

The two most important seal moulding collections of the *Haus-, Hof- und Staatsarchiv*, the collections of Franz Paul von Smitmer (1740–1796) and Karl von Sava († 1864), comprise together approximately 20,000 items. Seals were collected from the time of Emperor Ferdinand I up to the end of the Habsburg monarchy. These collections complement the original seals on the series of treaties and diplomas mentioned and provide source material not only for diplomatic, heraldic and genealogical studies, but increasingly also for studies on art history.

The manuscript collection owes its existence and current structure to the principle of archiving according to external features, which was applied over a long period of time. Manuscripts from the *Schatzkammerarchiv* (treasury archive), the court library, the imperial archives, the archives of the state and cabinet registries, from the archives of monasteries, from collections (Johann Anton Graf Nostitz) and bequests (Johann Christoph von Bartenstein) were put together irrespective of their provenance, and were made fully accessible by means of a printed inventory. The Oriental manuscripts of the consular academy (middle of the 14th to the beginning of the 19th century), which were used at the academy for study purposes, form a separate entity. The main series of the manuscript collection consists of richly illuminated manuscripts, copies of documents, copies of diplomatic correspondence (with attached printed publications), handwritten papers in the original, some of them bound, (especially from the time of Emperor Rudolph II, 1551–1612), rentals, feudal estate books, travel accounts and reports from legations. The period covered extends from the 10th to the 20th century. One example is the current registry of Friedrich III, a de-luxe parchment volume from the middle of the 15th century. Together with the coat of arms of Lower Austria it shows the well-known motto AEIOU, which still awaits a conclusive interpretation.

#### Other record series and special stocks

The group containing Austrian and Hungarian records contains papers relating to the activities of the Imperial Chancellery and the State Chancellery

and of authorities (secret councils of Graz and Innsbruck) which, at the time when the territories were partitioned in the 16th and 17th century, were the supreme advisory bodies of the rulers of Austria and the Tyrol. The Austrian records, which are subdivided by Provinces (Lower Austria, Upper Austria, Carniola, Carinthia, etc.) are, on the one hand, arranged in accordance with external criteria (documents, books, manuscripts and files), and, on the other hand, in accordance with the principle of provenance, that is to say that archival material of different provenance is grouped by subject or simply in chronological order. The records of the Austrian Imperial Diet (1848/49) form an important part of this group. Like the Austrian records, the Hungarian records evolved from simple collections of files, which later became a "confused mixture of numerous partial archives" and currently comprise a number of sub-series – arranged in chronological order – on the history of the territory under the Crown of St. Stephen and on the history of armed conflicts between the Habsburgs and the Ottomans. The records acquired when monasteries were secularised (expropriation of ecclesiastic domains) at the beginning of the 19th century, contain what remains of the archives of dissolved monasteries (including the archives of Jesuit monasteries) as well as the registries of subsequently created authorities (e.g. Lower Austrian authority for the administration of state property).

*Italien-Spanischer Rat* (Italian-Spanish Council) refers to the extant records of the central authorities in Vienna, which were set up in the 18th century, after the end of the War of the Spanish Succession to administer the previously Spanish, now Austrian parts of Italy (Naples and Sicily): *Supremo Consejo de España* (1702–1736), *Consiglio d'Italia* (1736–1756), *Dipartimento d'Italia* of the State Chancellery (1755/57–1798) and the Italian aulic chancellery (1793–1805). The records of the General Government of Lombardy and Venetia (1817–1859) are currently kept in Italy, as are the *Dispacci di Germania* (reports by the Venetian envoy to the imperial court); copies of the severely damaged originals, however, can still be consulted at the *Haus-, Hof- und Staatsarchiv* (foreign country department/Italy).

The department of the Netherlands (Belgium) suffered considerably from the hasty removal, later reintegration and "inappropriate" arrangement as well as from "unmethodical transfers of archival material" (1856–1875). Currently, there are three main groups (excluding the documents concerning the Netherlands): 1. parts of the registries of Emperor Charles V and his governors Margarete (1522–1586) and Maria (1505–1558); 2. diplomatic correspondence with Great Britain and France at the time of Arch-Duke Albert (1559–1621) and Arch-Duchess Isabella Klara Eugenia (1566–1633), when the Spanish ruled over the Netherlands; 3. parts of the registries of the Vienna and Brussels authorities competent for the Austrian Netherlands from the time between 1713 and 1794. The archive of Florimond Mercy-Argenteau († 1794), whose "official" correspondence as ambassador in Paris is deposited with the records of the foreign country department - France, and the *Papiers du Baron Marc de Fonseca* (Deffonseca 1712–1735) are attached to the archival section relating to Belgium.

