, Margaret Triffitt, a clutch of letters in the Museum archive which give some idea of the difficulties facing the collectors commissioned by Walter.<sup>2</sup> When set alongside a dozen or so letters sent to Walter by the Curator of the Museum in Perth and now held in the Natural History Museum in London as part of the huge and fascinating collection of Walter's correspondence, it is

Walter Rothschild by Joszi  
Arpad Koppay, c. 1910.  
(Courtesy of the Natural  
History Museum, London)

possible to piece together the journey of one of these specimen collectors into the wilderness of the Northern Territory of Australia at the turn of the 20th century.

John T. Tunney was something of a drifter. He had started work as a post office messenger, then worked on a construction gang erecting the overland telegraph and doing surveying work for various mining companies before coming into contact with the Western Australia Museum in 1895 and beginning to collect objects and specimens for them from the remoter parts of the country.<sup>3</sup> Only two known images of him survive. In one he sits primly for a studio portrait, his trade and personality completely obscured by the stiffness of the occasion; in the other he sits outside his tent, preparing specimens to send to the Museum, his face cast in deep shadow, leaving him still something of a mystery.

Walter appears to have first been in touch with the newly named Western Australian Museum and Art Gallery in Perth in July 1899 when its Curator, the London-born Bernard Henry Woodward, son of Samuel Woodward, a geologist and mineralogist in the British Museum, sent him by the S.S. *Britannia*, two adult emus “shot for you by our collector, near Kojonup in the south-west of this colony.”<sup>4</sup> In return for this and other specimens Woodward asked for specimens of British species – rabbits, hedgehogs, robins, thrushes and so on – to boost the museum's collections. Kojonup was Tunney's home town. He had been working for the museum as a collector for four years. In all he would complete nine collecting expeditions for them.

In sending the emus, Woodward little dreamt that he would unleash Walter's insatiable appetite for specimens. By August 1900 he was writing to Perth “Send me a pair of every species of Kangaroo and Wallaby from each locality i.e. region, throughout Australia and Tasmania including the surrounding Islands.”<sup>5</sup> Perhaps to contain his ambitions within practical confines, Woodward proposed an expedition, sending Tunney off into areas of the Northern Territory as yet unexplored. A deal was struck in December. Walter would pay Tunney £100 a year for two years, paid through the Museum, which would be entitled to receive the second specimen of any species collected.<sup>6</sup>

Tunney was to pay particular attention to butterflies and moths, and would also collect aboriginal weapons and notes on their lifestyle and customs – in which Walter professed no interest whatever – for the Museum. More detailed instructions and requirements followed from Tring, together with a full set of apparatus and instructions for catching, killing and storing lepidoptera.<sup>7</sup>

The route Tunney was to take led him over 1500 miles, from Port Hedland in the Pilbarra region north of Perth, west to the border of the Northern Territory and then northwest into increasingly unknown land. Rothschild's hope was that Tunney would spend a year in the area of the Alligator River in the extreme north, to the east of Darwin, moving some 100 miles either side of the river from source to estuary. His expectation was that he would be able to send him up to 5,000 birds and as many mammals, plus moths and butterflies. He was also hoping for specimens to be caught en route to the Alligator.<sup>8</sup>



The area and route of Tunney's expedition, 1901 - 1903



Across the winter months of June, July and August 1901, Tunney prepared himself. The insect-catching apparatus arrived from England, he bought horses and looked out for a boat to take him around the coast to the mouth of the river. The most disturbing factor was that no-one seemed to know anything about the Alligator River. No-one had been there and there were no charts to be had. Furthermore, trying to get aboriginal labour to accompany him was not proving easy; they were all busy on the sheep stations.<sup>9</sup>

Tunney filled in his time as best he could with short collecting sorties into the country around Port Hedland. The catch was sent back to England and in September Tunney, through Woodward in Perth, had a first hint of the more exacting side of Walter's nature. He was pleased with specimens received but, "I never saw anything so disgracefully packed in my life. The birds were just thrown into the box like potatoes into a sack and were rolling about loose and with no covering. Each specimen ought to be wrapped separately in soft paper and all the interstices filled out with hay".<sup>10</sup> Equally trying was the weather. The rains were now setting in and by mid-September he was forced to accept that an early start on his trek was now looking unlikely. Anxious to pick up time he sought leave to do as much of the journey as he could by sea.<sup>11</sup> Back in the mildness of a Tring winter, Walter appears to have been unsympathetic. His interest did not lie in sea creatures and the delay of a tough overland journey was not a key factor.

