



Smithsonian

National Museum of American History Kenneth E. Behring Center

Guide to the American Relief Administration, European Children's Fund Collection

NMAH.AC.1199

Alison Oswald.

2012

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Collection Overview

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| Repository: | Archives Center, National Museum of American History |
| Title: | American Relief Administration, European Children's Fund Collection |
| Date: | 1919 - 1921 |
| Identifier: | NMAH.AC.1199 |
| Creator: | American Relief Administration. European Children's Fund (Creator) |
| Extent: | 0.3 Cubic feet (1 box, 1 oversize folder) |
| Language: | Collection is in German. Some materials in English. |
| Summary: | The collection consists of photographs and printed materials (almost exclusively in German), documenting the relief efforts of the American Relief Administration (A.R.A.), European Children's Fund (E.C.F.) (Mission to Austria), 1920-1921, to feed malnourished children in Europe in the post-World War I era. The photographs, publications and charts in this collection specifically relate to children in Vienna and other Austrian cities. |

Administrative Information

Acquisition Information

Donated to the United States National Museum by the American Relief Administration, through Mr. Messerole on February 6, 1922.

Provenance

Originally housed in the United States National Museum, Arts and Industries Building, Division of Foods. The original accession number was 67854. The collection was transferred to the Archives Center in 2010 by the Division of Work and Industry.

Related Materials

Materials at Other Organizations

Hoover Institution Archives, Stanford University

Register of the American Relief Administration. European Operations Records, 1919-1923

Processing Information

Processed by Alison Oswald, archivist, 2012.

Preferred Citation

American Relief Administration, European Children's Fund Collection, 1919-1921, Archives Center, National Museum of American History

Restrictions

The collection is open for research.

Conditions Governing Use

Collection items available for reproduction, but the Archives Center makes no guarantees concerning copyright restrictions. Other intellectual property rights may apply. Archives Center cost-recovery and use fees may apply when requesting reproductions.

Biographical / Historical

The American Relief Administration (A.R.A.) was formed by the United States Congress in 1919 as a relief mission to Europe after World War I. Herbert Hoover, future president of the United States, was the program director. A humanitarian organization, A.R.A. was tasked with alleviating the suffering of European children in the years after World War I.

In 1919, a special Children's Relief Bureau was organized within the A.R.A. Many European children being cared for were orphans, and many had suffered malnourishment during the war. Hoover insisted that aid be provided to them. Although the new A.R.A. European Children's Fund (E.C.F) was an outgrowth of the A.R.A. which acted as an agent of the United States government, the European Children's Fund was a private volunteer organization for the promotion of charitable causes. While the E.C.F. did not have a formal charter, the food supplies were donated from the Congressional appropriation and the president's National Security and Defense Fund. The E.C.F. operated for five years, from 1919 to 1924. It was headquartered in New York City with a branch office in London and began operations in August, 1919. Field missions were located in Finland, Estonia, northwest Russia, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, Czechoslovakia, Austria, Hungary, Romania, and Yugoslavia. The E.C.F. relied heavily upon the assistance and cooperation of other organizations such as the European Relief Council, Red Cross, American Friends Service Committee, and the Y.M.C.A. A system of central and regional warehouses was maintained. Children needing aid met the following requirements: registration through a school, investigation by a local committee, and a physical examination by a local physician. All feeding of children was done in special kitchens setup at institutions, orphanages, or hospitals. In most countries a noonday meal was served and every child was issued a card which was punched for each meal received.

Child-feeding programs in Austria began on May 5, 1919. The method for feeding and selecting children in Austria was developed by Dr. Clemens von Pirquet (1874-1929) of Vienna University Children's Hospital. Pirquet's method was known as the Pelidisi formula which is the ratio between the sitting height and the weight of the child. The Pelidisi norm was expressed as 100, but with children it was 94.5 since they did not carry as much fat. Children with a Pelidisi of 94 were considered underfed and those under 93 were admitted to a feeding center immediately. Examinations of children were repeated at frequent intervals.

Scope and Contents

The collection consists of photographs and printed materials (all in German), documenting the efforts of the American Relief Administration, European Children's Fund (Mission to Austria), to feed malnourished children in Europe in the post-World War I era. The photographs, publications and charts in this collection specifically relate to children in Vienna and other Austrian cities.

