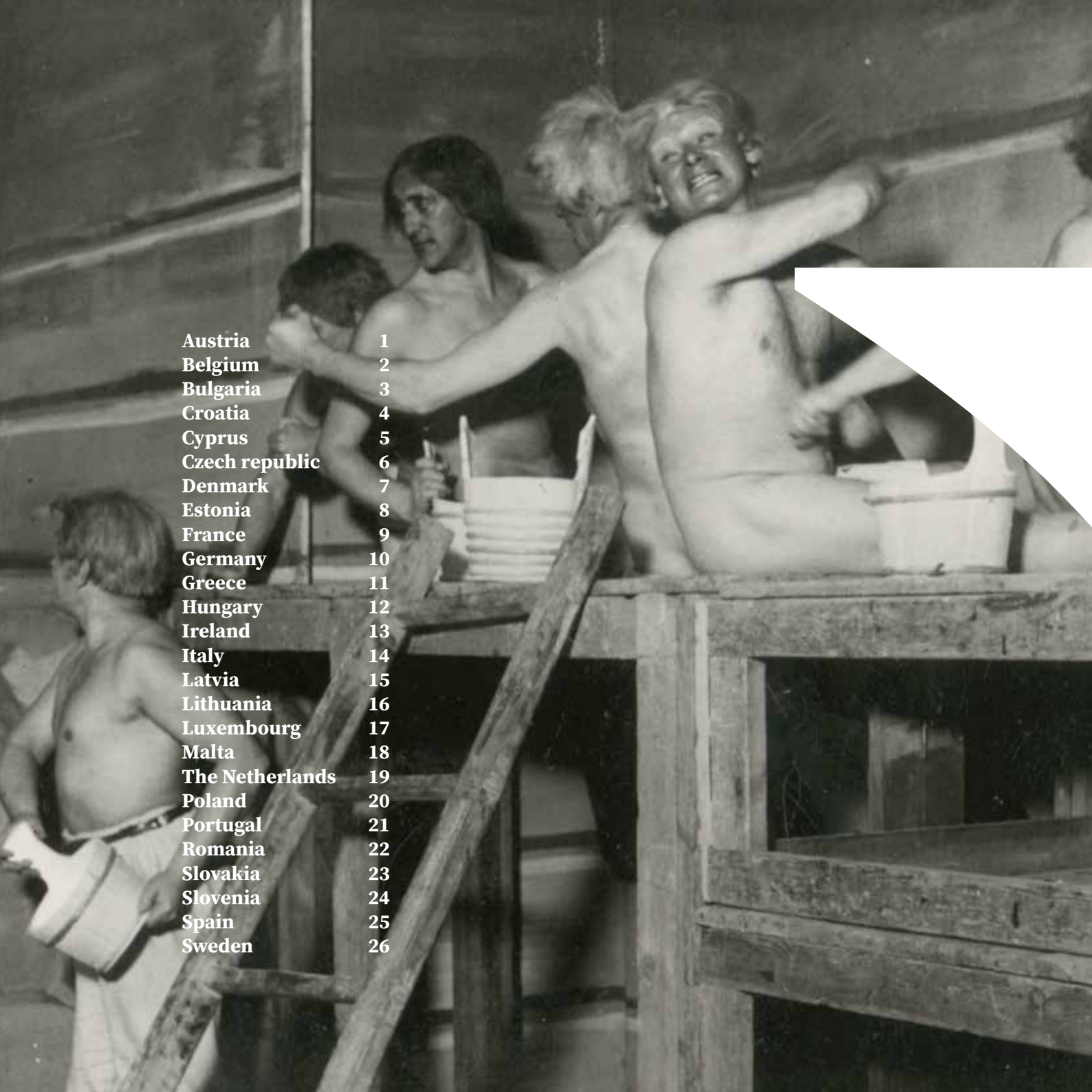




SEVEN

International Archives
Week Challenge
2026





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SEVEN

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Abbreviations

Archive | **A**
Reference code | **R**
Title | **T**
Description | **D**

Editorial

In 2020, together with Dr. Rik Opsommer from the Town Archives of Ypres, we initiated the first International Archives Week Challenge. This year marks the seventh edition of the project, presented each June as part of International Archives Week—a time when archives around the world highlight their work, mission, and shared cultural responsibility.

The first edition took place during the COVID-19 pandemic, a period that, paradoxically, brought archival institutions closer together despite physical distance and uncertainty. Even under those circumstances, eight archives joined the initiative, laying the foundations for what would gradually become a broader European collaboration.

The concept has remained intentionally simple. Each year, we invite one archive from every EU country to contribute a single item—a reproduction accompanied by its historical context—connected to a common theme. Over time, the project has grown not only in scale, but also in diversity and substance. Yet it has deliberately preserved a certain openness and spontaneity. Some partners participate regularly, others occasionally; there are no strict obligations, nor should there be. The project continues to leave room for flexibility, curiosity, and creative interpretation.

This year's theme, SEVEN (7), has proven to be perhaps the most intriguing and demanding so far. The result demonstrates the richness of Europe's archival heritage, the similarities that connect us across borders, and the diversity that defines our historical experiences. Each archive approached the theme in its own way, creating a vivid mosaic of stories, perspectives, and memories.

The contributions vary greatly in both form and content—from photographs and contemporary visual materials to medieval charters, administrative records, posters, drawings, and murals. Some stand out because of their rarity or historical significance, while others resonate on a deeply human level. The chronological span is equally impressive, reaching from the distant past to the very recent present.

