



LIGUE DES BIBLIOTHÈQUES EUROPÉENNES DE RECHERCHE
ASSOCIATION OF EUROPEAN RESEARCH LIBRARIES

Manuscript Librarians Group

Norway – Backgrounds

Tone Modalsli (Nasjonalbiblioteket, Oslo)

Contents: Introduction. – National Library, Oslo. – National Archives, Oslo. – Regional State Archives. – Archives and Library of the Labour Movement, Oslo. – Library of the Norwegian University of Science and Technology, Trondheim. – University of Bergen Library. – Bergen Public Library.

Introduction

The most significant repositories of manuscripts and private archives are the National Library of Norway, The National Archives, the regional state archives, The Archives and Library of the Labour Movement, the University Library of Trondheim, University Library of Bergen.

Nasjonalbiblioteket, Oslo

www.nb.no

The National Library of Norway was established as an independent institution in 1999. Previously it had been a part of the University Library of Oslo (established 1811), whose collections were divided between the University Library and the National Library in 1999. All holdings of manuscripts (except for papyri) went to the National Library; the University Library of Oslo does not collect that sort of material. Manuscripts and private archives are kept in the Manuscripts Collection of the National Library. The main focus is on papers of individuals from ca 1800 onwards, of national interest. In 2002 the National Library and the National Archives signed an agreement according to which the National Library shall have a special responsibility for collecting papers from the cultural sphere (individuals as well as private organizations and firms).

Major collections:

- Medieval Latin manuscripts: some 60 codices, mostly of non-Norwegian medieval provenance. Notable is a small 12th-century psalter, probably of domestic production and use.
- Medieval Norwegian manuscripts: a couple of important law codices from early 14th century
- 17th and 18th centuries: a number of historical and topographic manuscripts
- Post 18th century: The bulk of the collection consists of manuscripts, letters and private archives from 1800 to the present day. A large amount of important personalities in the arts, culture and society are represented. Politicians are

- more scarce, cf. National Archives below. Particularly substantial are papers (Nachlässe, archives etc.) of the following categories:
- literary authors. Highlights: Henrik Ibsen (1828-1906), Nobel prize winners Bjørnstjerne Bjørnson (1832-1932), Knut Hamsun (1859-1952), Sigrid Undset (1882-1949)
 - literary institutions. Highlights: archives of the Norwegian Authors Union
 - artists. Highlights: letters from Edvard Munch (1863-1944); other leading Norwegian painters
 - Ivar Aasen (1813-96), creator of the ‘New Norwegian’ language: his extraordinarily comprehensive archive
 - polar explorers. Highlights: Fridtjof Nansen (1861-1930), Roald Amundsen (1872-1928)
 - women’s organizations
- Pictures, manuscript music, manuscript maps, archives of theatres and actors are kept in the Picture collection, Music collection, Map collection, and Theatre collection respectively.

Riksarkivet and Statsarkivene

<http://www.arkivverket.no/english/>

The National Archives (Riksarkivet, Oslo) and the regional state archives (statsarkivene) together form the National Archival Services of Norway (Arkivverket). Both the National Archives and the regional state archives preserve private archives from companies, organizations, political parties and private people.

- The Division for Private Archives in the National Archives is a main repository of its kind. As in the National Library the focus is on papers of national interest, but in contrast the holdings are rich on papers of politicians and of corporate bodies (but see The Archives and Library of the Labour Movement below). The Division has national responsibility for developing and coordinating the national work on private archives and has published guidelines (*Retningslinjer for arbeidet med privatarkiver*, Oslo 2002) and a handbook (V. Lange, D. Mangset, Ø. Ødegaard, *Privatarkiver. Bevaring og tilgjengeliggjøring*, Oslo 2001). The institution also keeps a national union catalogue for private archives.
- The National Archives is the main repository for medieval parchment fragments of domestic origin as well as for Norwegian medieval charters/diplomas.
- The regional state archives in Oslo, Hamar, Kongsberg, Kristiansand, Stavanger, Bergen, Trondheim and Tromsø keep similar material of regional or local interest.

Arbeiderbevegelsens arkiv og bibliotek, Oslo

<http://www.arbark.no/>

The Archives and Library of the Labour Movement (Arbark) collects archives of political parties, organizations and individuals in the Labour movement and the political left.

NTNU Library, Trondheim

<http://www.ntnu.no/ub/english>

The Library of the Norwegian University of Science and Technology was established in 1786 and is Norway's oldest research library, founded to serve the Royal Norwegian Society of Sciences and Letters. It holds the Society's archives besides manuscripts, letters and private archives of national and regional interest.

Universitetsbiblioteket i Bergen

<http://www.ub.uib.no/avdeling/spes/index-e.htm>

The manuscript holdings of University of Bergen Library focuses on manuscripts and private archives of local (Bergen and western Norway) interest.

Bergen Offentlige Bibliotek

Bergen Public Library houses the 'Edvard Grieg arkiv': the papers of the composer Edvard Grieg (1843-1907).

http://www.bergen.folkebibl.no/grieg-samlingen/grieg_samlingen_intro.html