



United Nations
Educational, Scientific and
Cultural Organization



International Tracing Service
Inscribed on the International Register in 2013
Memory of the World

ITS

International Tracing Service
Service International de Recherches
Internationaler Suchdienst

About the history of the effects after 1945

Shortly after the liberation of Lunden, Schleswig-Holstein, the occupying administration took guardianship of the personal items owned by inmates of the Neuengamme concentration camp. At the time, the items constituted what was left of the office at Neuengamme responsible for administering the inmates' personal belongings ("Gefangeneneigentumsverwaltung"), which had been relocated to Lunden. The British military government confiscated the effects in accordance with no. 52, art. 1 of the "property of absent owners" law, placed under British wealth/property control and inventoried. In the summer of 1948, the effects were turned over to the Central Claims Registry ("Zentralamt für Vermögensverwaltung") which was renamed the "Administrative Office for Inner Restitutions" in 1955. The acceptance of the effects was associated with the obligation to return them to their rightful owners.

Likewise in 1948, the Claims Control handed over to the Central Claims Registry personal effects found at the Bergen-Belsen concentration camp, belongings whose owners could be found in only a few cases. Following a second major inventory, the Central Claims Registry assumed the responsibility of restitution until 1963.

After the liberation of Dachau, the property of the inmates there was secured. However, the majority of the effects were destroyed when a fire broke out in the storage area in May 1945. Until 1946, the personal belongings were kept by the International Information Office ("Auskunftsstelle Dachau"), which was responsible for returning them. When that office was closed, the responsibility was transferred to offices of the Allies. The valuables ended up at the German Red Cross Tracing Service in Hamburg, which bore the responsibility of returning the effects until 1957. Those belongings that could not be returned were transferred to the "Administrative Office for Inner Restitution." The private documents of the prisoners were transferred to the Bavarian State Commissariat for Persons Persecuted for Political, Racial and Religious Reasons ("Bayrisches Staatskommissariat für politisch, rassisch und religiös Verfolgte"). The Indemnification Office of Bavaria was the successor organization to the State Commissariat.

Around 1963, the ITS received the few remaining effects. At that time, they consisted of items belonging to approximately 4,700 former inmates. Every year, the ITS is able to return a few of these belongings to family members.