We would like to sincerely thank all contributors for the care and effort invested in selecting their materials. This year, the project brings together contributions from 26 archives across Europe, once again confirming its vitality and collaborative spirit.

Special thanks also go to Dr. Rik Opsommer, who co-founded the project together with me and has shared the organizational work throughout the years.

Finally, to our readers, we wish an inspiring and enjoyable journey through the stories gathered in this year's edition.

Borut Batagelj

AUSTRIA

A | Steiermärkisches Landesarchiv / Styrian State Archive, Graz

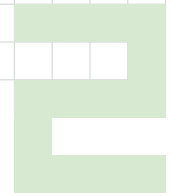


R | StLA-AUR-1607-VII-07, Rom

T | Letter of Indulgence from Pope Paul V. for the Styrian Augustinian Canons' Monastery of Seckau, issued on 7 July 1607, in Rome

D | The indulgence document, issued on 7 July 1607, in Rome in the form of a papal breve for the Styrian Augustinian Canons' Monastery of Seckau, was transferred to the Styrian State Archives along with the archives of this community, which was dissolved in 1782, and is now part of the General Document Series, which comprises approximately 65.000 documents. The document was severely damaged in the first weeks after the end of the Second World War in 1945 and could not be restored until 1969. The letter of indulgence was issued at the request of Maria of Bavaria (1551–1608), the widow of Archduke Charles II of Inner Austria (1540–1590), and was intended as a special honor for the monastery, where Charles had been buried.

BELGIUM



A | Stadsarchief Ieper / Town Archives of Ypres



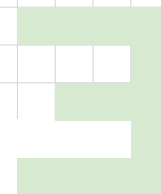
R | Ieperse Aanwinsten 433

T | The Chronogram of 1757: A Visit of Rhetoric Chamber of Ypres to their Colleagues in Messines

D | From the late 15th to the 18th century, within the Low Countries, the rhetoric chambers were important literary societies. They consisted of laypeople who organized public performances of plays and recitations, thus promoting the development of Dutch-language poetry and drama. On 7 July 1757 (“7en jullius”), the Ypres based rhetoric chamber of “Our Lady of Alseberg” paid a visit to their colleagues of “Mary in Need” in nearby Messines. The poems and short plays which were performed were written down in a register. The year is hidden in a chronogram (M=1000, D=500, C=100, L=50, Y=5, I=1; whose numerical values add up to 1757) within the device: “He adores the hall with pure language”, or “hY CIert De zaLe aL Met reIne taeLe”.

BULGARIA

A | Централен държавен архив / Central State Archives, Sofia



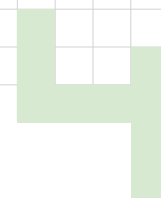
R | CSA, Fonds 3K, Inventory list 14, Archival Unit 103, Page 255

T | A photo of Crown Prince Simeon as a baby, 16 June 1937

D | Seven years after Tsar Boris III's wedding to the Italian Princess Giovanna of Savoy in October 1930, their son, Prince Simeon of Tarnovo, heir to the throne, was born on 16 June 1937. This event spontaneously became a national holiday. Parades and festivities were held in towns and villages across the country. In the capital, Sofia, a church service was held at St. Alexander Nevsky Cathedral. The photograph is an official portrait of the heir to the throne, featuring the royal monogram, a ribbon bearing the national flag, and a handwritten inscription by King Boris III with the name of Simeon II and his date of birth.



CROATIA



A | Državni arhiv za Međimurje / State Archive for the County of Medjmurje, Štrigova



R | Internal documentary collection of the State Archive for the County of Medjmurje (Photo: Jurica Cesar)

T | Digital photograph of seven employees of the State Archive for the County of Medjmurje (2026)

D | This photograph depicts seven employees of the State Archives for Međimurje, captured in front of the main archive building in Štrigova. The archive, located in a rural border village directly adjacent to Slovenia, is among the youngest state archives in Croatia and is notable for being the only one headquartered outside an urban center. Despite its relatively recent establishment, it has been steadily expanding, both in terms of the archival holdings it acquires and the number of its staff.

The photograph features seven archive employees: Siniša Habuš (Archivist), Igor Mekota (Archivist), Franjo Cerovec (Archives Technician), Martin Đud (Archivist Intern), Blaženka Rožmarić (Archives Technician Specialist), Josip Mikec (Archivist Intern), and Marko Smojver (Archives Technician Specialist). The image was taken by the director of the archive, Jurica Cesar on the 22th of April 2026. Beyond its documentary value, the photograph conveys a broader message: archives are not only defined by the records they preserve, but also by the people who manage and interpret them.

CYPRUS

A | Κρατικό Αρχείο / Cyprus State Archives, Nicosia

	Inspector of Schools	
Larnaca	I. J. Constantino - In part of Insp. of Schools	24/1/07
Nicosia	K. K. Pavlos - a part of S	25/1/07
Limassol	A. K. Pilavakis - In mid part in Education Dept.	26/1/07
Nicosia	Harold J. Papadimitriou	27/1/07
	Post of Greek Inspector of Schools - Schoolmasters Association of Nicosia pray that a specially trained man from Athens be appointed	28/1/07
	Mr. Maratheftis: Recommended by Urban Council for post of Greek Insp. of School	29/1/07
	Muslim Inspectors of Schools: Representation made in Leg Council by Muslim Members as to increase of	30/1/07
Nicosia	A. Pissinos for post of Insp. of Greek Schools	31/1/07
"	J. Papadimitriou - do -	1/2/07
"	Stas P. Papadimitriou - do -	2/2/07
Limassol	A. H. Economos - do -	3/2/07
Lafio	Angelo Triantafyllou - do -	4/2/07
Nicosia	Andreas Pissinos - do -	5/2/07
Larnaca	Solon K. Michaelides - do -	6/2/07
Porto Said	C. J. Constantino - do -	7/2/07
Nicosia	M. Markides - do -	8/2/07
	J. D. Zammit - do -	9/2/07
	Appointment of two new Methodists in lieu of one Inspector of Greek Schools.	10/2/07
	Mr. Scudo suggests and offers her services for one of the posts	11/2/07
	Not to sign as Chief Inspector of Schools before appointment is finalized	12/2/07
	Mr. Amundson application for post of Greek Inspector of Schools	13/2/07
	Mr. Pilavakis application for post of Insp	14/2/07
	Vacancy of Greek Insp. of Muslim School - (vice A. Pissinos off)	15/2/07

