



1

In 2018 the Swedish National Archives celebrated 400 years. In 1899 the first branch outside Stockholm was established here in Vadstena Castle. The document shows a New Year greeting sent from the management in Stockholm to the first director in Vadstena, Victor Örnberg in 1902.

1a

The Swedish National Archives is one of the country's oldest public authorities. With roots in the Middle Ages, the first archive was established in 1618 to hold government and court records, and was placed under the control of the Royal Chancery. In 1878 the National Archives were removed from the Royal Chancery to become an independent public authority and moved to a separate building. From 1968 it is located in a new building in the central city (Marieberg) and since the 1990's also in another building, north of Stockholm (Arninge).

The Military Archives, which hold military records from the sixteenth century to the present, was established in 1805 and is now a part of the National Archives. The National Archives fall under the Ministry of Culture and have a statutory role and functions that are determined by Parliament and the government.

We primarily care for public archives, but also the archives of private individuals and non-public organizations, including businesses. The National Archives collect and secure records to preserve them for future generations. Some holdings are also being digitized. Public access to the official record is the fundamental task of the National Archives.

1b

Between 1899 and 1935, seven Regional State Archives were established to collect and preserve the records of regional and local authorities, the first one here in Vadstena Castle.

The seven Regional State Archives are located all over Sweden and are responsible for a district; for Vadstena it means four counties (län) in south-eastern Sweden, or about 60 kilometers of documents.



2

Vadstena Castle in 1618

From the beginning built in the mid 1500's as a fortress, the Castle already in 1618 had become a glorious residence for the Swedish king Johan III:s son Johan, Duke of Östergötland. The Castle have had various functions during its existence, one of its functions was as a storage for military arms. The paintings on the walls in this room are about 400 years old.

3

The first staff

The photo from 1900 on the wall shows the first staff of the Regional Archives in Vadstena. It is the first director, Victor Örnberg, the archivists Gustaf Fjetterström and Eric Ihrfors and the caretaker Gustaf Rogalin. Notice Örnberg's dog, Lova, to the right. During this era, the interest for genealogy and family history increased and Örnberg was one of the pioneers.

4

The first years, much work was done to adapt the premises in the old castle to archival activities, fix the heating and to make room for the documents that were delivered during the first years. Already in the 1920s there was a shortage of space in the old castle and one was renting premises elsewhere in the city.

In the 1800s the old ramparts around the Vadstena castle were demolished. They were rebuilt in the 1980s and 1990s to restore the exterior but also to create new space for the archives on the inside. The archives were furnished at the same time and the offices were rebuilt.

Back in the 1990s most seats in the reading room were equipped with microfiche readers. In the 2000s they were replaced with computers and genealogy programs on the Internet. In the 1990s there was an increase in visitor numbers. Today approximately 3 000 visits the reading room every year.

5



Here we see the earliest visitors book from the early 1900's. From 1904 and for 30 years Carl Mauritz Kjellberg was the Director. During this time, the archival business was more professionalized and Kjellberg was one of the promoters.

6

The Regional State Archives all began life as independent institutions, but were subsequently merged with the National Archives in 2010. Number of employees today is in total ca 500 and about 25 in Vadstena. Karin Åström Iko became the first female Director General of the Swedish National Archives in 2016. In 2006 Eva Malmberg became the first female head of The Regional States Archives in Vadstena.

The Swedish National Archives has received electronic records since the 1970s. In the 1980s the church records were microfilmed. Only 3 % of the Swedish National Archives records are today digitized and most of it is population registration records. From 1 February 2018 the digital collections at the Swedish National Archives are free to search and use. You can discover our collections at www.riksarkivet.se. You can also use The National Archives Database (NAD) to find information about archives in Sweden.

We do much more than help out with genealogy here at the Regional State Archive. For example, we can help with finding old estate inventories or property values. The work is also affected by what is happening in the society. A decision made by another authority can cause a need for a certain kind of document such as those relating to real estates and easement. When a person dies without known close relatives we can help with finding living relatives that may have lost contact. The Regional State Archive has an assignment to share information about our archives. Groups can come and we also do tours for children, especially schools.



The National State Archive keep about 750 kilometers of archives on 10 locations around the country. Here in Vadstena the archives are located in the castle ramparts. We keep a large variation of archives. The most frequently used is the church archives that is mainly used for genealogy. But we also have the archives from courts, police and, as mentioned, the large archive from the court of appeal Göta hovrätt. This is just some examples of the authorities that keep their older archives here. We also have archives from private companies and even from familjes, farms and associations. One of the best known companies might be Swedish Match. Often used is also the archives from Motala Verkstad AB and Göta Kanalbolag.

