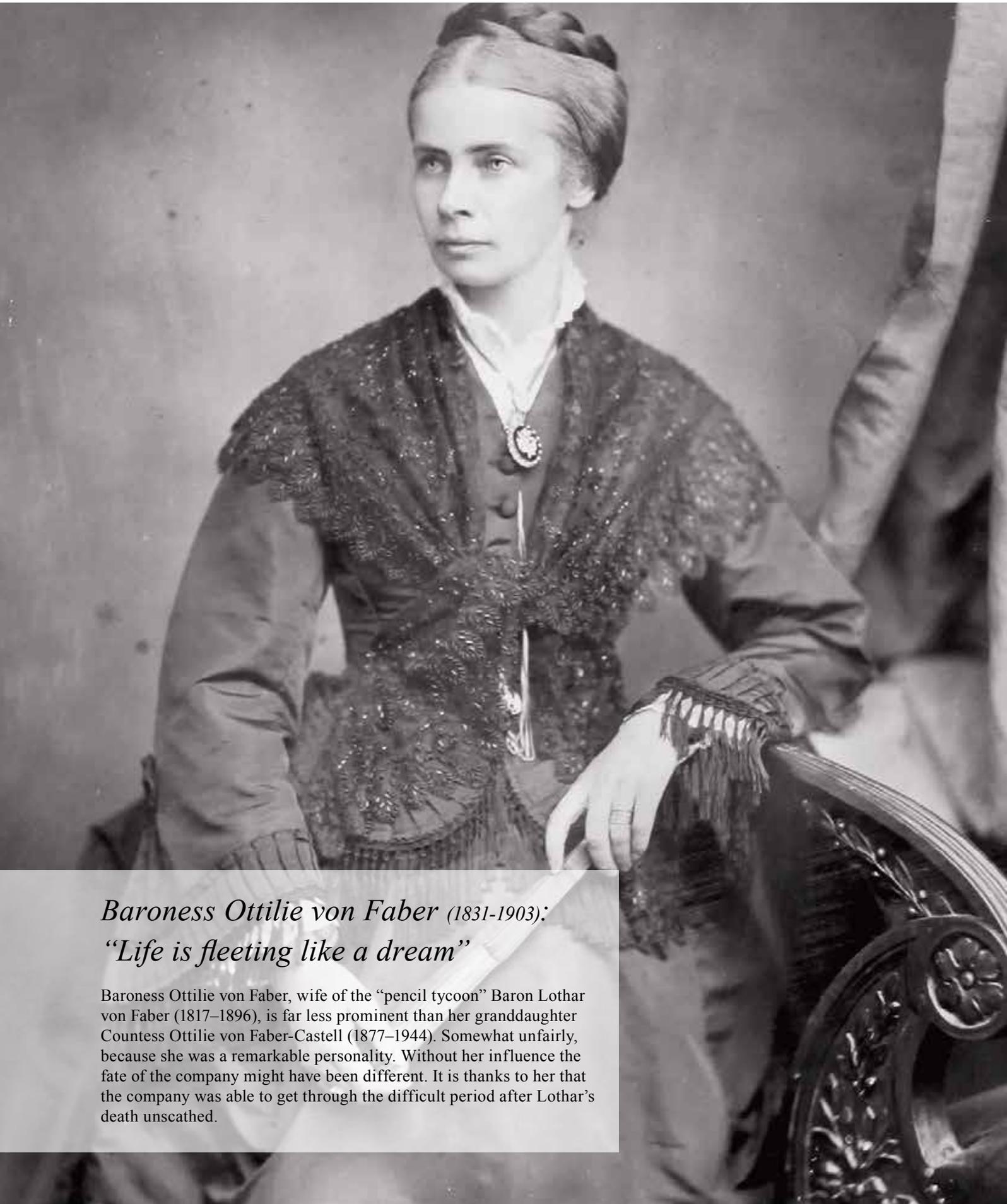




FABER-CASTELL  
since 1761



*Baroness Ottilie von Faber (1831-1903):  
“Life is fleeting like a dream”*

Baroness Ottilie von Faber, wife of the “pencil tycoon” Baron Lothar von Faber (1817–1896), is far less prominent than her granddaughter Countess Ottilie von Faber-Castell (1877–1944). Somewhat unfairly, because she was a remarkable personality. Without her influence the fate of the company might have been different. It is thanks to her that the company was able to get through the difficult period after Lothar’s death unscathed.



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Family happiness:  
Baron Lothar von Faber, Baroness Otilie and son Wilhelm.

Otilie was born on 14 January 1831 in Dinkelsbühl, Germany. At a young age she boasted impressive rhetorical talent, an elegant writing style and artistic talent, which her mother Caroline diligently encouraged. Throughout her life she was interested in contemporary and classical literature, for she was convinced that “genuine education by no means makes a woman unwomanly”. In this respect, she was the ideal partner for Lothar von Faber, because to him “the most beautiful thing in life seemed to be an educated woman”.

After their wedding on 1 August 1847, Otilie quickly found her way in her role as wife of an ambitious industrialist, despite her youth. She no longer had to lend

her own hand to pencil production like the women of earlier generations, but her high social status went hand in hand with a wide range of tasks: she and Lothar “worked tirelessly together” in managing the increasingly extensive family property, which included not only factories and commercial buildings, but also agricultural goods and country estates. In the town of Stein she organised the repeated conversion of the “old” castle and designed the park. She managed a large house, took on representative and charitable roles and received illustrious guests such as King Maximilian II of Bavaria and his wife; the “Swan King” Ludwig II and Crown Prince Ludwig of Bavaria.

In 1851 she gave birth to her only child, son Wilhelm (†1893). She raised him with a loving but energetic hand. In order to prepare him as well as possible for his future role as head of an international company, she ensured that he attended boarding school in Switzerland.

His unexpected death struck her like “a crushing bolt of lightning out of the blue“. She devoted herself intensely to raising her three granddaughters, whom she steered to discipline, meaningful activity and modesty.

Even though Lothar ran the business according to the spirit of the time, as co-owner of the company she was privy to the business processes and knew how to master many a delicate situation with diplomatic skill. As his closest confidante, Lothar appointed her heiress of the company, for he knew “that she will administer the same with the purpose and spirit and according to my life principles, which she well knows”. After his death in 1896, Otilie, in accordance with his wishes, transferred management of the company to long-serving employees, who assisted her in preserving her significant inheritance.

She saw the marriage of her granddaughter Otilie to Count Alexander zu Castell-Rüdenhausen in 1898 as a “ray of light in the life of the Faber family” after years of mourning. Trusting in Count Alexander’s abilities, she included him in the company management two years after the wedding.

After a full life she died on 27 January 1903: “the days are always too short and life is fleeting like a dream.”