Επισημαίνεται ότι η παρούσα αντιγραφή αποτελεί έγγραφο αρχείο και η χρήση της γίνεται υπό την ευθύνη του αναπαραγωγέα. Δεν εξασφαλίζεται η ακεραιότητα των αντιγράφων. Η χρήση της είναι υπό την ευθύνη του αναπαραγωγέα.

ΚΡΑΤΙΚΟ ΑΡΧΕΙΟ ΚΥΠΡΟΥ
CYPRUS STATE ARCHIVES
Nicosia, Cyprus, Republic of Cyprus
SA9/34

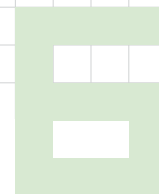
Please note that this copy is supplied subject to the State Archives' terms and conditions and that any use of it may be subject to copyright restrictions.

R | Secretariat Archives - Register of files of the year 1907: SA9/34

T | Register of records of the year 1907, the 7th subcategory, Inspectors of schools

D | The 7th subcategory of the Secretariat Archives Register of records, of the year 1907 indicating the reference number of each record that was created in 1907 on Inspectors of Schools in Cyprus.

CZECH REPUBLIC



A | Státní okresní archiv Cheb / State District Archive in Cheb



R | Cheb City Archives, EL NAD 1, box 1991

T | The bilingual announcement of the mourning ceremony for Tomáš Garrigue Masaryk, 1937

D | The people of Cheb clearly opposed having been incorporated into the independent Czechoslovak state in 1918. Nevertheless, the memory of the first Czechoslovak president Tomáš Garrigue Masaryk – the “President Liberator,” who died on 14 September 1937 – was honored in Cheb with reverence and appropriate respect. The obituary was published on the front page of the “Egerer Zeitung” (Cheb newspaper) already on 15 September. The City of Cheb sent condolences to the president’s family in Lány and to government officials in Prague. Cheb’s mayor, Andreas Prokisch, traveled to Prague for the state funeral along with the head of the city office, while a memorial ceremony was held in Cheb on the funeral’s day. But did all the people of Cheb truly mourn? The radicalization of the local Germans and their identification with Nazi ideology were reaching their peak at that time. There was only one year left until the German residents of Cheb began expelling their Czech neighbors from their homes and destroying Czechoslovak border posts and boundary stones.

DENMARK

A | Kolding Stadsarkiv / Kolding City Archive



R | B20891

T | The deed in which Lady Jytte mortgaged her land, 1427.

D | In 1427, Lady Jytte mortgaged the land of Brændkjær, located in the Duchy of Schleswig, to the town of Kolding in the Kingdom of Denmark. According to legend, when she came to repay the loan, the townspeople had the church clock set forward, causing it to strike twelve before she arrived. As a result, she was too late, and the land passed to Kolding. The story claims that, as punishment for this deceit, the church clock has never kept proper time since—a curious detail still observed today, despite several replacements of its mechanism – most recently in 1974. Variations of this tale exist, making it a lasting part of local folklore. Historically, the mortgage created a disputed border area, later sold to Kolding in 1444 and incorporated into Denmark by King Christian I in 1452. While the factual record survives in archives, the legend of the faulty clock has endured far more vividly over the centuries.

ESTONIA

A | **Rahvusarhiiv / The National Archives of Estonia, Tartu**



R | RA, EAA.2111.1.7992.1

T | Seven brothers whipping in sauna. From the play »Seven Brothers« by Finnish writer Aleksis Kivi, published in »Postimees« on 5 December 1934

D | Seven brothers have been left to fend for themselves after losing their parents. They withdraw from the village and its people, heading into the forest, where they create their own world and way of life. Naturally, the young men are brimming with emotions and passions; a trivial word can spark a quarrel, yet there is also joy and a bond of solidarity for all. This instructive story, based on Aleksis Kivi's novel, has been cherished in Estonian theaters for decades. The selected photo is from the Drama Theater's 1934 production, a time when Estonian theater life was vibrant and beloved—the Drama Theater in Tallinn, known for its high artistic standards, was home to a professional resident troupe that achieved nationwide reach and recognition.

FRANCE



A | Archives de la Communauté d'Agglomération du Pays de Saint-Omer / Archives of Saint-Omer Urban District.

