

**MEMORY OF THE WORLD INTERNATIONAL REGISTER
NOMINATION FORM**

Denmark - Archives of the Danish overseas trading companies

PART A - ESSENTIAL INFORMATION

Abstract:

Archives of the Danish overseas trading companies A number of archival groups held in the Danish National Archives reflect Denmark's relations with foreign countries such as the European States, Russia, Turkey, North African states and the American states. The archival group of the Danish overseas trading companies includes, in particular, the archives of the Danish East India Company, the Danish Asiatic Company, the Danish West India and Guinea Company and the Danish West India Trading Company. It consist of around 4000 protocols and bundles and includes royal charters, copybooks, letters, instructions, accounts, ship's logs, maps...

1. Identity and Location:

Name of the Documentary Heritage: Archival group of the Danish overseas trading companies, kept in the Danish National Archives

Country: Denmark

State, Province or Region: Denmark, Copenhagen

Address: Rigsarkivet, Rigsdagsgaarden 9, DK-1218 København K, Denmark

Name of Institution: Rigsarkivet (i.e. Danish National Archives/DNA).

2. Legal information:

Owner: DNA

Custodian: Birgit Løgstrup, Director of Public Department

Legal Status:

- *Category of ownership:* Public, the Danish State

- *Details of legal and administrative provisions for the preservation of the documentary heritage:* Common archival care, managed by the DNA

- *Accessibility:* Free public access and use in the reading room

- *Copyright status:* No copyright restrictions, under the obligation to refer to correct source

- *Responsible administration:* DNA, an institution under the Danish Ministry of Culture.

3. Identification:

Description: General information:

All of the 130 km of records belonging to the Danish National Archives are unique. The collections cover the period 1186 (papal brief from Urban III) to 1995 (municipal electronic register of financial support of housing and loan system). They consist of the records of the Danish Royal Family, the civilian and military central administration, law courts, private persons and institutions. The media are parchment, paper, film, micro fiche and electronic. The archives up to 1990 are registered in "Rigsarkivet og hjælpemidler til dets benyttelse" (The Danish national Archives and supplementary Aid to Use) (9 volumes, Copenhagen 1983-1992), to which is connected a long series of special registrations for the 18th century till now.

Archives groups of interest to foreign countries:

Relations to foreign countries (European states, Russia, Turkey-1770. Later than 1770 in addition North African states (Algeria, Morocco, Tripoli and Tunisia) and American states (USA, Argentina, Brazil, Colombia, Mexico, Peru and Venezuela). After 1848 - especially towards the end of the 19th century the number of countries with Danish delegations were extended to other parts of the world as well - Asia and Australia. Archives concerning trade companies (Iceland-1788, the Finmark-1788, Greenland-1908/1986 and the Faeroe Islands-1856, Asia 1670-1838, Africa and the West Indies 1671-1816.

The archive of The Missionary Society (Greenland and East India).

The Local Archives of the West Indies (1675-1917).

The Danish Missionary (1821) and private missionary societies.

The archives mentioned above and several others are - besides being registered in "Rigsarkivet og hjælpemidler til dets benyttelse" (The Danish State Archives and Supplementary Aid to Use) 9 volumes, Copenhagen 1983-1992 - registered in "Sources of the history of North Africa, Asia and Oceania og Denmark" by C. Rise Hansen, K.G. Saur, Munich, New York, London, Paris 1980, 842 pp. Published under the auspices of UNESCO.

The archival group of the Danish overseas trading companies:

This fonds includes first and foremost the Danish East India Company 1670-1730, the Danish Asiatic Company 1730-1827, archives of the Danish West India and Guinea Company 1671-1755, the Danish Guinea Company 1765-1778, and the Danish West India Trading Company 1778-1816. It consists of around 4000 protocols and bundles and includes royal charters, copybooks, letters, instructions, accounts, files on employees, ship's logs, maps, etc..

Bibliographic details: Two inventories have been published

- Bro-Jørgensen & Aa. Rasch, *Asiatiske, vestindiske og guineiske handelskompagnier*, (=Vejledende Arkivregistraturer vol. 14), Copenhagen, 1969 (i.e. detailed inventory)

- Rise Hansen, *Sources of the History of North Africa, Asia and Oceania in Denmark*, (= Guides to the Sources for the History of Nations Ser. 3 Vol. 3), München, 1980

Visual documentation: <http://www.sa.dk>

History: The archival group has come to the DNA after the winding up of the companies.

Bibliography: - Ole Feldbæk, *the Organization and Structure of the Danish East India, West India and Guinea Companies in the 17 and 18th Centuries*, (in Leonard Blussé & Femme Gaastra, eds., *Companies and Trade*, Leiden, 1981)

- Ole Feldbæk, ed., *Danske handelskompagnier 1616-1843. Oktrojer og interne ledelsesregler*, Copenhagen, 1986 (i.e. source edition of charters and by-laws) Erik Gøbel, *Danske oversøiske handelskompagnier i 17. og 18. århundrede*, (in *Fortid og Nutid* vol. 28, 1980) (i.e. survey of research on the Danish overseas trading companies)

- Erik Gøbel, *the Danish West India Company Records in the Danish National Archives*, (= *Society of Virgin Islands Historians, Occasional Papers* vol. 1), Christiansted, St. Croix, 1989

- Wilhelm von Rosen, ed., *Rigsarkivet og hjælpemidlerne til dets benyttelse*, I:1-2, Copenhagen, 1983 (i.e. general introduction to the DNA)

4. Management plan:

The records are covered by the normal procedures for preservation and handling of the holdings of the DNA.

Preservation of documents of museum value is carried out, while it is attempted to secure longer series of records via safety photographing. Certain parts of the archival group are in such a bad state of preservation, especially due to the impact of the tropical climate in which they have been created, that they are not allowed to be taken to the reading room. Parts of the archival group have been microfilmed already. Copies from the films are for sale or may be lent out for use outside the DNA. Other parts of the group may be microfilmed for a modest fee.

5. Assessment against the Selection Criteria:

Cf. "Description and inventory"

6. Consultation:

Owner: DNA

Custodian: Birgit Løgstrup, Director of Public Department, DNA

Regional or National Memory of the World Committee:

Independent institutions and experts:

(a) Birgit Løgstrup, DNA

(b) Erik Gøbel, DNA

(c) Ole Feldbæk, University of Copenhagen, Institute of History, Njalsgade 102, DK-2300 Copenhagen.

7. Nominator:

Name: DNA

Relationship to the documentary heritage: Owner

Contact person:

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