



My father had come from Germany.

Robert Mathias worked for his Uncle, the industrial chemist, Ludwig Mond. From all accounts Robert Mathias was an indulgent and generous man, beloved by all. In the picture above I am being held by my Great grandfather.

[Here is the Mond Family tree. My grandmother has written, in her distinctive hand, her grandmother and father's names. Her grandmother, Matilda Mond, was elder sister to Ludwig Mond. My great grandfather wanted me to be named after his mother but my parents thought the name old fashioned so Matilda is my middle name.](#)

Robert grew up in Germany and even did a stint of compulsory military service in the German army. He spoke with a thick German accent all his life.

[For a little more about Robert Mathias read "Gentien the Corporal."](#)

James Lander wrote:

In case you've never seen "The Life of Ludwig Mond", here's an interesting quotation about Robert Mathias (who also wrote a very brief preface): "a man with a delighted sense of the ridiculous, and an imperfect mastery of the English language, he provided a gay contrast to the serious company at 'The Poplars!'."

The book also mentions that RMM served briefly in the German army (which he found "displeasing") before moving to London. There he was secretary for the Mond Nickel Co. when it was founded in 1900, at salary of £400. He was also the director of another company set up by Ludwig Mond, the Brimsdown White Lead Company.



Portrait by John Singer Sargent of Robert Mathias that is at the Tate Britain.

I remember a tutor at art school condemning the way the hands are painted by Sargent in this informal portrait of the Impressionist painter Claude Monet. Where as the hands of



my great-grandfather are beautifully painted.