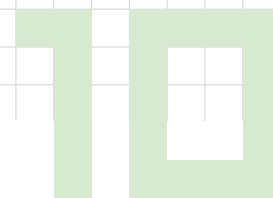


R | Saint-Omer municipal archives, ms. 1718

T | The act of surrender of the city of Saint-Omer, 22 April 1677

D | From the 16th century until the third quarter of the 17th century, Saint-Omer was under the authority of the Kings of Spain, successors to the Dukes of Burgundy. In 1635, conflicts arose between Spain and France, and the city of Saint-Omer is first besieged by French troops in 1638, and again in 1677 during the Franco-Dutch War (1672-1678). During the later, on 14 March, the Duke of Orléans, brother of King Louis XIV, encircles the city with 25,000 men, and a month and a half later, on 20 April, Saint-Omer surrendered. On 22 April, the King of France signed the act of capitulation of Saint-Omer, which contains fifteen articles amended, annotated, granted, or refused by le Roi-Soleil. It thus ends 161 years of Spanish dominion over the Artesian city. However, Saint-Omer officially becomes a part of the Kingdom of France with the Treaty of Nijmegen on 17 September 1678.

GERMANY



A | Stadt- und Stiftsarchiv Aschaffenburg / City and Abbey Archives Aschaffenburg



R | Stiftsarchiv Aschaffenburg, Urkunde 21

T | The appointment of Johann Riederer as vicar at the Collegiate Church of St. Peter and Alexander in Aschaffenburg, 26 February 1393 (Charter sealed with seven seals)

D | The »book with seven seals« is a well-known idiom derived from the Book of Revelation in the Bible. It represents something which is difficult to understand. Many archival documents, especially from the Middle Ages, are also difficult to understand at first glance due to their hard-to-read script. However, digitization, online access, and description in archives are making many new insights possible. The document dated 26 February 1393, concerns the appointment of Johann Riederer as vicar at the Collegiate Church of St. Peter and Alexander in Aschaffenburg. The collegiate church, dissolved over two hundred years ago, still plays a significant role in the city of Aschaffenburg. The written record is housed in the Aschaffenburg City and Abbey Archives, while the manuscripts are part of the Aschaffenburg Court Library. Several years ago, a substantial portion of the collegiate archives was digitized with the support of the State of Bavaria.

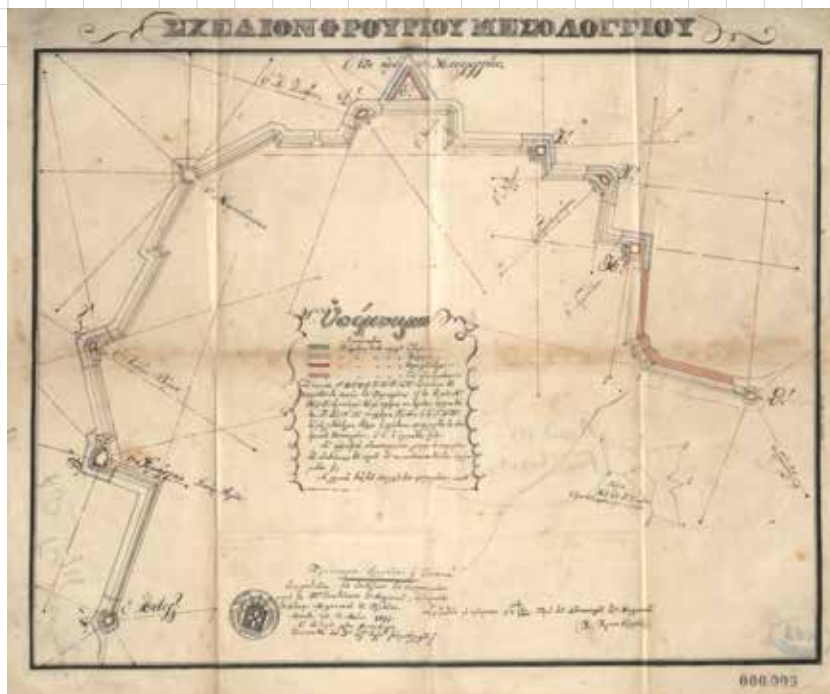
GREECE

A | Γενικά Αρχεία του Κράτους / General State Archives of Greece. Central Service, Athens

R | General State Archives of Greece, Central Service, Small Collections (K10e-e)

T | The Hellenic Heptagon. Plan of the fortress of Missolonghi, which, following its destruction in 1826, was rebuilt according to the heptagonal design conceived by the engineer Kokkinis. Missolonghi, 31 May 1844

D | In 1821, the Greeks revolted against the Ottoman Empire, claiming their independence. During the ten years of the Greek War of Independence, the small town of Missolonghi in western Greece emerged as a symbol of the struggle for freedom. In 1822, the Ottoman army failed to capture Missolonghi, and in April 1825, with the assistance of Egyptian troops, they resumed the siege of the town. Despite being vastly outnumbered, the Greek defenders of Missolonghi managed to withstand the attacks thanks to the town's strong fortifications. The fortress of Missolonghi was designed and rebuilt by the Greek engineer Michael Kokkinis, who arrived in Missolonghi in 1823. Kokkinis built a formidable defensive structure two kilometres long, which, due to the wall's heptagonal shape, became known as the 'Hellenic Heptagon'. Following a year-long siege, and with starvation having had a devastating effect on the besieged, the defenders of Missolonghi along with the women and children of the town made the decision, those who still had the strength, to attempt a breakout from the fortress. This occurred on 10 April 1826. It was an act of desperation, but also a conscious sacrifice in defence of the ideal of freedom. Very few of the defenders and civilians of Missolonghi survived the Exodus. Among the dead was Kokkinis, the engineer of the 'Hellenic Heptagon'. The year 2026 marks the 200th anniversary of the "Exodus of Missolonghi."