Series 1, Photographs, 1920-1921, consists of black and white copy prints documenting children being fed or playing, kitchen scenes, and dormitory scenes throughout Austria. There are two images depicting the Pedilisi score for two unidentified boys. Some of the prints are captioned.

Series 2, Printed Materials and Charts, 1919-1921, includes writings by Clemens Peter Freiherr von Pirquet (1874--929) an Austrian scientist and pediatrician best known for his contributions to the fields of bacteriology and immunology. Pirquet worked with the American Relief Administration, European Children's Fund in Austria and developed the Pedilisi method of determining a child's level of malnourishment.

Arrangement

The collection is divided into two series.

Series 1, Photographs, 1920-1921

Series 2, Printed Materials and Charts, 1919-1921

Bibliography

Hoover, Herbert. *An American Epic. Volume: 3*. Chicago: H. Regnery Company, 1959.

Surface, Frank M. and Raymond I. Bland. *American Food in the World War and Reconstruction Period. Operations of the the Organizations under the Direction of Herbert Hoover, 1914 to 1924*. Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1931.

Names and Subject Terms

This collection is indexed in the online catalog of the Smithsonian Institution under the following terms:

Subjects:

Children -- Austria
Humanitarian assistance -- 1920-1930 -- Austria
Relief and volunteer organizations -- 1920-1930 -- Austria

Types of Materials:

Pamphlets
Photographs -- 1920-1930

Places:

Austria

Container Listing

Series 1: Photographs, 1920 - 1921

Box 1, Folder 1
[Image\(s\)](#)

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Series 2: Printed Materials and Charts, 1919 - 1921

| | |
|-----------------|---|
| Box 1, Folder 2 | Nobel, Edmund. Principles of Professor Pirquet's System of Nutrition, 1921 |
| Box 1, Folder 3 | Pirquet, Clemens. Die Amerikanische Rinder Hilfsaktion in Osterreich (American Cattle Relief Effort in Austria), 1920 |
| Box 1, Folder 4 | Pirquet, Clemens. Pelidisi-Table, 1921 |
| Box 1, Folder 5 | Ernährungs-unde Osterreichischer Almanach für Ernährung (Nutritional Diet for Customer: Austrian Almanac), 1921 - 1922 |
| Box 1, Folder 6 | Die Jahresfeier der Amerikanischen Kinderhilfsaktion (The Annual Celebration of the American Relief Effort, the child firmly in the park of the Castle Schonbrunn) (2 copies), undated |
| Box 1, Folder 7 | Mitteilungen der American Relief Administration, Die Jahresfeier der Amerikanischen Kinderhilfsaktion das fest im park des Schlosses Schonbrunn (Communications of the American Relief Administration, the annual celebration of the American relief effort, the child firmly in the park of the Castle Schonbrunn), 1921 June |
| Box 1, Folder 7 | Mitteilungen der American Relief Administration, Schülerspeisung in den Städten und Kleineren Orten Niederösterreichs (Releases for the American Relief Administration Students Feed into the Smaller Cities and Locations down in Austria), 1921 August |
| Box 1, Folder 7 | Mitteilungen der American Relief Administration, Erfolge der preisausschreiben für kinder kuchen in niederosterreich (Communications of the American Relief Administration), 1921 September |
| Box 1, Folder 8 | Recepte (Recipes), 1919 November-1920 February |
| Box 1, Folder 9 | Die Amerikanische Kinderhilfsaktion in Österreich (The American Children's Relief Campaign in Austria), 1920-1921 3 Volumes Notes: Contains three bound volumes: Band I, Die Amerikanische Kinderhilfsaktion in Wien; Band II, Die Amerikanische Kinderhilfsaktion in den Ländern Osterreichs and Band III, Vienne, M. Salzer. See museum accession 67854. |
| Map-folder 1 | American Relief Administration, European Children's Fund organizational chart, 1920 |
| Map-folder 1 | American Relief Administration, European Children's Fund, one year's work (chart), 1920 |

Map-folder 2

View of the nourishment of school children in Upper-Austria (charts), 1920
November

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