

Under the Nazi dictatorship from 1933 to 1945, millions of people were deported and murdered. In order to search for missing persons and clarify their fates one of the largest archives on Nazi crimes was founded in Arolsen. It contains over 30 million documents, index cards and lists, on Holocaust victims and concentration camp prisoners, as well as foreign forced laborers and survivors.

Tracing offices had already been established in World War I, in light of the new dimensions of 20th century warfare, involving mass murder, deportation, imprisonment and flight. But the devastation of World War II was even greater. New structures were therefore set up by the Allies in 1945 to search for the missing victims of Nazi persecution. And for documents that would help clarify their fate.

As a result, the *International Tracing Service* was founded in 1948. Originally a temporary measure, it became a permanent institution when new responsibilities were added to its tracing activities. Since 2019 the institution has been known as the *Arolsen Archives*. It is an international center on Nazi persecution. The collections in the *Arolsen Archives* are a *paper monument*. Millions of fates are recorded in millions of documents, all cataloged within a huge *Central Name Index* – and listed on the UNESCO Memory of the World register. But how did tracing and providing information develop over time? How was the archive created? Who used it and who had access? This exhibition enables answers to these questions and also describes the development of dealing with historical evidence and the victims of Nazi crimes themselves.