HUNGARY

12

**A | Magyar Nemzeti Levéltár Bács-Kiskun Vármegyei Levéltára/
Hungarian National Archives, Bács-Kiskun County Archives, Kecskemét**

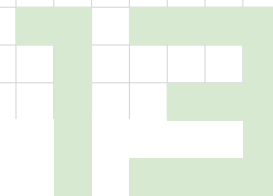


R | HU-MNL-BKML-MNL BKML XV.76.b.-5

T | The poster of the Hírös Hét (Famous Week) in Kecskemét, 1934

D | The greatest Hungarian poet, Sándor Petőfi, called Kecskemét “hírös” (famous) in one of his poems, a term that has since become a defining cultural symbol and brand of the city. The Hírös Hét (“Famous Week”) is the most well-known and long-standing multi-day festival in Kecskemét. Although its name refers to a “week” (traditionally understood as a period of seven days), the actual duration of the festival has varied over time: the first editions, including the one in 1934, lasted as long as nine days, while today the event typically takes place over four days. Despite these changes, the original name has been preserved. The festival was first organized in 1934 with the aim of boosting tourism and opening new markets for local products. In addition to exhibitions of fruit, wine, and other industrial goods, it also featured events presenting the cultural diversity of the city, including the first independent exhibition compiled from the treasures of the Kecskemét archives. The poster of the first festival depicts the city skyline with the towers of its religious buildings, the famous Kecskemét apricot, and a hammer symbolizing local agriculture and industry. It also features a typical scene from the Great Hungarian Plain, including a herd of grey cattle and a shadoof.

IRELAND



**A | Waterford City and County Archives Service, Dungarvan Library,
Davitt's Quay, Dungarvan, County Waterford**



R | IE-WCA-WCC-GNA-91

T | Letter dated 11 April 1917 from Chadwick's Grand Circus applying for a cinematograph licence

D | Letter from Henry Chadwick, Chadwick's Grand Circus, Waterford to R.G. Paul, County Secretary, Waterford County Council applying for a licence for a portable cinematograph exhibition to tour Ireland under the Cinematograph Act, 1909. The proposal was to show the cinematograph film and hold a circus in the tent shown in the letterhead and to travel to six "or less" towns per week. Cinematograph film was highly inflammable and the Cinematograph Act was introduced in 1909 to ensure public safety. Local authorities were given the task of issuing licences to cinema owners to ensure public safety and some councils interpreted this to include the type of films that were to be shown. Chadwick's Grand Circus was located at Foley's Paddock, Manor Street, Waterford City in the heart of the urban area and near the Waterford and Tramore Railway Station. This letter gives a little glimpse into the circus business in 1917 and into the entertainment enjoyed by people in Ireland at that time.

A | Archivio di Stato di Gorizia / State Archive of Gorizia



R | Pretura di Gradisca – Archivio di Gabinetto (1503-1830) box 6, file 6 (year 1647)

T | Decree of Johann Anton von Eggenberg promoting the settlement of the County of Gradisca (1647)

D | Decree issued by Johann Anton I von Eggenberg (1610-1639), Prince of Gradisca, Duke of Krumlov, and first Princely Count of Gradisca (15 October 1647), aimed at promoting the repopulation of the newly established County of Gradisca with settlers from abroad by granting exemption from all taxes for the first three years of residence. At the bottom left, the autograph signature of Johann Anton is visible. On the eve of the

conclusion of the Thirty Years' War, Emperor Ferdinand III of Habsburg decided to grant a vast strategic area of Imperial Friuli – situated along the southern border with the Republic of Venice – to Prince Johann Anton von Eggenberg. As creditor of the emperor, endowed with substantial personal wealth and eager to obtain a seat in the Imperial Diet, Johann Anton received, in exchange for the sum of 315.000 florins, the rank of immediate prince of the Holy Roman Empire and sovereignty over a fortified city (Gradisca) and around fifty smaller settlements, including ancient Aquileia (25 February 1647). He undertook to ensure the defense of this territory and to return it to the monarch should the male line of his house become extinct. This eventuality occurred seventy years later, in 1717, with the untimely death of the twenty year old Princely Count Johann Christian II. The fatal recurrence of the number seven is evident in this brief yet significant dynastic episode of the Early Modern period.

A | Latvijas Nacionālais arhīvs – Latvijas Valsts Vēstures arhīvs / The National Archives of Latvia – Latvian State Historical Archives, Riga

R | LVVA F5561_1_18

T | The contract for the sale of Rosenbeck castle between the van Kudezel brothers and the knight Rolof Perseval and his son Jurgen, 7 July 1437

D | The contract of sale for the property, concluded on 7 July 1437, concerning Rosenbeck castle (Rozenbeku pils) and all its associated properties, people, rivers, villages, lakes, mills, and fishing rights, was concluded between seven directly involved parties—three sellers—Klaus Kudezele, Wilhelm Kudezele, Bertram Kudezele; two buyers—Rolof Perseval and Jurgen Perseval; and two direct participants: the Kudezele mother, who gave permission to sell the castle, and the Kudezele uncle, Diederich, who attested to the authenticity of the contract. The property being sold includes approximately 1.500 hectares of land and is sold for the substantial sum of 12.000 Riga marks. The sale of the property occurs amid a complex political, military, and economic situation in medieval Livonia. Following military campaigns in Lithuania, internal disagreements have arisen within the Livonian Order, along with changes in the Papal Curia's influence over the selection of Livonia's spiritual leaders. Moreover, the land had suffered several years of crop failure. This is why the document includes, several times, a clause stating that the property is free of debt and that future owners will not face any legal or moral claims. The contract is concluded in perpetuity, as confirmed by the witnesses and the attached seals from the parties involved (two of the seals have gone missing).



