Sweden — Backgrounds

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Contents: Kungliga biblioteket, Stockholm. — Lund University Library. — Uppsala University Library. — Gothenburg University Library. — National Archives and the regional state archives of Sweden. — The Research Archives. — Linköping Public Library, stiftsbiblioteket. — Örebro University, University library, the research archives.

Introduction

The most significant repositories of manuscripts are the Kungliga biblioteket/National Library of Sweden, the National Archives, the major university libraries and museums with research collections and regional archives.

Kungliga biblioteket / National library of Sweden, Stockholm (KB) — Manuscripts, Maps, Pictures. Major collections:

- Medieval manuscripts which have their origins outside the Nordic countries, among them Codex Gigas and Codex Aureus.
- The collection of historical Swedish manuscripts, the largest collection of its kind in Sweden. It contains materials from Vadstena Abbey, the most important medieval manuscript library in Sweden, medieval rhyme chronicles, epic poetry, legal texts. The most renowned is the Västergötland legal MS, the ‘Äldre västgötalagen’ (B59) dating from circa 1280, the oldest surviving book in the Swedish language. Another item is a fragment of the revelations of St Bridget.
- Old Icelandic manuscripts, the collection is internationally renowned and acknowledged as one of the largest outside of Iceland.
- Noteworthy is the collection under the subject heading Fornkunskap (F), an older term for archaeology, consisting of reports and notes from 17th-century inventories of archaeological remains and historical monuments. Two of the highlights are the Johan Peringskiöld collection (Fh) and the so called ‘Rannsakningar efter antikviteter’ (Fl 9). Notable is the notebook ‘Sumlen’ (Fa12) of the avid early modern collector Johannes Bureus.
- Significant collections of hand-written documents by historically renowned Swedish statesmen and collectors from the 18th century: Carl Gustaf Tessin and Carl Christoffer Gjörwell.
- The 19th and 20th centuries are dominated by the collections of private papers and literary archives of notable Swedes, among them August Strindberg, Dag Hammarskjöld, Selma Lagerlöf, Ellen Key and Astrid Lindgren.
• The Nelly Sachs Collection which has been preserved in a reconstruction of study of the noted German-Swedish 20th-century poet.

**Lund University Library** (LUB) — Manuscript Section. Major collections:
- Private papers from scholars connected to Lund University and literary manuscripts and papers from authors from the south of Sweden.
- Medieval codices from 12th to 14th century.
- Oriental manuscripts, acquired since the 18th century.
- Papyri
- Music manuscripts from the Academic Orchestra, approx. 2,200 works from the 17th and 18th centuries.

**Uppsala University Library** (UUB) — Manuscripts and Music. Major collections:
- Private papers from Swedish intellectuals and scholars, e.g. the naturalist Carl Peter Thunberg and the poet Gunnar Ekelöf.
- Medieval European codices, starting with the Codex Argenteus from the 6th century. Most of the existing part of the library of Vadstena Abbey.
- Oriental manuscripts, especially from the Moslem cultural sphere (in Arabic, Turkish and Persian).
- Collections of historical manuscripts, notably the Palmskiöld, Nordin and Westin collections.
- Music manuscripts, among which the music of the Swedish Court Chapel in the 17th century.

**Gothenburg University Library** (GUB) — Manuscript Department. Major collections:
- The oldest records comprise papyri manuscripts
- and c 40 Greek and Latin medieval manuscripts
- Purchases made today are mostly aimed at acquiring archive material with reference to artists, authors and journalists from the Swedish West Coast, as well as researchers and lecturers at GU.
- The archives of the national poets Nils Ferlin, Birger Sjöberg and Evert Taube are among the more prominent featured.
- Archive material concerning the 18th-century Swedish East-Indian Company.
- **Women’s History Collections** at Göteborg University Library are a special library for women’s, men’s and gender studies. The principal goals are surveying and cataloguing literature on gender issues and compiling and cataloguing manuscript material on women’s history. The manuscript collection include manuscripts dating primarily from the first half of the 20th century.

**National Archives and the regional state archives of Sweden** (RA)
The National Archives (Riksarkivet) is one of the oldest public agencies in Sweden, its history leading back to the Middle Ages. In the 17th century, Chancellor Axel Oxenstierna created a new organization for record-keeping and the National Archives came into being. Today, the National Archives has the supervision of all public records of the agencies of the central government, while it delegates to the regional archives the supervision of records generated by the regional and local authorities. The Military Archives form part of the National Archives.
- Besides Government archives, the National Archives has family and estate archives and archives of organisations under its auspices.

**The Research Archives** (FOARK)
The Research Archives is a division of the University Library in Umeå. The Research Archives is responsible for the collection of manuscripts of Umeå University of which the major part represents manuscripts from researchers, authors, ministers and other leading personalities with connections to Northern Sweden.
Linköping Public Library, *Stiftsbiblioteket* (LP)
Has a collection of manuscripts, especially manuscripts concerning this part of Sweden.

Örebro University, University library, *Research Archives*
A collection of literary archives and *Mörnersamlingen*, which contains letters and manuscripts.