By February Tunney had moved on to Derby, some 400 miles eastward along the coast, but it was still raining. "The country is all under water now. A man was drowned on the main road last week crossing a small creek". Tunney's plea that it would take a strong vehicle, six horses and two months to do the overland trek still fell on deaf ears; he was forced to cancel tentative arrangements for a boat journey and to reconcile himself to the overland journey. Perhaps it was the rain, perhaps Walter's intransigence, but certainly frustration broke through in Tunney's letters. He had had an offer of £200 to work on a sheep station, he reported, clearly hinting that he had been tempted. He would go the long and hard way but, "If the Hon W.R. were to dispense with my services after a few months it would be very annoying". By now he reckoned it would take him four months to travel the 1,400 miles to Palmerston (renamed Darwin in 1911).<sup>12</sup> In mid-March the journey finally began, though even at the point of departure troubles beset Tunney. He had found an aborigine to accompany him, but he had died a week before they were due to start. He could only hope that he might find another en route. He had also taken out his camera and found it ruined by the climate. He had sold it for £6. This would be an expedition without photographs.<sup>13</sup>

It was to be more than the expected four months before Tunney wrote again to Perth. He was now at Brocks Creek, about a hundred miles from Palmerston and accompanied by his brother, for whom – perhaps in desperation for a trustworthy companion) he had sent, offering him £2 a week for the duration of the expedition. Even so, the journey had done nothing, it would seem, to lift his spirits. One of his six horses had fallen down a shaft; he had found no aboriginal companion, and, to cap it all after the rainy season, he had passed through an unseasonally dry landscape. There had been half the usual rainfall and game was scarce. "In fact the trip has been a failure so far. I travelled since leaving Derby about 1,300 miles and have not enough specimens to pay expenses. I am very disappointed and I know you must be, still I did my best." Clearly the spectre of Walter's cancelling his commission and leaving him high and dry still haunted him. The best he could do was to assure Woodward and Rothschild that there would be 150 specimens for him to send on from Palmerston and to remind them that the Alligator was now only about a hundred miles away, though by the time he reached there the rains would be back. The expectation was for 60-70 inches of water.<sup>14</sup>



There is no way of knowing whether all Tunney's letters back to Perth have survived. The next letter we have, dated 3rd February 1903 at Eureka, talks of damage to his arm. It is now "fairly strong again, though I do not think it will ever be quite straight". We can only speculate on what had happened. By now he had made sorties up to the head of the South Alligator River into the granite mountains in search of specimens, and had been driven back only by shortage of rations.<sup>15</sup>

Six months later he was back at his base camp at Brock's Creek and admitting to having only been able so far to work half the district. He was exploring the area in a series of trips, darting up into the hills and mountains while he left his brother to keep camp. The coastal area was flooded and mosquitoes plagued him morning and night. He had been suffering from fever, though this seemed now to have retreated. Indeed, the tone of Tunney's letter is quite changed, falling over himself to describe the rich game he was finding and pursuing. His tally of specimens was rising rapidly. He had recruited aborigines to make fires and drive out specimens of a black kangaroo which he thought and hoped might be a rarity, living only in the mountains to the east of the Alligator. There was a black and white pigeon he could not find in any book, a *malurus* (a small bird, the fairywren) the identification of which was problematic and lots of small mammals. He was even planning to send samples of the mosquitoes! Indeed, all in all, he was about to send a consignment of "about 183 birds and 150 mammals, also about 400 specimens of native implements, etc."<sup>16</sup>

That is the last letter we have from Tunney on this expedition. We know from his journal (now sadly lost)<sup>17</sup> that he stayed in the Alligator region until November 1903 and then he and his brother took ship around the coast to Fremantle.