LITHUANIA

16

A | Kauno regioninis valstybes archyvas / Kaunas Regional State Archives



R | Kaunas City Municipality Passport Department. Fond No.66, inv. 1, files No. 165A/1936; 478/1937; 625/1934; 848/1938; 3043/1937; 14586/1931

T | A historic turning point in Lithuanian basketball, 7 May 1937. Internal passport cards of the European Basketball Championship winners

D | On 7 May 1937 Lithuania won the European Basketball Championship, defeating Italy in the final and marking a historic moment in the country's basketball history. The archival set presented here consists of six of the twelve members of the Golden Lithuanian Basketball Team internal passport cards – Artūras Andrulis, Česlovas Daukša, Leonas Kepalas, Pranas Mažeika, Zenonas Puzinauskas and Eugenijus Nikolskis. Although only part of the team is represented, these documents reveal the personal identities

behind the landmark of national victory. The number seven is embodied in the date itself, symbolizing the moment that marked the beginning of Lithuania's basketball era. Together, these records testify to the determination of a small nation to achieve great victories, and encourage a sense of pride in its history and its outstanding people.

LUXEMBOURG

A | Archives de la Ville de Luxembourg / City Archives of Luxembourg

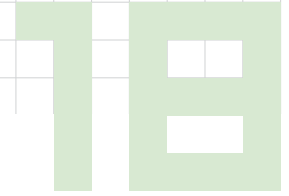


R | LU I 10_32, f°19

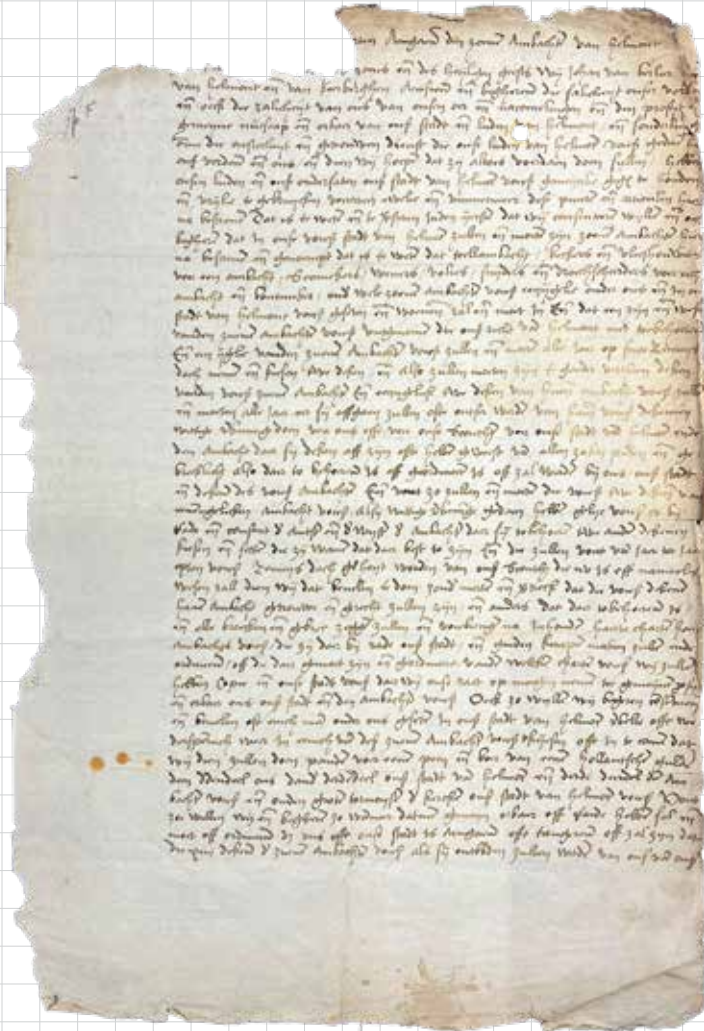
T | The Seven Aldermen of the City of Luxembourg

D | During the Ancien Régime, the City of Luxembourg was governed by an institution known as the “Magistrat”. This body consisted of seven aldermen, who were appointed by the government and held their positions for life. At the head of the magistrat was the justicier. He served a one-year term and was elected by the city’s bourgeoisie on the eve of Saint Andrew’s Day, 29 November. Every other year, the justicier was chosen from among the seven aldermen; in the alternate years, he was selected from the city’s bourgeois citizens. The capture of Luxembourg City by the French Revolutionaries in 1795 marked the end of this system. The magistrat was dissolved and replaced by a municipal government. However, the number seven still holds symbolic importance today: the “Collège échevinal”, the city’s main executive body, is composed of seven members: the mayor and six aldermen.

THE NETHERLANDS



**A | Regionaal Historisch Centrum Eindhoven /
Regional Historic Center Eindhoven**



R | Collectie Gemeentebestuur Helmond 1300-1810, nummer 12001, inventarisnummer 1499

T | Charter of the Seven Guilds, 1389

D | In 1389, Johan van Berlaer, lord of Helmond, established the rights and obligations of seven guilds within the town. This “charter of the seven guilds” provides valuable insight into the urban organization and economy of the late Middle Ages. Among these guilds were weavers, fullers, and cloth finishers, who played a central role in Helmond’s thriving textile industry. The document illustrates how crafts were regulated and how cooperation and specialization supported economic growth. Belonging to the collection of the municipal government of Helmond from 1300–1810, it offers a good glimpse into life at the time.

