

M1926

RECORDS OF THE
REPARATIONS AND RESTITUTIONS BRANCH OF THE
U.S. ALLIED COMMISSION FOR AUSTRIA (USACA) SECTION,
1945–1950

Matthew Olsen prepared the Introduction and arranged these records for
microfilming.

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INTRODUCTION

On the 156 rolls of this microfilm publication, M1926, are reproduced the individual claims processed by and general records of the Reparations and Restitutions Branch of the United States Element, Allied Commission for Austria (USACA) Section, 1945–1950. The claims represent assembled information that was used to determine if the claimants deserved restitution of property or that property's value. These records are part of the Records of United States Occupation Headquarters, World War II, Record Group (RG) 260.

Background

The U.S. Allied Commission for Austria (USACA) Section was responsible for civil affairs and military government administration in the American section (U.S. Zone) of occupied Austria, including the U.S. sector of Vienna. USACA Section constituted the U.S. Element of the Allied Commission for Austria. The four-power occupation administration was established by a U.S., British, French, and Soviet agreement signed July 4, 1945. It was organized concurrently with the establishment of Headquarters, United States Forces Austria (HQ USFA) on July 5, 1945, as a component of the U.S. Forces, European Theater (USFET). The single position of USFA Commanding General and U.S. High Commissioner for Austria was held by Gen. Mark Clark from July 5, 1945, to May 16, 1947, and by Lt. Gen. Geoffrey Keyes from May 17, 1947, to September 19, 1950. USACA Section was abolished following transfer of the U.S. occupation government from military to civilian authority. This was marked by President Harry Truman's appointment of Walter J. Donnelly as Envoy (later Ambassador) to Austria and U.S. High Commissioner for Austria on September 20, 1950. Ambassador Llewelyn E. Thompson, Jr., succeeded Donnelly on July 17, 1952. The U.S. occupation government in Austria officially terminated on July 27, 1955, as a result of the State Treaty for the Re-establishment of an Independent and Democratic Austria, signed May 15, 1955.

The Reparations, Deliveries, and Restitutions (RD&R) Division of USACA Section was organized into branches. Initially, the Property Control Branch and the Monuments and Fine Arts Branch shared the division's work. However, by February 1946, the work of the Monuments and Fine Arts Branch was substantially completed and was disbanded. A new branch called the Reparations and Restitutions Branch was activated at that time to handle general restitution matters as well as any subsequent work related to monuments and fine arts. One additional branch called the German External Assets Branch was organized on October 12, 1946.

The organizational structure and policies used by the division were based largely on similar work performed by the Office of the Military Government, United States Zone (Germany)(OMGUS). The general posture of USACA policy in Austria, however, was intended to achieve a balance between the complete control exhibited by OMGUS and the cooperative atmosphere in the formerly occupied countries of northwest Europe.

The functions of the Reparations and Restitutions Branch were to interpret policy with respect to restitution of looted property under U.S. jurisdiction in Austria; to direct the investigation of claims of foreign governments for the restitution of looted property under U.S. jurisdiction in Austria; to cooperate with the heads of foreign restitution missions with respect to inspection trips and restitution of looted property in the U.S. Zone of Austria; and to maintain liaison with the appropriate Divisions of the Austrian Federal Ministry for Property Control and Economic Planning with respect to the economic effects of specific restitutions within the U.S. Zone.

The claims within these records represent a wide variety of property. For example, a large number of claims for Hungary involved horses. Similarly, French claims contain many concerning stolen vehicles. Some of the more prominent family names of Europe also appear throughout the claims, such as the Rothschilds. However, the majority of claims were filed on behalf of governments and businesses.

Records Description

The records of the Reparations and Restitutions Branch are divided into two series. The first series, Records Relating to Claims, 1945–1950, consists of claims, claim lists, receipts, descriptions of art treasures, and miscellaneous records. They are arranged alphabetically by country and thereunder, numerically by claim within each country.

The majority of the folders in this series are dedicated to individual claims. The claimant was either an individual, organization, business or government. Each claim folder generally consists of correspondence, receipts, and material found or created during the investigation of the claim.

For each country, the claims are followed by folders containing receipts for approved and restituted claims. The accumulated receipts show which claims were approved and restituted. In most cases, these receipts are copies of those already in the individual claim folder. For each country, these folders are located between the individual claims and the claim list. Towards the end of the Yugoslavian claims, separate lists are included for the varying nationalities within Yugoslavia, such as Serbians and Croatians.

The final folder for each country contains a claim list that provides general information on each claim for that country. Owner, property description, and location information are the typical details included.

The numbering for folders containing materials other than claims, such as receipts and claims lists, continues after the number used for the last claim. For example, the final Austrian claim is number 122 and the next folder containing compiled receipts is folder number 123.

The second series, General Administrative Records, 1945–1950, consists of the managerial records of the Reparations and Restitutions Branch. These records are arranged numerically according to a Reparations and Restitutions (R&R) number. In addition, each folder has a corresponding subject title. The appendix at the end of this introduction provides a list of the R&R numbers along with their titles. This series also contains semiannual reports for 1946–1949. The reports summarize the administration of the Branch, contain information on special projects, and provide historical background concerning restitution in Austria.

Related Records

TEXTUAL RECORDS IN THE RECORDS OF THE UNITED STATES OCCUPATION
HEADQUARTERS, WORLD WAR II, RG 260.

