

## E. PARKER LESLEY, JR., PAPERS

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### COLLECTION OVERVIEW

<b>Record Group Number</b>	RG 28
<b>Record Group Title</b>	Collections of Donated Materials
<b>Subgroup Title</b>	MFAA-E E. Parker Lesley, Jr., Papers
<b>Series Titles</b>	28MFAA-E1 Art Restitution-Related Materials, 1944 - 1951 28MFAA-E2 Professional Subject Files, 1934 - 1969 28MFAA-E3 Photograph Prints, 1946 28MFAA-E4 Digital Scans
<b>Abstract</b>	This collection documents the activities of E. Parker Lesley, Jr., as an officer with the Monuments, Fine Arts and Archives (MFAA) Section of the United States Army in Germany during and immediately after World War II. These materials also relate to Lesley's career as a museum professional and scholar of decorative arts.
<b>Inclusive Dates</b>	1934-1969
<b>Volume</b>	Less than one cubic foot
<b>Physical Description</b>	Correspondence, reports, and publications

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## E. PARKER LESLEY, JR., PAPERS

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### BIOGRAPHICAL NOTE

- August 31, 1913      Born, Baltimore, Maryland
- 1934                      B.A., Classical Literature (Greek), Stanford University, Palo Alto, California
- 1935                      Certificate, University of Paris, France
- 1937                      M.F.A., Art and Archeology, Princeton University, Princeton, New Jersey
- Certificate, Free University of Brussels, Belgium
- 1938-1939                Curator of European Art, Detroit Institute of Arts, Detroit, Michigan
- 1939-1942                Assistant Professor of Art and Architecture, University of Minnesota, Minnesota
- 1946-1947                Chief, Restitution Branch, Office of Military Government for Greater Hesse, Germany
- 1946                      Awarded Chevalier, Order of Poland Restored (Polinia Restituta), Poland
- 1947                      Honorary Medal of Art & Science, House Order of Orange-Nassau (Orde van Oranje-Nassau), The Netherlands
- 1947-1948                Studied at New York University, New York, New York
- 1950-1954                Keeper, Department of Exhibitions, Cooper Union Museum, New York, New York
- Acting Director, Norfolk Museum of Arts and Sciences (later, Chrysler Museum of Art), Norfolk, Virginia
- Assistant Professor of Art, College of William and Mary, Williamsburg, Virginia
- 1959-1979                Professor of Art, Old Dominion University, Norfolk, Virginia
- 1974-1976                Curator of Decorative Arts, National Gallery of Art, Washington

## **E. PARKER LESLEY, JR., PAPERS**

1978-1979      Eminent Professor of Art (later, Professor Emeritus), Old Dominion University

February 1982      Died, Norfolk, Virginia

Note: E. Parker Lesley, Jr., was also known as Bill Lesley

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## E. PARKER LESLEY, JR., PAPERS

### SCOPE AND CONTENT

This collection documents the activities of Everett Parker (Bill) Lesley, Jr., as a captain with the Monuments, Fine Arts and Archives (MFAA) Section of the United States Military Government in Germany immediately after World War II. While in Germany, Lesley was assigned to several posts, including Frankfurt and Bad Nauheim. In April 1946, he accompanied a restitution train of twenty-seven cars, *Special Train A*, from Nuremberg, Germany, to Cracow, Poland. The shipment included many important works of art and cultural monuments, most notably the Veit Stoss altar from the Church of Our Lady, Cracow, and Leonardo da Vinci's *Lady with an Ermine*. Lesley helped draft and later signed the *Wiesbaden Manifesto*, which opposed the military decision to transport 202 German-owned works of art to the National Gallery of Art, Washington, for safekeeping. This collection also reflects Lesley's research interest in decorative arts.

The collection consists of official documents relating to Lesley's work with the MFAA. Materials include a daily journal, a sworn statement regarding a Cracow shooting incident, memoranda regarding the Bernterode mine repository, requests for an investigation relating to property, a report of the discovery of property belonging to the House of Saxe-Weimar, and a guest book from the Wiesbaden Central Collecting Point. Of special interest are the approximately 200 photographs documenting the journey of the restitution train from Germany to Poland in April and May 1946.

Lesley's academic and scholarly work include a research paper on the arts and crafts movement, notes taken during an interview with artists Frida Kahlo and Diego Rivera, exhibition catalogues from the Cooper Union Museum for the Arts of Decoration, correspondence, and reference material on the *Chalice of Abbot Suger of Saint-Denis*.

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### ADMINISTRATIVE INFORMATION

<b>Access/Use Information</b>	These papers are unrestricted.
<b>Preferred Citation</b>	E. Parker Lesley, Jr., Papers, National Gallery of Art, Washington, D.C., Gallery Archives
<b>Copyright</b>	No information about the donor's copyright is available.
<b>Language</b>	The papers are in English.
<b>Acquisition Information</b>	Gift of E. Parker Lesley, Jr., 1979
<b>Processing Information</b>	Preliminary organization was performed by National Gallery of Art Library staff.  Gallery Archives staff completed the processing and prepared the finding aid in October 2007.
<b>Contact Information</b>	Telephone: (202) 842-6614 Facsimile: (202) 842-6948 Email: <a href="mailto:gallery-archives@nga.gov">gallery-archives@nga.gov</a> Web Site: <a href="http://www.nga.gov">www.nga.gov</a>  <i>Mailing Address</i> National Gallery of Art Gallery Archives 2000B South Club Drive Landover, MD 20785  <i>Research Room Location</i> National Gallery of Art West Building Sixth Street and Constitution Avenue, NW Washington, D.C. 20565