R | NAM/PWD/003/02/3390 (PDM 65928)

T | Sketch of monument commemorating victims of the 7 June 1919 riots

D | Sette Giugno (Italian, 'Seventh of June') is a national holiday in Malta commemorating the 7 June 1919 riots in Malta, then a British colony. The high cost of living and the sharp increase in unemployment after the Great War of 1914-1918 intensified the general discontent among the Maltese and strengthened the demand for a constitution in the political field. On 7 June 1919, people gathered in Valletta while a national assembly was discussing a submission for a constitution to the British authorities. Riots erupted and four Maltese were killed by British troops, and many were wounded. In 1925 a monument was erected at the Addolorata Cemetery to commemorate the victims. It was designed by Boris Edwards (1860–1924), a Ukrainian refugee in Malta from Odessa who fled the Russian Revolution. The document is a sketch of the document submitted with the application for the permit to erect the monument.



A | Archiwum Państwowego w Warszawie / The State Archive in Warsaw

R | 72/3216/0/1.1/126/5

T | Tractor Ursus-28, produced in URSUS Mechanical Works in the 1960s and mural “The Seven Maidens of Ursus” at Stanisława Wojciechowskiego Street in Warsaw made by Marcin Czaja (photo: Anastasia Smyk)

D | This tractor—like many others—would not have been built if weren't for the magical number seven. It was the dowry of seven maidens that contributed to the creation of the Company of a Special Factory of Fixture (Towarzystwo Spółkowe Specyalnej Fabryki Armatur), later known as the Ursus Tractor Works. When, in 1893, Warsaw engineers and entrepreneurs founded a factory producing fittings (for sugar refineries and waterworks, among others), they used the dowries of their daughters: Hanna, Jadwiga, Wanda, Helena, Stanisława, Eliza, and Aniela as their founding capital. To commemorate this event, the factory's trademark for the first years of its operation was “P7P” (from “Posag 7 Panien”—the dowry of seven maidens in Polish)—it could be seen, among other things, on the valves used in the construction of a modern water supply system designed by William Lindley and his son William Heerlein Lidley. Many years later Ursus employees played a significant role in shaping the anti-communist opposition in the Polish People's Republic. Protests against price increases, suppressed by the authorities, contributed to the formation of the Workers' Defense Committee (Komitet Obrony Robotników). When the Independent Self-Governing Trade Union “Solidarity” (Niezależny Samorządny Związek Zawodowy „Solidarność”) was founded in 1980, it included activists from “Ursus”. Today, Ursus is a district of Warsaw, and the seven maidens are commemorated by Posag Siedmiu Panien Street in the Szamoty district of Ursus and by a mural at 15 Stanisława Wojciechowskiego Street.



PORTUGAL

21

A | Arquivo Distrital do Porto / Porto District Archive

5.
Este menino ha de ser procurado
p.^o este signal que leba, e o mesmo
que he hum Cruzado de humbo
com huma rede que he hi 7

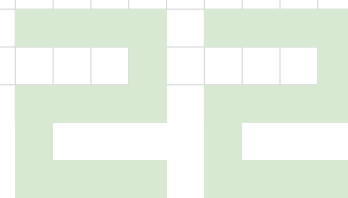


R | PT/ADPRT/ACD/CRPRT/AE/001/04860

T | Foundling record of Guilherme with a pendant marked “7”, 1827–1828, Casa da Roda do Porto (photo: Leo Leppänen)

D | This token and its accompanying note document Guilherme’s admission to the foundling wheel (Casa da Roda do Porto) on 20 June 1827, the day on which seven children were received. Around his neck, he wore a small pendant—a lead heart engraved with “7”—a number that would become a striking symbol of his brief life. This number recurs throughout the documentation, from the record of his admission to the record of his death on 7 July 1828. Guilherme’s story reveals both the administrative practices of care for abandoned children and the deeply human dimension preserved in these archives, where a simple object retains identity, meaning and memory. The ongoing international nomination, which seeks to recognize foundling tokens as UNESCO World Heritage, highlights not only the historical value of these documents but also the profound humanity inscribed within them. To shed light on this human dimension, we have selected a particularly significant case from the Porto Foundling Wheel. This contribution aims to offer a thoughtful interpretation of the theme, bringing together archival structure, historical context, and human experience, while also emphasizing the distinctive character of our archival holdings.

ROMANIA



A | Arhivele Naționale ale României / National Archives of Romania, Bucharest

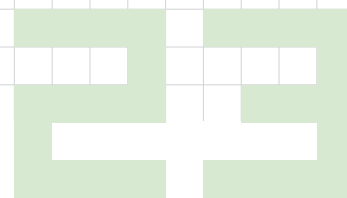
R | ANR, fond Comisia Consultativă Heraldică, file no. 3 ANR

T | Coat of arms of Michael the Brave after the union of Wallachia, Moldavia, and Transylvania in 1600; Coat of Arms of the Kingdom of Romania in 1921

D | The symbolism of the number seven in relation to Transylvania is one of the most enduring and meaningful elements of the region's historical identity. This symbolism is directly connected to the German name of Transylvania, Siebenbürgen, which literally means "Seven Fortresses" or "Seven Castles." Thus, from a linguistic and historical perspective, the number seven became inseparable from the image of Transylvania itself. Yet the symbolism of seven extends beyond language into heraldry, where it remained a constant marker of Transylvania for centuries. Early coats of arms of Transylvania, appearing around the late sixteenth century, already displayed the emblematic combination of an eagle above and seven mountains or hills surmounted by towers below. A remarkable reinterpretation of this symbolism appears in the coat of arms of Michael the Brave after the union of Wallachia, Moldavia, and Transylvania in 1600. In that unified heraldic composition, Transylvania was represented by seven golden mountains with two rampant lions standing above them. This imagery later inspired the heraldic design of Greater Romania after the First World War when the new national arms incorporated the symbols of all historical provinces. In the fourth quarter, representing Transylvania, there appeared a divided shield: in the upper blue field, a black eagle accompanied by a golden sun and crescent; in the lower golden field, seven red fortress towers. The tradition continues to this day in the current coat of arms of Romania, where the fourth quarter contains the arms of Transylvania together with Maramureș and Crișana; in the lower golden section there are seven red crenellated towers, arranged in two rows, four above and three below. This modern representation confirms that the number seven remains an official and living emblem of Transylvania within the Romanian state.