In the section which comprises the papers left by politicians, ministers and "hommes célèbres" (mostly from the 19th century), as well as demesne and family archives, there are a number of bequests and archives which are deposited with the *Haus-, Hof- und Staatsarchiv* and are only accessible to researchers who have obtained written permission. This section in many ways supplements the above-mentioned registries and archival series. Mention should be made of the papers left by Alois Graf (Count) Aehrenthal, Joseph Maria Baernreither, Leopold Graf Berchtold, Egon Caesar Conte Corti, Josef and Oskar Lasser, Ignaz and Ernst Plener, Friedrich Gentz, the archive of Count Stadion, the diaries of Anton Freiherr von Prokesch-Osten and (mostly with restricted access) the Auersperg, Csáky, Erdödy, Pálffy, Grafenegg, Guntersdorf, Khevenhüller-Metsch, Rosenau and Walpersdorf demesne and family archives.

Three further items on this (incomplete) list deserve particular mention: the Archiv der *Orientalischen Akademie* (since 1898 consular academy), the collection of maps and plans (geographical maps and architectural plans) and the *Archiv des Ordens vom Golde-*

nen Vlies (archive of the Order of the Golden Fleece – restricted access). The order was founded in the 15th century “to the glory of God, to further the Chri-

stian faith and to uphold the knightly virtues”; its grand mastership is to this day held by the head of the House of Habsburg-Lorraine. The archive, with

its parchment documents and richly illuminated manuscripts, is one of the greatest treasures of the *Haus-, Hof- und Staatsarchiv*.



## The böhmisch-österreichische Hofkanzlei (Bohemian-Austrian Aulic Chancellery)

The history of an archive usually begins on the day on which either its foundation is documented or on which the records office containing its principal stocks comes into being. The beginning of the history of the *Allgemeine Verwaltungsarchiv* is neither marked by an imperial decree nor by the command of a military leader. The first date encountered when tracing the beginnings of the *Allgemeine Verwaltungsarchiv* is the year 1945, when the *Wiener Reichsarchiv* was transformed into the *Österreichische Staatsarchiv*, and the *Allgemeine Verwaltungsarchiv* emerged from the department called *Staatsarchiv des Innern und der Justiz* (state archive of the interior and of justice). The foundation date is so difficult to determine, because the archival groups are made up of non-current records of various ministries (Justice, Interior, Agriculture, Trade, Education, and Transport), and all these records have their own genesis.

In 1749, Maria Theresia dissolved the Austrian and the Bohemian aulic chancelleries and replaced them by a new body called *Directorium in publicis et cameralibus*. This body was in charge of political administration (internal administration) and of financial administration, though excluding military matters, which remained the responsibility of the *Hofkriegsrat* (aulic war council), and the imperial household, which came under the State Chancellery. At the same time, the non-current records of the Aulic Chancellery were amalgamated with the current records to form an "archive". After 1848, this *Archiv des Direktoriums* (directorate's archive), which in 1783 became the *Archiv der vereinigten böhmisch-österreichischen Hofkanzlei* (archive of the united Bohemian-Austrian Aulic Chancellery) was incorporated into the *Allgemeine Archiv des Ministeriums des Innern* (General Archive of the Ministry of the Interior). This was the nucleus of the *Allgemeine Verwaltungsarchiv* consisting of two major archive groups: the *Vereinigte Hofkanzlei* (1527–1848) and the *Polizeiarchiv* (Police Archive – 1780–1867). The main part of the archive, with the staff offices and user rooms was housed in three basement premises in the *Palais der Böhmisch-Österreichischen Hofkanzlei* (1010 Wien, Judenplatz 11), built by Johann Bernhard Fischer von Erlach (1656–1723) between 1710 and 1714, and since 1848 seat of the Ministry of the Interior. The rest of the archival material was stored in four office buildings situated in different parts of the city centre.

## The time after the First World War

The decline of the Austro-Hungarian Empire and the birth of the Republic of Austria held the chance of a new beginning for the archives. Three problems dominated the period after the First World War; first, the handing over of records to the successor states, second, the taking over of administrative records not yet arranged for archiving, and third, the restructuring of the former imperial and royal archives. Heinrich Kretschmayr (1870–1939) once more put forward the proposal which he had submitted to the commission for administrative reform in 1913 to set up common archives of the central Austrian authorities. Kretschmayr considered the *Allgemeine Archiv* attached to the Ministry of the Interior to be the nucleus, to which he intended to add, step by step, the non-current records of the former imperial and royal authorities. In future, all archival material not relating to foreign, financial or military affairs, was to be transferred to this institution.