We do not have a final tally of specimens collected on the expedition. By the end of 1905 Ernst Hartert had described in print 221 birds collected by Tunney, of which two were new species and three new sub-species. Michael Oldfield Thomas, the Curator of Mammals at

John Tunney on expedition. (Courtesy of the Western Australian Museum, Perth). The studio, reprinted from *The Emu*, 1954. below



the British Museum, was presented with a collection of mammals by Walter and published them.<sup>19</sup> Three were species new to science.

Of the three players in this small drama, Bernard Woodward, the curator in Perth, was honoured in the names of two new species of birds, a shrike-thrush (*Colluricincla woodwardi*) and a grasswren (*Amytornis woodwardi*) both collected on the hills near the South Alligator. He was also acknowledged in the naming of a new kangaroo, distinguished by its black coat, found by Tunney in the high granite ranges near the South Alligator and described by him as “a most striking and remarkable discovery, the finest that has been made in Australia for many years”. This was to be *Macropus bernardus*. Tunney lives on in a new species of black butcherbird (*Cracticus quoyi tunneyi*) which he had shot in the mangrove swamps near the mouth of the Alligator, in a white-bellied rat (*Mus tunneyi*) from the Mary River and in *Epthianura crocea tunneyi*, the yellow chat, a small bird of the Alligator flood plain, now threatened with extinction. For Walter, Thomas named a new rock wallaby, *Petrogale rothschildi*. Perhaps ironically, it had been caught by Tunney in July 1901 near the Cossack River, as Tunney filled in time waiting for the real travails of the expedition to begin.

Tunney never returned to the Northern Territory. It is claimed<sup>20</sup> the climate had taken too great a toll on his health, and his last two expeditions were in more temperate areas south of Perth. He stopped collecting in 1909 and lived out the remaining twenty years of his life on his farm close to his native Kojonup.

Walter's lust for specimens continued unabated. There were many more expeditions and many more collectors in any number of corners of the globe. Behind each of their journeys must lie similar confusion, pain, disappointment and elation. Like the specimens themselves, the sources may prove elusive, but may well await discovery in unexplored collections.

#### NOTES

1. The most detailed account of Walter Rothschild's life and work is Miriam Rothschild's *Dear Lord Rothschild: birds, butterflies and history*, London 1983.
2. The papers, comprising 21 pieces, are among correspondence held in the Western Australia Museum Archives, Perth, Western Australia. Through the generosity of the Librarian, photocopies are held in The Rothschild Archive London, Acc. No. 1276.
3. On Tunney, see M Whittell: 'Notes on field trips of J T Tunney' in *Emu*, Vol. 38, 1954
4. Bernard Woodward [hereafter BW] to Walter Rothschild [WR], 21 July 1899, Natural History Museum Archives, papers of Walter Rothschild [NHM] TM1/151/25.
5. WR to BW, 20 August 1900, Western Australia Museum [hereafter WAM]
6. WR to BW, 10 December 1900,
7. WR to BW, 12 February 1901, WAM
8. WR to BW, 19 May 1901, WAM
9. John T. Tunney [hereafter JTT] to BW, 25 July, 12 and 19 August 1901, WAM
10. WR to BW, 12 September 1901, WAM
11. JTT to BW, 14 September 1901, WAM
12. JTT to BW, 16 February 1902, WAM
13. JTT to BW, 19 March 1902, WAM
14. JTT to BW, 8 August 1902, WAM
15. JTT to BW, 3 February 1903, WAM
16. JTT to BW, 18 July 1903, WAM
17. G.M. Storr: 'J T Tunney's itinerary in Northern Australia 1901-1903' in *Emu*, Vol. 66, No.1, 1966, pp.59-65 reconstructs Tunney's route by way of surviving specimen labels.
18. Ernst Hartert, 'List of birds collected in north-western Australia and Arnhem-Land by Mr. J.T. Tunney', *Novitates Zoologicae*, vol.12, 1905, pp.194-242.
19. Oldfield Thomas, 'On a collection of mammals made by Mr. J.T. Tunney in Arnhem Land, Northern Territory of South Australia', *Novitates Zoologicae*, vol.11, 1904, pp.222-229.
20. M Whittell: 'Notes on field trips of J T Tunney' in *Emu*, Vol. 38, 1954

# Principal acquisitions 1 April 2002 -31 March 2003

This list is not comprehensive but attempts to record all acquisitions of most immediate relevance to research. Some items listed here may, however, remain 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.

