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British Online Archives (BOA) is one of the UK's leading academic publishers and online repositories. Hosting over six million records, carefully sourced from private and public archives, such as The National Archives (UK) and British Library, our unique primary source collections cover over 500 years of world history.

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## Related Collections

Our primary source collections are organised thematically so as to enhance user experience and boost discoverability. Via careful reflection on our archival holdings, and in dialogue with scholars, we have grouped our collections under key historical themes.

*Germany 1920–1969: British Foreign Office Confidential Print* falls under the broad themes of “International Relations”, “Politics and Social Movements”, and “War, Security, and Intelligence”. You can explore these themes by scanning the QR codes, where you will find related collections, such as *Life under Nazi Rule: Reports by Anti-Fascists in Occupied Europe, 1933–1945*, and *Prosecuting the Holocaust: British Investigations into Nazi Crimes, 1944–1949*.

International Relations



Politics and Social Movements



War, Security, and Intelligence



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Germany, 1920–1969: British Foreign Office  
Confidential Print



## Germany, 1920–1969: British Foreign Office Confidential Print

Comprising over 55,000 images sourced from The National Archives (UK), this collection surveys Foreign Office material relating to Germany and its nearest neighbours. The collection contains a wide variety of documents, all of which were selected by the Foreign Office for inclusion in its Confidential Print series, on the basis of their significance.

The twentieth century was a time of great change and turmoil for Germany. In just fifty years, it experienced post-war revolution, an experiment with liberal democracy, the rise of Hitler and the Nazi Party, the establishment of a brutal dictatorship, the horrors of war and genocide, occupation by foreign powers, and division into two ideologically-opposed states.

Throughout this period, Britain's fate was closely entwined with Germany's. The two countries shared a number of important similarities and, as two of the most powerful states in Europe, their relations could have serious implications for the continent and beyond. During the two world wars, they were bitter adversaries, but at other times, they enjoyed periods of peaceful and friendly co-operation.

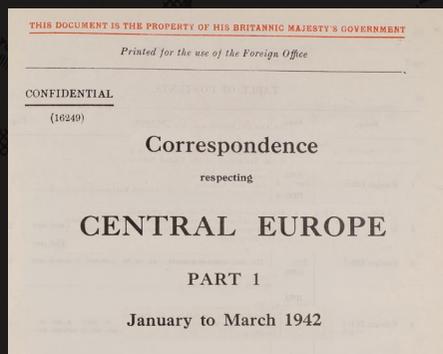
The government files in this collection reveal how well-informed British officials and diplomats perceived, interpreted, and responded to Germany throughout much of this critical period, offering an unrivalled English-language insight into the frequent and significant changes which Germany experienced during that time.



This map shows Germany after the Second World War, when borders across Europe were redrawn and the country itself was divided into four occupation zones, governed respectively by Britain, France, the Soviet Union, and the United States. Even this map hints at some of the complexity involved in settling the difficult “German question” after six years of war and disruption.

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| 17 To Mr. Peterson<br>No. 714    | 15              | Reparations<br>Transmits memorandum on report of Experts Committee   | 37    |
| 18 To Mr. Osborne<br>No. 308     | 16              | Portugal<br>Reports proposal of Portuguese Government that they should take part in forthcoming conference   | 39    |
| 19 To Mr. Nicholson<br>No. 905   | 16              | Germany<br>Refers to No. 1. Defines attitude of His Majesty's Government towards Borchgrevink's action in rejecting law for protection of the republic | 39    |
| 20 To Mr. Nicholson<br>No. 922   | 16              | Germany<br>Transmits memorandum already handed to German Ambassador about forthcoming conference   | 40    |
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| 22 Sir W. Tyrrell<br>No. 1033    | 19              | France<br>Transmits translation of speeches by M. Briand on war debts, the forthcoming conference and the  | 43    |

The Confidential Print series is extremely easy to navigate. The vast majority of documents are organised chronologically, feature clear page numbers, and include detailed tables of contents.



This collection also includes files relating to Austria, Czechoslovakia, Hungary, and Poland, especially during the Nazi period when these nations were occupied and partially absorbed into the Greater German Empire.

CONFIDENTIAL



## Diplomatic Documents dealing with Anglo-German Relations

(November 1925—March 1939)

The collection offers researchers and students an excellent guide to the complex diplomacy of this period, when Anglo-German relations had huge ramifications for the whole world.

CHAPTER 10—HOW TO TREAT GERMANS

Germany as a nation began after 1871 when Bismarck unified the various states now comprising, with certain later additions, the Third Reich.

Naturally, the inhabitants possess different characteristics depending upon their history, locality and origin. Thus we find many different racial types intermingled, not only as a result of periodic wars but as a result of Nazi efforts to destroy the autonomy of the former states. Generally the people in the East bear physical traces of their Slavonic origin, those in the South and along the middle Rhine show evidences of a Latin admixture, while in the Northwest they are usually blond and blue eyed. Although the inhabitants all speak German, but with great variety of distinct dialects, there is considerable variation in customs and religion. After the Reformation, Protestantism greatly increased in Central and Northern Germany. The West and South, however, remained Catholic strongholds. At the time Hitler came to power in 1933, the proportion of Catholics to Protestants was roughly one to two. However, the ratio became about even upon the acquisition of the Catholic countries of Austria, Sudetenland, Alsace-Lorraine and portions of Poland. In the broadest generalities, the Rhinelanders is Catholic, often dark-complexioned, lively and quick. In Westphalia, which is adjoining on the Northeast, the inhabitants are Catholic, but otherwise different, being usually blond, heavy, slow and thrifty. Farther to the Northeast in Hanover (where reputedly the best German is spoken) we find Lutherans but with other

Many of the documents in this collection relate directly to the Second World War. This handbook helped British officers understand the complexities of the Nazi state.

Some of the richest material comes from reports compiled by British ambassadors (and other senior consular staff) in Germany. These officials were usually well-connected and perceptive. The information that they provided directly shaped British attitudes. The collection also contains correspondence and policy documents. These explore Anglo-German relations in the period, illuminating a key element of wider British foreign policy, as well as wider European and world affairs.

Alongside these internal reports and memoranda are a number of important diplomatic documents, such as the proceedings of the Locarno Conference of 1925 and the establishment of relations with the Federal Republic of Germany in the 1950s. Another particular strength of this collection is the number of files relating to the British occupation of Germany at the end of the Second World War. While this began as a military effort to ensure no resurgence of German aggression after 1945, it rapidly became a much more complicated undertaking.

THE  
NATIONAL  
ARCHIVES

Sources include: The National Archives (UK).

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“... the question of Anglo-German relations is of the first importance for our two countries and for Europe.”

Neville Chamberlain, 30 September 1938.