## Staatsarchiv des Innern und der Justiz (State Archive of the Interior and of Justice)

Kretschmayr was encouraged to go ahead with his project, when the Ministry of Justice transferred its older stocks, which had been stored in two rooms on the groundfloor of the ministry's office building in 1010 Wien, Schillerplatz 4, to the *Allgemeine Archiv*. Most of these records had been generated by the legislative commissions and by the *Oberste Justizstelle*

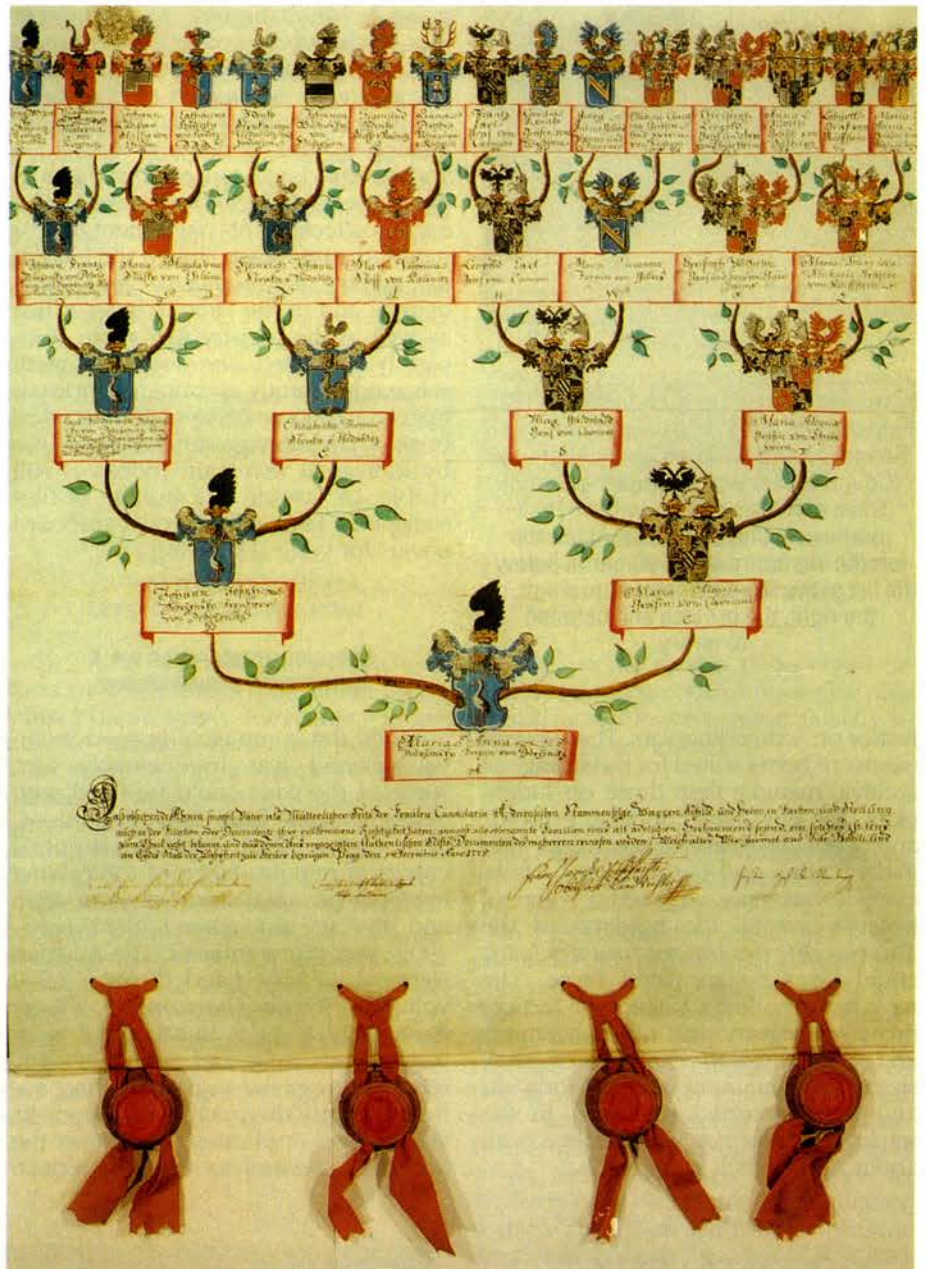
(supreme judiciary authority – 1949–1848), and had later been taken over by the Supreme Court of Justice. This expansion in terms of subject matter prompted a change of the archive's name, in 1921, to *Staatsarchiv des Innern und der Justiz*.

### The former Imperial and Royal Ministry of War

Subsequent to the transfer of the archives from the Ministry of Justice, Kretschmayr induced all the other central authorities which had not established their own archives or similar facilities to transfer their non-current records to the *Staatsarchiv des Innern und der Justiz*. An enormous increase in the volume of archival material was to be expected, which focused attention once again on a problem which had already given cause for concern in the past: the lack of storage space. It was found that some space was available in the building of the former War Ministry, and the records of the Imperial and Royal Ministry for Defence were moved there in 1922 to be administered by the *Staatsarchiv des Innern und der Justiz*. Nevertheless, the need for suitable premises became increasingly urgent, since the initiated transfer of archival material was gathering momentum. Gradually the Ministries of Trade and of the Interior transferred the material ready for archival storage, which included the minutes of the meetings of the Austrian cabinet, which were kept at the imperial and royal cabinet bureau. In 1923, several central authorities were merged as a result of budget consolidation measures. These consolidation measures had been taken by the government to secure a loan from the League of Nations (Geneva Protocol of October 1922). The merger of the Ministry of the Interior with the Federal Chancellery – one of the austerity measures – meant the loss of the premises in the *Böhmisch-Österreichische Hofkanzlei*, which had to be ceded to the Federal Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry.

