

Zeitschrift: Swiss pioneers of economics and technology
Herausgeber: Association for Historical Research in Economics
Band: 3 (1995)

Artikel: Rieter's 200 years : 1795-1995. From trading company to international group : Johann Jacob Rieter (1762-1826), Heinrich Rieter (1788-1851), Heinrich Rieter (1814-1889)
Autor: Furrer, Alfred J.
Vorwort: Introduction
DOI: <https://doi.org/10.5169/seals-1091179>

Nutzungsbedingungen

Die ETH-Bibliothek ist die Anbieterin der digitalisierten Zeitschriften auf E-Periodica. Sie besitzt keine Urheberrechte an den Zeitschriften und ist nicht verantwortlich für deren Inhalte. Die Rechte liegen in der Regel bei den Herausgebern beziehungsweise den externen Rechteinhabern. Das Veröffentlichen von Bildern in Print- und Online-Publikationen sowie auf Social Media-Kanälen oder Webseiten ist nur mit vorheriger Genehmigung der Rechteinhaber erlaubt. [Mehr erfahren](#)

Conditions d'utilisation

L'ETH Library est le fournisseur des revues numérisées. Elle ne détient aucun droit d'auteur sur les revues et n'est pas responsable de leur contenu. En règle générale, les droits sont détenus par les éditeurs ou les détenteurs de droits externes. La reproduction d'images dans des publications imprimées ou en ligne ainsi que sur des canaux de médias sociaux ou des sites web n'est autorisée qu'avec l'accord préalable des détenteurs des droits. [En savoir plus](#)

Terms of use

The ETH Library is the provider of the digitised journals. It does not own any copyrights to the journals and is not responsible for their content. The rights usually lie with the publishers or the external rights holders. Publishing images in print and online publications, as well as on social media channels or websites, is only permitted with the prior consent of the rights holders. [Find out more](#)

Download PDF: 24.04.2026

ETH-Bibliothek Zürich, E-Periodica, <https://www.e-periodica.ch>

Introduction

Determined to make his own way in life, the young Johann Jacob Rieter left the family's goldsmith business in 1795 for the world of commerce. His thirst for the freedom to conduct his own business prompted him to break out of the constraints imposed on the craft trades in the Zurich of those days. The Rieter name has endured through an eventful series of developments ever since.

Over several generations and through economic ups and downs, the sons and grandsons of the Rieter family have taken responsibility for the development of the firm. They led the company from trading in colonial produce and cotton, to become ultimately a spinning machinery manufacturer. In the process they also became involved in numerous other textile machinery sectors and diversification ventures such as e.g. turbines, electrical engineering, railways, bridgebuilding and rifles.

In the early 20th century the company's destiny was finally entrusted to specialists outside the Rieter family. They continued to manage the company in the spirit of its founders, concentrating its activities on spinning machinery manufacture. While following this development route, the company was also opening up to all international markets. In the process, Rieter grew out of the monoculture of a one-product company and developed the structures of a global multitechnology group.

These developments are recorded in these publications celebrating the 200th anniversary of the Rieter com-



Obertöss factory bell, inscribed «My peal calls to and fro, to work and to rest»

pany. The first volume reviews the company's history, while the second volume deals with general engineering, textile machinery manufacture, the products of staple fibre and filament technology, and noise control.

The brief, matter-of-fact presentational style of these two pioneering volumes has been chosen deliberately to reflect the spirit of the times as the turn of the millenium approaches. The material is intended to provide verbal and pictorial information on the past 200 years of Rieter's activities, and also to encourage reflection on the company's future.

As regards historical developments and the first 175 years of the company's existence, this volume is based on the manuscript by Dr. Hans U. Rentsch of Winterthur, who died in 1994. Paul Klaeger of Meilen completed the chapter on the Rieter family and put together the chronicle of «Rieter's 200 Years 1795–1995».

The work as a whole, and in particular the progress of the company in the past twenty-five to fifty years, has been compiled by the author.

Winterthur, summer 1994
Alfred J. Furrer

*The Rieter family coat
of arms*