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### ADDITIONAL DESCRIPTIVE INFORMATION

#### **Related Materials**

See *A Guide to Research Resources Relating to World War II* (Washington: Gallery Archives, National Gallery of Art, 1999) for information relating to other war-related materials available at the National Gallery of Art.  
(<http://www.nga.gov/resources/gadesc.htm>)

The National Archives of the United States (NARA) holds official government records relating to the work of the Monuments, Fine Arts and Archives officers and the American Commission for the Protection and Salvage of Artistic and Historic Monuments in War Areas (Roberts Commission). Detailed finding aids are available from NARA and on the Web site of the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum.

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### ORGANIZATION

**Series E1** ART-RESTITUTION-RELATED MATERIALS, 1944 - 1951  
Arranged alphabetically

This series contains a catalogue of an exhibition of eighteenth-century paintings held at the Central Collecting Point, Wiesbaden, organized by the Monuments, Fine Arts and Archives (MFAA) Section of the United States Military Government in Germany. Also included is the *Wiesbaden Manifesto* and a publication containing editorials about the Berlin paintings controversy, and materials relating to the military government and transportation of looted art. Of special interest is a report detailing the discovery and transportation of property belonging to the House of Saxe-Weimar.

**Series E2** PROFESSIONAL SUBJECT FILES, 1934 - 1969  
Arranged alphabetically

This series contains materials relating to Lesley's academic and scholarly work. Included are a research paper on the arts and crafts movement, notes taken during an interview with artists Frida Kahlo and Diego Rivera, a bound collection exhibition catalogs from the Cooper Union Museum for the Arts of Decoration, correspondence, and reference material on the *Chalice of Abbot Suger of Saint-Denis*.

**Series E3** PHOTOGRAPH PRINTS, 1946  
Arranged alphabetically by subject

This series documents Lesley's supervision of the removal and return of looted works of art and other cultural materials. Included are approximately 200 photographs documenting the journey of *Special Train A* from Nuremberg, Germany to Cracow, Poland.

**Series E4** DIGITAL SCANS  
Digital scans are made from prints and negatives on an as-needed basis. Contact archives staff for information on scans that are currently available.

## 28MFAA-E Collections of Donated Materials

### E. Parker Lesley, Jr., Papers

#### 28MFAA-E1 Art Restitution-Related Materials, 1944 - 1951

##### Box 1

- 1-1 Catalogue - *Eighteenth Century Painting, Central Collecting Point Wiesbaden (Landesmuseum)*, 1947  
*Includes 2 concert programs, 1 in English and 1 in German*
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- 1-2 *Civil Affairs and Military Government Activities in Connection with Monuments, Fine Arts, and Archives*. Report of the General Board United States Forces, European Theater [undated]
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- 1-3 Daily Journal [December 4, 1944-May 21, 1945] [Reference Copy and Fragile Original]
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- 1-4 Disposition of Contents at Bernterode Mine Repository [1945-1946]  
*Includes documents on Operation Bodysnatch, Disposition of Hohenzollern and Hindenburg Caskets, Regimental Standards in the Marburg Collecting Point, and German War Banners, includes preservation copies*
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- 1-5 Guest Book - Wiesbaden [1947, 1951]
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- 1-6 *Magazine of Art* (February 1946)  
*Includes editorials relating to the Berlin Paintings Controversy*
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- 1-7 Military Investigations [1945-1946]
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- 1-8 Report on the Discovery and Transportation from Eschwege to Frankfurt/Main of Property Belonging to the House of Saxe-Weimar [1946]
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- 1-9 Statement of Lesley - Regarding Cracow shooting incident in May 1946
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- 1-10 Wiesbaden Manifesto [1945] [Reference Copy and Fragile Original]
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## 28MFAA-E Collections of Donated Materials

### E. Parker Lesley, Jr., Papers

#### 28MFAA-E2 Professional Subject Files, 1934 - 1969

##### Box 2

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|-----|---|
| 2-1 | Collected Catalogues of Exhibitions Presented at the Cooper Union Museum for the Arts of Decoration [1950-1954]   |
| 2-2 | Correspondence - Joan Evans [1963-1969]<br><i>Includes a color slide and photograph of Evans</i>  |
| 2-3 | Reference Files Regarding Suger Chalice   |
| 2-4 | Reference Files Regarding Suger Chalice - Microfilm and Printout  |
| 2-5 | Research Paper by Everett P. Lesley, Jr. "A History of the Development and Ideals of the Craftsman Movement, 1850-1915"<br><i>Research paper for a Stanford University Graphic Arts Class, Spring Quarter, 1934</i> |
| 2-6 | Notes and Transcript of Conversations with Frida Kahlo de Rivera and Diego Rivera, 27 May 1939  |

**28MFAA-E Collections of Donated Materials**  
**E. Parker Lesley, Jr., Papers**

**28MFAA-E3 Photograph Prints, 1946**

**Box 3**

3-1 Cracow General [April - May 1946]

*43 images*

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3-2 Cracow, Special Train A [April - May 1946]

*14 images*

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3-3 Journey of Special Train A [April - May 1946]

*120 images*

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