### Interim storage in the Palace of Justice

After thorough consideration and lengthy negotiations, new premises were eventually found in the Palace of



Family tree of Anna Maria Dobrzensky Freifrau von Dobrzenitz from the year 1778; parchment document with four wooden seal boxes attached to it.



One of the files from the Royal-Imperial Aulic Chancellery which were damaged by the fire at the Palace of Justice in 1927: Emperor Joseph II instructs the supreme Bohemian and Austrian Chancellor Graf (Count) Blümegein to assist the Grand-Duke of Russia and his wife on their journey via Vienna to Italy. At the top left the signature of the emperor, below the list of the Grand-Duke's entourage, on the right, the precise and detailed itinerary.

Justice on Schmerlingplatz. These premises were better suited for the storage of archival material than those on Judenplatz, for they had connecting rooms and were dry, easy to heat and allegedly (!) fire- and burglar-proof. However, it was only an interim solution, because not all the holdings of the *Staatsarchiv des Innern und der Justiz* could be accommodated there. The new main building (Palace of Justice) provided registry and office premises and approximately 5.5 km of shelf space; the remaining stocks (Landwehr and trade records) remained in the stacks of the former War Ministry, with about 2.8 km shelf space.

### The fire at the Palace of Justice

In the history of Austrian archives one day will never be forgotten – July 15, 1927, “the black Friday”. It was the day when the Vienna Palace of Justice was set on fire, and the *Staatsarchiv des Innern und der Justiz* was severely damaged by the flames. Almost three quarters of the archival material was destroyed. The remainder, about 700,000 files and manuscripts, were taken dripping wet to the old building of the Austro-Hungarian National Bank in 1010 Wien, Herrengasse 17 (Bank-

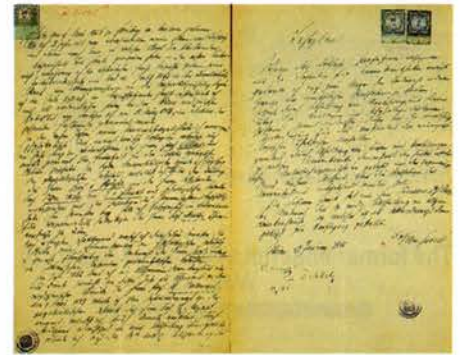
gasse 3, Landhausgasse 4). In the former works where securities were printed scaffolding was put together from rafters and thin bundles of files were hung up to dry like wet laundry. An air heating system, consisting of a stove and several fans, caused the water in the suspended files to evaporate. The small collection of parchment documents, the reference library, the legislative archive, the records of the archive council and of the later archives office as well as the registry files were completely destroyed. The stocks that were salvaged currently account for approximately 10,000 archival units (fascicles, boxes). The damage suffered in the fire by individual items and books is still visible. (A fascicle is a bundle of files strapped between two cardboard covers for vertical shelving.)

### Laborious restoration work

While the completely burned archival material was irredeemably lost, some of the gaps could be filled with generous gifts from two institutions. The Czech state archive supplied copies of minutes taken of the cabinet meetings in 1890 and between 1895 and 1897, the time when Badeni (1846–1909) was prime minister. The Austrian National Library handed over 2,500 volumes (*Wiener Diarium* and *Wiener Zeitung* 1726–1918; hundreds of volumes of laws, aulic and state calendars, state and regional registers listing authorities and their staff, etc.) from its collection of duplicates. In addition, the archivists themselves tried to reduce



Water-colour painting by Ludwig Wülffinger of a chain bridge built in 1828 across the river Wien and linking the Viennese districts of Mariahilf, Margareten and Wieden.



An autograph curriculum vitae and teaching curriculum of Sigmund Freud; these were the documents he submitted to the University of Vienna in 1885 together with his application for habilitation as university lecturer (eligible for a professorship) on mental diseases.

the gaps by copying various records. The academic writings left by the former director of the Aulic Chancellery Archives Joseph Trimmel, for example, were borrowed from the regional archive in Brno and taken to Vienna for copying. Joseph Emil Trimmel had headed the old Aulic Chancellery Archive from 1832 till 1848. The papers left by Herbert Eichler were acquired with a similar aim in mind. Eichler had excerpted and copied records of the Aulic Police Office before the fire and these were now used to complement certain records that had been severely damaged. The most important acquisition, however, was the papers left by Alexander Freiherr von Bach (1813–1893), who, after the revolution of 1848, had first been Minister of Justice and from 1849 to 1859 Minister of the Interior. His papers include not only important correspondence and policy outlines from the “Bach era” but also the engrossed copies of the *Reichsverfassung für das Kaisertum Österreich* (Imperial Constitution of the Austrian Empire) of March 4, 1849, as well as the pertinent imperial manifesto and patent.

