



WADDESDON  
Rothschild Collections

## WADDESDON AT WAR 25 March – 25 October 2015



Gardeners at Waddesdon, c. 1900; Waddesdon, The Rothschild Collection (The National Trust)  
© The National Trust, Waddesdon Manor

Continuing from 2014, this exhibition marks the centenary of the First World War. Drawn from the Archive and Rothschild memorabilia collections, and including loans from other collections, it looks at the Manor and Estate during the war from the perspective of the family and staff. As Europe was fractured by the conflict, the exhibition also explores the impact of the war on the wider Rothschild family, including those in Austria, Germany and France.

There were approximately 200 staff working at Waddesdon in 1914 at the outbreak of the First World War. Over two thirds of them joined the armed forces and fought in all theatres of war from France and Flanders to Egypt and Palestine in every branch of the armed forces. Over the last year we have been undertaking further research into the fate of these men and will be telling the stories of some of those who went to war using archival research, documents and images.

This year we continue to tell the story of the Rothschild family and the impact of the war, using archive material, photographs and correspondence to look at what they were doing in 1915 and 1916. Early in 1915 the family suffered a devastating blow with the death of Nathaniel (Natty), first Lord Rothschild (b. 1840), a steady hand at the head of the Bank and voice of experience in advising the Government. A small section of the exhibition remembers his life. Mr James de Rothschild remained in the French Army throughout 1915 and early 1916 and his correspondence with his wife, Dorothy, sheds light on his activities and news from home. In October 1916 he was awarded the Distinguished Conduct Medal for his activities on the front line.

-Ends-



WADDESDON  
Rothschild Collections

**Vicky Darby**, Press Officer at Waddesdon Manor  
01296 653231 [vicky.darby@nationaltrust.org.uk](mailto:vicky.darby@nationaltrust.org.uk)

**Visitor information and opening times:** [www.waddesdon.org.uk](http://www.waddesdon.org.uk)  
Waddesdon Manor, Waddesdon, Near Aylesbury, Buckinghamshire HP18 0JH

---

NOTES TO EDITORS

1. Waddesdon Manor was built from 1874 by Baron Ferdinand de Rothschild to display his outstanding collection of art treasures and to entertain the fashionable world. It combines the highest quality 18<sup>th</sup>-century French decorative arts, magnificent English portraits and Dutch Old Master paintings with one of the finest Victorian gardens in Britain, famous for its Parterre and ornate working Aviary. The house was bequeathed to the National Trust in 1957 and is now managed by a family charitable trust, The Rothschild Foundation, under the chairmanship of Lord Rothschild.
2. Waddesdon is one of the most visited historic houses among England's National Trust properties. The collections are a reflection of the passions of the Rothschilds who created and have cared for Waddesdon, from Ferdinand de Rothschild, who built the Manor in the late 19<sup>th</sup> century, to Jacob, the present Lord Rothschild.
3. In recent years, Waddesdon has hosted a vibrant and varied exhibitions programme which both reflects and complements the collections, history of the house and the Rothschild family. Recent highlights include *Predators and Prey: A Roman mosaic from Lod, Israel* (in partnership with the Israel Antiquities Authority and the British Museum), *Fame and Friendship: Pope, Roubiliac and the Portrait Bust in 18<sup>th</sup>-Century Britain* (in partnership with the Yale Center for British Art, New Haven), and *Waddesdon at War* (all 2014); *Sacred Stitches: Ecclesiastical Textiles in the Rothschild Collection at Waddesdon Manor* (2013); *Taking Time: Chardin's Boy Building a House of Cards and Other Paintings* (2012); *Playing, Learning, Flirting: French 18th-Century Board Games* (2012) and *Fantasy from the Fire: Sixteenth-Century Maiolica in the Waddesdon Collection* (2011-2013). The developing programme of contemporary art has encouraged artist responses to the historic collections and interiors as well as to the gardens at Waddesdon. In 2012, **Edmund de Waal** made new works for the historic ground floor rooms, including two large-scale vitrines, which have been acquired by The Rothschild Foundation for Windmill Hill. In 2013, Catalan artist **Joan Sallas** created *Folded Beauty: Masterpieces in Linen*, reviving designs for magnificent Baroque table centrepieces, but including his own contemporary versions. The 2013 carpet bedding and a contemporary wild flower planting scheme were designed by artist **Philippa Lawrence**, inspired by the collection of historic lace and textiles at Waddesdon, and in 2014 we worked with artist **Jan Dunning** on a trail inspired by the experiences of evacuee children and a collaboration with contemporary lace-makers, *Imagine...Lace at Waddesdon*.