SLOVAKIA



**A | Archív Železníc Slovenskej republiky /
Archives of the Railways of the Slovak Republic, Bratislava**



R | Collection of Memorial Books of Railway Stations – Myjava (1927–1997)

T | Seven Employees of the Railway Station in Myjava

D | On 8 July 1923, construction began on the Veselí nad Moravou – Nové Mesto nad Váhom railway line. On 8 December 1927 operations were launched on the Lipov – Myjava section. On that same day, the railway station in Myjava also began its activity, and the station's Memorial Book was established, from which we learn, among other things, about the employees of this station. Photographs of seven station employees are included in an entry from 1932, from which the mentioned images originate. During this period, the station employed a stationmaster, a station operator, a switchman, a station assistant, two auxiliary workers, and one laborer.

SLOVENIA

24

A | Zgodovinski arhiv Celje / Historical Archives Celje

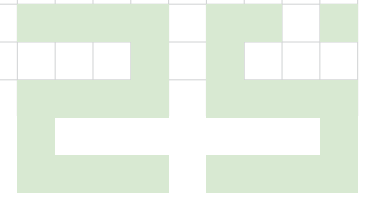
R | SI_ZAC/0900/016/00056 Slovensko ljudsko gledališče Celje

T | “The Seven Year Itch”, scene from a theatre production of the Slovene People’s Theatre Celje, 1955

D | The photograph shows a scene from the play “The Seven Year Itch” by American playwright George Axelrod, which premiered at the Slovene People’s Theatre Celje on 10 November 1955, directed by Mirč Kragelj. The actors depicted are Marija Goršič and Janez Škof. The play, which humorously explores the theme of male midlife crisis, represents an interesting example of the introduction of American popular culture into the theatrical space of a smaller town in socialist Yugoslavia. Axelrod’s work is globally best known through its film adaptation, *The Seven Year Itch*, starring Marilyn Monroe. In contrast, the Celje stage production did not leave a lasting mark on the theatre’s history. Yet it is precisely this apparent marginality that gives the archival material additional value today. It offers insight into early processes of cultural Americanization in the 1950s and raises questions about shifts in theatrical repertoires—from strongly socially and politically engaged works to lighter, more entertaining and intimate themes such as romantic comedies. As an additional point of interest, the photograph was taken in the same season in which the Historical Archives Celje started the process of its establishment; in 2026, the institution marks its 70th anniversary.



SPAIN



A | Archivo General de Indias / General Archive of the Indies, Sevilla



Plano de las Cajas y Contenido de cada una de las siete Cajas que se enviaron a España

CAJA	PAIS	RELES	CONTENIDO
1	Buenos Aires	10 libras 4 onzas	Esqueleto de un animal desconocido
2	Buenos Aires	10 libras 4 onzas	Esqueleto de un animal desconocido
3	Buenos Aires	10 libras 4 onzas	Esqueleto de un animal desconocido
4	Buenos Aires	10 libras 4 onzas	Esqueleto de un animal desconocido
5	Buenos Aires	10 libras 4 onzas	Esqueleto de un animal desconocido
6	Buenos Aires	10 libras 4 onzas	Esqueleto de un animal desconocido
7	Buenos Aires	10 libras 4 onzas	Esqueleto de un animal desconocido

R | ES.41091.AGI//MP-BUENOS_AIRES, 249

T | Drawing of the bones of the “Megatherium americanum” found in a ravine of the Luján River

D | In 1788, Nicolás del Campo, the 2nd Marquess of Loreto and Viceroy of the Río de la Plata—a jurisdiction encompassing present-day Argentina, Bolivia, Brazil, Chile, Paraguay, and Uruguay—dispatched seven crates to Spain for the recently established Royal Cabinet of Natural History in Madrid, the precursor to today’s National Museum of Natural Sciences. The crates contained the complete skeletal remains of a “large and unknown animal” discovered on the banks of the Luján River in present-day Argentina, along with a detailed plan of the skeleton and a table listing the weight, measurements, and contents of each crate. From the outset, the remains raised numerous questions: despite its massive size, the animal appeared to have the claws of a carnivore but the teeth of a herbivore. When asked about its origin, local indigenous people attributed it to their giant ancestors. The remains were later identified as a complete skeleton of “Megatherium americanum”, a giant sloth species that went extinct around twelve thousand years ago. This specimen is considered the first fossil vertebrate displayed to the public in Europe and the first reconstructed in its presumed life posture. Thanks to this documentation and related drawings, Georges Cuvier, the leading pioneer of comparative anatomy and palaeontology, was able to formally describe and name the species.

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Seven (7)

International Archives Week Challenge 2026

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Celje

June, 2026

BY CIOROS DE ZALLO AL MICHREIN... TAI... L...

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International
Archives
Week 2026

June, 2026

SEVEN

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Bucuresti
Celje
Cheb
Eindhoven
Gorizia
Graz
leper
Kaunas
Kecskemét
Kolding
Luxembourg
Nicosia
Rabat
Porto
Riga
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