### New stacks at Stiftskaserne

The restoration work at the provisional premises at Herrengasse 17 had



Cross-section of the library wing of Vienna University. Coloured pen-and-ink drawing by Heinrich Ferstel, signed and dated 1877.

hardly got under way, when storage space became available in the building of the former War Archive, large enough to house not only the archival material from the War Archive but also that from the *Staatsarchiv des Innern und der Justiz*. After lengthy negotiations, it was agreed that the War Archive would be amalgamated in the northern wing of the *Akademietrakt*, and that the middle wing would be restructured and equipped with shelves for the *Staatsarchiv des Innern und der Justiz*. After the archive had been moved to Stiftsgasse it was reopened for users on February 1, 1932.

#### Transfer of additional archival material

When the move to the Stiftsgasse was completed and the storage problems of the *Staatsarchiv des Innern und der Justiz* appeared to be solved, other central authorities insisted on having their old records stored there as well. As a consequence, the records of the Ministry of Agriculture, of the Ministry of Public Works and the former Archive of the Nobility found their way into the State Archives. The papers of the Social Democratic Party, which had been banned in 1934, were a special addition – which was not to remain the only one of its kind. The main holdings of the archives of the Social Democratic Party had been kept in the building of the *Vor-*

*wärts* publishing house (1050 Vienna, Rechte Wienzeile 97). Unknown to the state police, the trust administration had sold and shipped this archival material as waste paper (1,600 kg) to the paper factory Obermühl (Upper Austria). From there the stocks, whose volume had meanwhile increased to 3,369 kg, because they had been mixed with other waste paper delivered for maceration, were returned to Vienna. The total volume of records mixed with waste paper had to be transported back to Vienna and laboriously sorted. The archives of the National Socialist Party found their way to the *Staatsarchiv des Innern und der Justiz* in a similar manner.

#### Further storage problems

The daily work of the archive was soon adversely affected by further problems. These were inevitable, given that the building served two purposes. The running of a barracks made demands which were diametrically opposed to those made by the running of an archive, hence relations between the two became increasingly strained. There were various causes of conflict: constant infringement of the ban on smoking in the stacks; unauthorised removal of files and books from fascicles and shelves, especially during the night; lack of cleanliness; denial of access to staff and visitors despite the fact that they had permits etc. When the army then put pressure on the archive



Baronial coat-of-arms for Heinrich Ferstel, dated December 15, 1879. Water colour over freehand drawing.

to clear rooms so that these could be used for training courses for senior officers, a further move seemed as unavoidable as it was desirable.

#### The Palais Pálffy in the Wallnerstrasse

In 1936, a building came up for discussion which promised to solve all storage problems with one stroke: the former *Palais Pálffy* in 1010 Vienna, Wallnerstrasse 6 and 6a. The widely ramified family of Hungarian magnates by the name of Pálffy von Erdöd owned two palaces in Vienna's inner city. One of them, at Josefsplatz 6, belonged to the line of princes, the other, in Wallnerstrasse, was built for the line of counts. The Palais Pálffy in its present form was re-built between 1809 and 1813, after it had been destroyed by fire during the second French siege of Vienna. Contradictory accounts have been written concerning the architect. Whereas the art historian Renate Wagner-Rieger (1921–1980) and the *Dehio-Handbook* for Vienna attribute the plan of the building to Karl von Moreau (1758–1840), *Bäuerle's Theaterzeitung* claims that the "lovely and graceful palace of the Counts of Pálffy" was built by Louis Montoyer (1749–1811). The building has had an eventful history. In the 19th century, Gabriele Countess Andrassy (1833–1914) from the Johannean line of the Pálffy of Erdöd, trans-



Conferment of the Knighthood of the Holy Roman Empire on the Court Architect Nikolaus Pacassi on February 20, 1764; page with coat-of-arms from the original diploma.

formed the palace into a meeting place for Vienna's court society. The musical soirées and déjeuners, parties and balls which she gave in the salons of the building attracted statesmen and diplomats as well as countless members of the aristocracy. Even the former Imperial Chancellor Otto Fürst Bismarck (1815–1898) stayed in an apartment in the palace, when he came to Vienna to attend the wedding of his son Herbert (1849–1904) to Countess Marguerite Hoyos (1871–1945). Count János (Johann) Pálffy (1829–1908) furnished the palace in Wallnerstrasse with furniture and objects in the Empire style, which he had collected over a number of years, making the palace a "trésor" of the Empire era. The Empire style was the style which at the time of Napoleon I (1769–1821) strongly influenced the arts and crafts first in France and later throughout Europe. The centrepiece of his collection was a mahogany desk from the palace of "La Malmaison", which had formerly belonged to Napoleon I. Other objects from his collection which deserve to be mentioned are paintings by Ferdinand Georg Waldmüller (1739–1865), Thomas Gainsborough (1727–1788) and Franz Lenbach (1836–1904).