Business records of N M Rothschild & Sons Limited: Loans Dept., 1924-1970 (000/1094, 1099, 1101, 1108); Secretariat, 1922-1970 (000/1109, 1117); Partners' Room, 1920-1970 (000/1110); Paying Agents' Dept. records relating to loans, 1870s to 1991 (000/1131); Private Account files, 1922-1970 (000/ 1125, 1130 and 1138,1156, 1159, 1160 and 1163); files of Michael Comminos, partner, 1963-1970 (000/1112)

Pencil sketch of Nathan Mayer Rothschild by Richard Dighton, a study for his family group of the wedding of Charlotte and Anselm Rothschild, 1830 (000/1179)

Indenture for the purchase by Lionel de Rothschild of ten shares in the Alliance British and Foreign Life and Fire Assurance Company, 1832 (000/1190)

Circular miniature of a young messenger bearing the gold badge of the Austrian Imperial Courier and holding a letter inscribed 'à Monsieur de Rothschild, Paris', signed L. Gilbert, 1833 (000/1211)

*A manual of Judaism detailed in conversation between a rabbi and his pupil ...*, by Joshua van Oven, London, 1835; with full-page dedication to Mr and Mrs de Rothschild (000/1215)

*Barrikaten-Szene am 18ten. September:* caricature by S. Stern depicting 'Baron von Rotschirm' (believed to be Amschel Mayer Rothschild) surveying the barricades during street disturbances in Frankfurt, 1848 (000/1134)

Foundation letter and Statutes of the Freiherr Carl Mayer und Alexander von Rothschild'schen Stipendien Stiftung für Israelitische Schüler, Frankfurt-am-Main, 12 November 1854 (000/1174)

Photographs of two election broadsides in connection with the election campaigns of Lionel de Rothschild for the City of London, 1850 and 1851: *Rothschild & Victory and the glorious majority of 3515'* and *Rothschild for Ever! And the City won't be conquer'd* (000/1146)

Small oil painting on board by Cornelius Wiedermann of the Frankfurt Judengasse under snow, n.d. (000/1202)

Two watercolours by Evelina de Rothschild: view of a castle in a German landscape, 1864 and ladies on a terrace, 1866 (000/1129)

Cheque from de Rothschild Frères, 12 February 1871, for the payment of one million Prussian thalers from the account of the City of Paris to S. Bleichröder, Berlin, being the first part of the reparation payments following the Franco-Prussian War (000/1191)

Seven letters from Ferdinand de Rothschild to N M Rothschild & Sons on personal banking matters, 1879-1880 (000/1200)

Copies of telegrams from the Bank of Finland, 1880-1886, relating to loans made by M A von Rothschild und Söhne to the government of Finland (000/1082)

A Jahrzeit Tafel dedicated to his late brother, Mayer Carl (d. 1886) by Wilhelm Carl von Rothschild (000/1180)

*Les Rothschild, une famille de financiers juifs au XIX siècle*, Edouard Demachy, Paris, 1896 (000/1173)

Papers of Wilkins, solicitors of Aylesbury, relating to the property and affairs of Lionel Walter, 2nd Lord Rothschild: including records of the Champneys estate, a testimonial prepared for presentation to Walter Rothschild on his 21st birthday, schedules of deeds etc., 1813-1935 (000/1162)

*L'Abbaye des Vaulx de Cernay. Album édité par le Baron Henri de Rothschild*, Paris 1906, containing 24 photographs of the interior and exterior of the Abbaye (000/1214)

An address by the Jewish community in Frankfurt to Mathilde, Baroness Wilhelm von Rothschild, on her 80th birthday, 1912 (000/1180)