Records of the Director of the U.S. Allied Commission for Austria (USACA)

Records related to the Reparations and Restitutions Branch are interspersed throughout these files.

Files of the Director, 1946–1951

Decimal Files, 1946–1951

Records of the Reparations, Deliveries, and Restitutions Division [of USACA]

The three branches listed below combined with the Reparations and Restitutions Branch compose those of the Division.

Monuments and Fine Arts Branch, 1945–1950

German External Assets Branch, 1945–1950

Property Control Branch, 1945–1951

Records of the United States Forces Austria (USFA) Historical Division

Folders 250–276, USFA “Historical File”

Researchers should also consult *Holocaust-Era Assets: A Finding Aid to Records at the National Archives at College Park, Maryland*, compiled by Greg Bradsher (Washington, DC: National Archives and Records Administration, 1999). This finding aid includes information on specific areas within military records, such as War Department and Occupation records, as well as civilian records such as those of the State Department, that contain information on looted assets.

Additional information concerning the Holocaust may be located on our web site at www.archives.gov.

APPENDIX

FOLDER LIST GENERAL ADMINISTRATIVE RECORDS OF THE REPARATIONS AND RESTITUTIONS BRANCH (USACA), 1945–1950

This folder list provides the subject headings that appear on folders within the branch's General Administrative Records. The Reparations and Restitutions (R&R) file number is followed by the general topic(s) contained therein. These files are reproduced on rolls 141–156 of this publication.

R&R #01	Policy
R&R #02	Instructions
R&R #03	Miscellaneous
R&R #04	Restitution Costs
R&R #05	Table of Organization and Functions
R&R #06	Memoranda for the Record
R&R #07	Reports from the Field Offices
R&R #08	Zone Offices Administrative Data
R&R #10	Machine Tools
R&R #11A	Confiscated Equipment and Machine Tools
R&R #11B	Confiscated Equipment and Machine Tools
R&R #12	Vehicles Releases
R&R #13	Vehicles – Miscellaneous
R&R #14	United Nations Correspondence
R&R #15	Accrediting Orders
R&R #16	Reports – Restitution by USFA
R&R #17	Inquiries
R&R #18	Release of Currencies, Accounts and Securities
R&R #19	Briefing Notes
R&R #22A	Dutch Claims – Pending
R&R #22B	Austria Letter Re: Return of Fine Arts from CCP, Munich
R&R #23	Fine Arts-Miscellaneous
R&R #25	Release-Hungarian Claims to Austrian Government
R&R #26A	Manfred Weiss Concern
R&R #26B	Manfred Weiss Concern
R&R #27A	Field Reports
R&R #27B	Field Reports
R&R #27C	Field Reports
R&R #28	Railway Rolling Stock
R&R #29	Daily Briefing Notes
R&R #30	Austrian Claims List
R&R #31	Categories – Fine Arts in CCP
R&R #32	Fischhorn
R&R #33	Miscellaneous Loot – Origin Unknown

R&R #34	Rundfunk Society – St. Florian
R&R #35	Linzer Kunstmuseum List (only partly)
R&R #36	Kremsmunster Depot
R&R #37	Tapestries
R&R #38	Schloss Kogl – Art Depot
R&R #39	Receipts for Property Sent to CCP Munich
R&R #40	Receipts for Art Properties in U.S. Installations
R&R #41	Stift Kremsmuenster
R&R #42	U.S. Miscellaneous
R&R #43	Final Status Reports on Art Restitutions
R&R #44	List of Unidentified Paintings Stored at Residenz – Depot Salzburg
R&R #45	Benedictine Abbey
R&R #48	CCP – Austrian Group Claims
R&R #49	Salzburg Art Depot
R&R #50(1)	Alt-Ausee Salt Mine
R&R #50(2)	Alt-Ausee Salt Mine
R&R #50(3)	Alt-Ausee Salt Mine
R&R #50A	Alt-Ausee Salt Mine – Collections of Paintings and Art Objects
R&R #50B	Alt-Ausee Salt Mine – Paintings and Art Objects in the Mine
R&R #50C	Alt-Ausee Salt Mine – Paintings and Art Objects in the Mine
R&R #51	Intelligence Cases – Fine Arts
R&R #52	Items at Central Control Point Claimed by Austria
R&R #53	Art Depots (Old)
R&R #54	MFA Field Reports (Miss Tucker)
R&R #55	MFAA Field Reports, 1945
R&R #56	Official List of Monuments and Other Buildings, Sites and Archives in Austria
R&R #56A	Official List of Monuments and Other Buildings, Sites and Archives in Austria
R&R #57	Cultural Looting of the “Ahnenerbe”
R&R #58(1)	Declarations
R&R #58(2)	Horse Board Reports from Linz
R&R #58(3)	Declarations
R&R #58(4)	Declarations
R&R #58(5)	Declarations – Yugoslavia
R&R #58(6)	Declarations – Italy
R&R #58(7)	Declarations – Hungary
R&R #58(8)	Declarations – Poland
R&R #58(9)	Austrian Shipments from CCP
R&R #58(10)	Declarations – Unknown
R&R #59	Paintings Restituted (Miscellaneous)
R&R #59	Paintings Restituted (A)
R&R #59	Paintings Restituted (Ba–Bl)
R&R #59	Paintings Restituted (Bo–Bu)
R&R #59	Paintings Restituted (C)
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R&R #61(1)	Horse Claims
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R&R #61(3)	Horse Claims
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