Since neither János Pálffy nor Gabriele Andrassy had direct descendants, János Pálffy left instructions in his will that his collection should become the nucleus of an Empire museum in Vienna. However, the project of having the museum set up by the Austrian state at Pálffy's summer palace in Hernals (a district of Vienna), fell victim to the aftermath of the First World War. Since the financial burden of running and maintaining the museum would have been too heavy for the state, the handsome gift had to be refused, and a compromise was made with the heirs: they were permitted to auction off the bequest, provided that the most precious objects of the collection went to the state gallery and to the Austrian Museum.

### The Palais Pálffy is turned into a banking house

In 1921/22, the palace was bought by the Vienna banking house Kola & Co and adapted for banking purposes. The

largest of the three courtyards (ca. 280 sqm) was built up with safe deposit vaults covering almost the entire area. This structure provided the foundation for the main hall which was covered with a glass roof. A canopy added to the main entrance at Wallnerstrasse 6a was meant to lend the facade a more imposing, bank-like character. Later the building passed successively into the ownership of the *Britisch-Oesterreichische Bank- und Handels-A.G.* and of the *Kompass, Allgemeine Kredit- und Garantiebank*. After that it passed into the ownership of the *Kreditverkehrsschutz Ges.m.b.H.* which had entered into partnership with the *Kompass* banking house. When the *Kompass* banking house went into liquidation in 1936, the *Österreichische Credit-Institut für öffentliche Unternehmungen und Arbeiten*, which acted as liquidator, offered the building for sale to the state. On November 6, 1937, the cabinet approved the purchase for the amount of AS 630,000, and the building was taken over by the *Bundesgebäudeverwaltung* (federal authority in charge of state-owned buildings) on December 1, 1937.

### The archival material is moved to the Palais Pálffy

The purchase had partly been motivated by the fact that the building had valuable space reserves, which, though leased out at the time of purchase, could be gradually vacated by terminating the lease contracts. In addition, the office and user premises were ready for use without costly structural alterations. Moreover, the building was equipped with two passenger lifts, a fire and burglar-proof safe-deposit vault and a number of fire-proof safes in different places, which made it highly suitable for the housing of archival stocks. Finally, it was conveniently situated close to the central authorities, to other archives, to the National Library and the university.

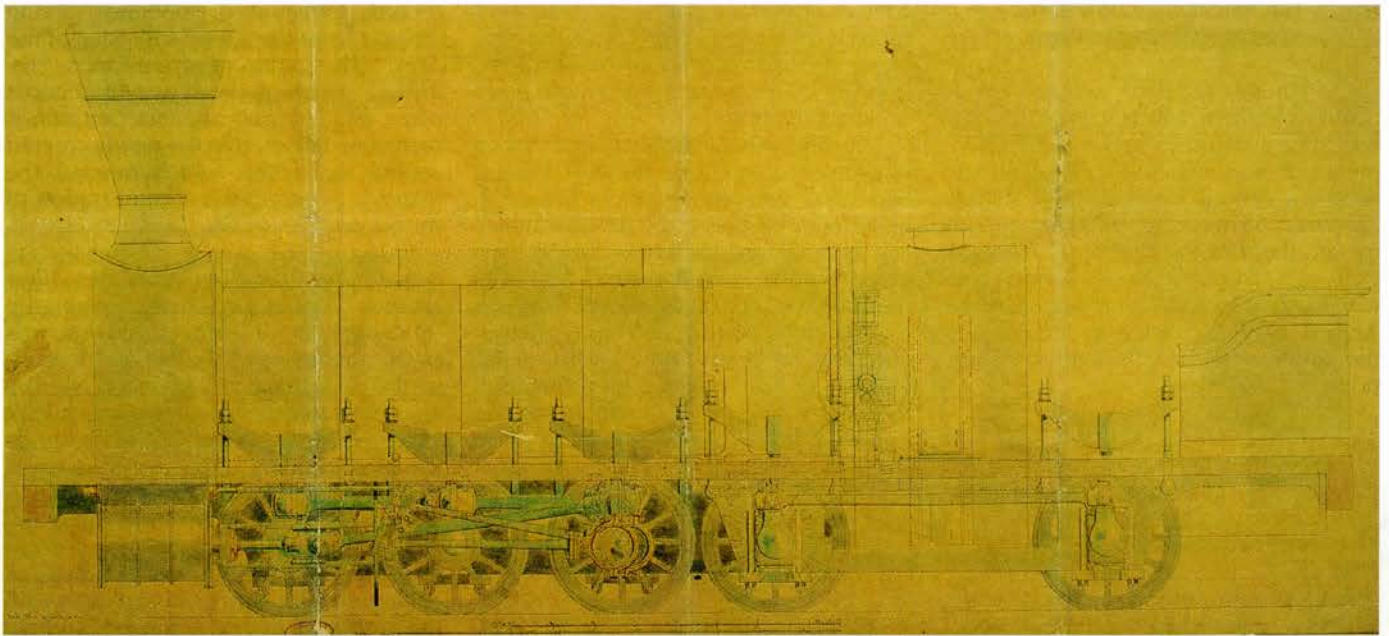
From the beginning of 1938 onwards, the lease contracts were terminated one after another, shelves were installed and the stocks were transferred from Stiftgasse to Wallnerstrasse. The main hall of the former bank became the new search room.