Photograph of a family group, taken 5 March 1922, at the Grüneburg, Frankfurt, on the occasion of the 90th birthday of Hannah Mathilde von Rothschild (000/1187)

Commemorative silver-gilt plaque produced for the Assemblée Générale des Actionnaires du Paris-Lyon-Méditerranée Railway, designed by L.-O. Roty and showing, on the reverse, the exterior of the Gare de Lyon, Paris (000/1123)

Portrait in oils of Leopold de Rothschild [by Horwitz], presented to him by members of the Council of the United Synagogue at the end of his Presidency (1915-1917) (000/1178)

Copy of *Reminiscences* by Constance, Lady Battersea (née Rothschild), 1922, interleaved with various papers, including postcards of The Pleasaunce, Overstrand, Norfolk and letters from R.J. Lister, staying at The Pleasaunce, 1908-1921 (000/1133)

Bronze medal issued by the Académie des Beaux Arts, to commemorate the Fondation Ephrussi de Rothschild; showing, on the obverse, the head of Béatrice Ephrussi de Rothschild and, on the reverse, the Villa Ephrussi, St Jean Cap Ferrat (000/1167)

Photographs and papers re the Rothschild and Goldschmidt-Rothschild families of Frankfurt, including: 3 photographs of the Villa Grüneburg, c.1900-1935, photograph of the Rothschild mansion on Bockenheimer Landstrasse, studio photographs of Marion von Goldschmidt-Rothschild, Minka von Goldschmidt-Rothschild, Hannah Mathilde and Wilhelm Carl von Rothschild; photograph of Maurice de Rothschild, Monte Carlo, 1949; photocopies of Goldschmidt family tree, pamphlet *Jahrbuch des Vermögens und Einkommens der Millionäre im Königreich Preussen*, by Rudolf Martin, Berlin 1913 and extracts on the families from an unidentified German biographical dictionary, c.1970 (000/1177)

Memorial sermon for Baron Edmond de Rothschild, delivered by Dr J H Hertz, at the Great

Synagogue, London, 1934 (000/1173)

Lists of the publications of Walter Rothschild, from *Novitates Zoologicae*, XLI, 1938 and *Ibis*, 14th Series, Vol. II, 1938 (000/1135)

Photocopies of extracts of documents re the looting of art collections in Vienna by the Nazis, from originals among the papers of the O.S.S. Art Looting Investigations Unit in the National Archives and Records of America (000/1170)

*Poèmes* by Philippe de Rothschild, published in a limited edition by Henri Javal in two volumes: Vol. I *A l'aube d'une guerre*, 1950, illustrated by Mario Avati; Vol. 2, *Éclos à l'aube*, 1954, illustrated by Georges Arnulf (000/1208)

A 'Hercules Disc', refined and minted by N M Rothschild & Sons at the Royal Mint Refinery on behalf of the First Banking Tangiers Bank, 1950s and showing, on the obverse, the figure of Hercules (000/1182)

Medal in honour of Edmond and James de Rothschild, issued by the State of Israel, 1966, to commemorate the opening of the Knesset (000/1137)

Collection of newspaper cuttings and other family and business memorabilia, 1934 to 1990; with some additional material including signatures and seal impressions, late 19th and early 20th centuries; letter from Leopold, also signed by Marie, on the occasion of their silver wedding anniversary, dated 19 January 1906; letter from Leopold, 5 March 1912 following an assassination attempt; copy of the address at the funeral of Elizabeth de Rothschild, 29

February 1980 and various internal memoranda of N M Rothschild & Sons: all collected by A Sheldon Radford, a former employee (000/1194)

Collection of obituaries and other press cuttings about the Rothschild family, 1980s (000/1128)

Video of 'Supreme Court Dedication Week', Jerusalem 1992 (000/1165)

Recording of BBC Radio 4 programme *Changing Places*, featuring Miriam Rothschild and broadcast 5 July 2002 (000/1126)

A collection of commemorative medals and coins presented to Edmund de Rothschild during his working life (000/1181)