### The "Anschluss" as reflected in the archive

The move had hardly begun, when the *Anschluss* of Austria to the German *Reich* triggered a new wave of record transfers. Soon after March 12, 1938, the *Staatsarchiv des Innern und der Justiz* was instructed to take into keeping the Austrian government archive, which had been liquidated by the German authorities. This set off an avalanche of occasionally rather chaotic transfers to the Wallnerstrasse. Valuable papers had been destroyed already during the days before the *Anschluss*, but especially in the night from the 11th to the 12th of March, 1938, partly out of fear, partly owing to vandalism or sheer ignorance, and the National-Socialist security forces added to the ravages. Gestapo and NSDAP staff in particular sifted through the official and non-official records in archival storage to find and to remove incriminating material. The archival stocks most seriously affected were the papers of the dissolved *Vaterländische Front* (party uniting all conservative groups, founded by Dollfuss in 1933) and its branches.

As early as March, preparations were made for the transfer of the Austrian departmental archives, which had lost their significance. Foremost among them were the archives of the Federal Chancellery, of the President's Office, of the Ministries of Justice, Trade, Agriculture, Social Affairs and institutions and enterprises under their direct control, such as the Voluntary Labour Service, the Agricultural Society and the Government Printing Office. In addition there were non-official records, such as the party archives of the Christian-Social Party, the Pan-German People's Party and the Farmers' Party as well as of the umbrella organisation of the student fraternities. Records of the former State Chancellor Karl Renner, which were assumed to be kept in his flat in Vienna, in Taubstummengasse, and in his villa in Gloggnitz, were seized by the NS-authorities after they had ordered the premises to be searched by the police.

The police also seized the private archive of the Counts of Paar. Before the Austrian postal administration passed into state ownership (1813), the Counts of Paar had been in charge of its



Construction drawing by the Cockerill company in Seraing (Belgium) for a "System Engerth" tank locomotive, designed for crossing the Semmering pass.

management. In their palace in Vienna they had stored historically valuable records dating from several centuries. The existence of these records was constantly denied, however, until several files turned up at a waste-paper dealer's, when the palace was demolished. Later they found their way via unexplained routes into the possession of the former Minister of Trade and Transport, Fritz Stockinger (1894–1968), who had them moved to the storerooms of a grocer's shop. This was where they were eventually found and confiscated. From there they were taken to the Post Museum and then, in 1938, they were handed over to the *Staatsarchiv des Innern und der Justiz*.

#### Further expansion of the archive

The increasingly rapid liquidation of Austria's non-current records made the further expansion of the archival infra-

structure in Wallnerstrasse imperative. Within the same year, new rooms had to be added to the available premises by terminating lease contracts. These rooms had to be equipped with shelves, new telephone lines, lighting fixtures and hydrants. Rooms had also to be found for the new members of staff, who had been employed to cope with the growing workload. It was at this time that a proposal was made to add another floor to the gallery surrounding the main hall. The underlying idea was to create space reserves for the expected, additional transfers of records.

#### Reintegration of archival material

After the annexation of Austria, Hitler took possession of Czechoslovakia. His next step, which caused the outbreak of the Second World War, was the attack on Poland on September 1, 1939. Soon

after taking power in the occupied countries, archive commissions were set up to sift through the local archival material for records to which they could lay claim. The Austrian archivists were alert to the fact that they should, first of all, claim the stocks that had been handed over after the First World War. The State Treaty of St. Germain contained a number of cultural provisions under which individual archival agreements had been concluded with the successor states. In 1919, the successor states held that they needed the records from the previous 30 years, i.e. from 1888 to 1918, in order to set up their own administrations. Whereas the archival agreement with Czechoslovakia had been concluded in 1920 and the archival material had been transferred by 1927, the negotiations with Poland and the record transfers there had been delayed until 1932. The archival material handed over had filled several railway carriages. Now it was returned to Vienna, some of it still in the original packaging.



## The *Reichsarchiv* in Vienna

On January 11, 1940, a decision was taken in Vienna, which was of vital significance for future archival developments. It was decided to amalgamate Austria's central archives in a *Wiener Reichsarchiv* with the following departments: the *Haus-, Hof- und Staatsarchiv*, the *Staatsarchiv des Innern und der Justiz*, the *Hofkammerarchiv*, the Archive of the Ministry of Finance and the Archive of the Ministry of Education.

### War damage and removal to temporary shelters

Even though, in the first years of the war, the archives in Vienna were not immediately endangered, the years to come were already casting their menacing shadow. Air raid training commenced in 1939, air raid shelters were adapted and the fire-fighting equipment was increased. As the war continued, the more valuable stocks had to be moved from the upper floors to the lower ones, or to the basements. In 1941, the archive staff arranged for a permanent night service in order to be prepared for night air raids.

The increasingly serious effects of the war and particularly the intensification of air warfare from the winter of 1943/44 onwards, made it advisable to build shelters in the less endangered environs of Vienna. Losses were to be kept to a minimum by decentralisation. Smaller archival stocks had already been stored in basement rooms in the *Neue Hofburg*. Now, the remaining stocks were removed to various palaces, monasteries and parish offices in Lower Austria and to the galleries of the salt mines in Lauffen near Bad Ischl. The evacuation was made extremely difficult by the lack of personnel and fuel, defective vehicles, frequent air-raid warnings and air raids and by repeated reloading to different means of transport (removal vans or trucks, railway carriages, horse-drawn vehicles and handcarts). By May 1944, two thirds of the archival items had been transported to the branch repositories, where the holdings had to be put in order and repeatedly checked. As the

war continued, these tasks became ever more difficult to perform and severely challenged the physical stamina of the officials in charge, most of whom were no longer young.

The removal of archival material to bomb-proof shelters outside Vienna had been completed just in time. On September 10, 1944, the archive building in Wallnerstrasse was hit by two aerial bombs, which caused not only the glass roof constructed over the main hall to collapse but also the galleries. Hundreds of boxes and books from the Ministry of Trade, which had remained in the building, were destroyed by the impact of the explosion.

### 1945 – Austrian State Archives

When organising the Austrian archival system after 1945, reference could be made to the preparations started before the *Anschluss* as well as to the archival structures introduced by the National-Socialist rulers. Under the Administration Transfer Act of July 28, 1945, the *Reichsarchiv* in Vienna was dissolved and replaced by the Austrian State Archives; the former Army Archives – now once more the War Archives – as well as the transport archives were integrated into this central institution. The previous department for educational archives was dissolved and incorporated into the *Staatsarchiv des Innern und der Justiz*, thus rounding off the universal character of its holdings. In keeping with the variety of its holdings, its name was changed to *Allgemeines Verwaltungsarchiv* (general administrative archives).

### New stacks

The glass-covered main hall and the galleries had been so severely damaged that repair was out of the question. Instead, the opportunity was taken to build stacks into the gap. For a few decades, until the fifth and last move in 1988, the five-floor stacks, built in 1950–1952, provided ample space for the papers ready for archiving. Among the first transfers were the liquidated German departmental records from the period between 1938–1945. The

records transported to Vienna during the war from the successor states of the Austro-Hungarian Empire were returned. Parts of the Austrian records taken to Germany after the *Anschluss* were also returned to the newly created central authorities which needed the material to set up the administration of the Second Republic.

For more than forty years, the *Allgemeine Verwaltungsarchiv* was the repository for the non-current records of the ministries of the Second Republic. In 1983, this task was taken over by the newly founded *Archiv der Republik* (Archive of the Republic). As soon as the new building of the State Archives in 1030 Vienna, Nottendorfer Gasse 2, was ready for use in 1987, the new *Archiv der Republik* also took over from the other departments archival material generated after 1918. On that occasion, the holdings of the transport archive were divided between the *Archiv der Republik* and the *Allgemeine Verwaltungsarchiv*. In two cases it proved impossible to adhere to the reference date of 1918: the records of the Ministry of Justice could not be separated nor could those of the Ministry of Education and Church Affairs, hence both stocks remained in the *Allgemeine Verwaltungsarchiv*.

### Move to the new archive building

Once the *Allgemeine Verwaltungsarchiv* had moved to the new archive building (September 1988 to March 1989), its remaining archival material was arranged into new archive groups. These consist of records from six ministries (including predecessors and coordinated agencies), i.e. the Ministries of the Interior, of Justice, Education, Agriculture, Trade, Transport, as well as the following thematic archival bodies: archive of the nobility, personal papers and bequests, family archives and map and plan collection. Although, in the course of its history, the *Allgemeine Verwaltungsarchiv* moved five times, was once burned to the ground and once bombed to ruins, it currently accommodates 13,000 linear metres of archival material, 1,500 sqm of maps and plans as well as approximately 5,000 documents and original diplomas.