

MEMORY OF THE WORLD REGISTER
The Alfred Nobel Family Archives

Ref N° 2006-30

PART A – ESSENTIAL INFORMATION

1 SUMMARY

The Nobel Family Archive (*Nobelska arkivet*) in the Regional Archives in Lund mainly originates from the industrial enterprises of Alfred Nobel's father, Immanuel Nobel, of his brothers Robert Nobel and Ludvig Nobel Sr, as well as of his nephew, Ludvig Nobel Jr during the period ca 1840 – 1900. The main part of the archive is related to the family's industrial and commercial activities in imperial Russia, particularly the production of land and sea mines intended for the Russian armed forces and the family's petroleum plants at Baku. The records thus reflect the enterprising traditions and inventiveness of the Nobel family, which constitute an important background to Alfred Nobel's life as an inventor, international industrialist and donor of world importance.

Alfred Nobel's archive (*Alfred Nobels arkiv*) at the National Archives in Stockholm is complete, rich and full of nuances. In his copy books and correspondence we can follow the talented inventor and industrialist day by day: restlessly busy, travelling, negotiating, carrying on lawsuits, etc. His papers give evidence of an inexhaustible creativity and energy resulting in new ideas and projects. His professional role is fully documented in his archival remains. The private side of his life, though the time left for this was limited, is documented as well. It appears in his correspondence in questions of war and peace with Bertha von Suttner as well as in his exchange of letters with his friend Sofie Hess. Among his literary remains we find the famous but abstruse drama *Nemesis*. And there is of course his will, which more than one hundred years after his death makes sure that he will never be forgotten as a great donor.

2 DETAILS OF THE NOMINATOR

2.1 Name (person or organisation)

The Regional Archives in Lund (Landsarkivet i Lund) and the National Archives (Riksarkivet).

2.2 Relationship to the documentary heritage nominated

The Alfred Nobel Family Archives are partly kept at the Regional Archives in Lund, where *Nobelska arkivet* was received as a deposit from the Nobel family in 1970, partly at the National Archives, where *Alfred Nobels arkiv* was deposited by the Nobel Foundation in 1972.

2.3 Contact person (s)

Tomas Lidman, National Archivist

Jan Dahlin, Director of Archives, Lund

Lars-Olof Welander, Head of Division, National Archives

2.4 Contact details (include address, phone, fax, email)

Postal address:

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Sweden
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E- mail: jan.dahlin@landsarkivet – lund.ra.se

Postal address:
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Sweden
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3 IDENTITY AND DESCRIPTION OF THE DOCUMENTARY HERITAGE

3.1 Name and identification details of the items being nominated

Documents kept at the Regional Archives in Lund:
Name: *Nobelska arkivet* (The Nobel Family Archive)
Identity number: SE/LLA/30187

Documents kept at the National Archives, Stockholm:
Name: *Alfred Nobels arkiv* (Alfred Nobel's Archive)
Identity number: SE/RA/720020/01

3.2 Description

Description and inventory

Nobelska arkivet in Lund comprises ca 2 linear metres: 32 volumes and boxes with written documents, ca 400 photos and about 350 drawings and paintings. The contents are described in an inventory which is available in Swedish at www.nad.ra.se. There is also an index of drawings and paintings. The archive mainly consists of documents concerning the Nobel family's industrial and commercial activities in imperial Russia during the period 1840 -1900, notably the production of land and sea mines intended for the Russian armed forces and the family's petroleum plants at Baku. Of special interest is a series of handpainted descriptions of the use of mines from ca 1850 and a series of photos of the industrial establishment at Baku from ca 1880–1890. There are also documents originating from Alfred Nobel.

Alfred Nobels arkiv in the National Archives comprises mainly the papers of Alfred Nobel, in total ca 14 linear metres or 179 boxes of written documents, photos and drawings. The contents are described in an inventory which is available in Swedish at www.nad.ra.se. In the year 2000 a digitization took place of documents judged as especially important for research (52 boxes) and these are now available on two compact discs. The archive mainly consists of copy books, manuscripts, letters and correspondence, documents concerning laboratories, patents, lawsuits and disputes, industries, banks and stockbrokers and documents concerning particular inventions and products. In addition there are documents concerning Alfred Nobel's properties, his accounts, a collection of prints as well as some drawings and photographs. From the private sphere can be found his correspondence with Sofie Hess and Bertha von Suttner as well as his manuscripts, for example of his drama *Nemesis*.

Provenance

Nobelska arkivet in Lund has since its origin been in the possession of the Nobel family. In 1970 it was deposited in the Regional Archives in Lund by Mr Olof Nobel, a grand-nephew of Alfred Nobel.

Alfred Nobels arkiv in the National Archives was formed in different places in Europe: in his house in Paris, in the villa in San Remo and at the mansion Björkborn in Sweden. After his death in 1896 his papers were taken care of by Ragnar Sohlman, who Alfred Nobel had nominated executor of his will. After the establishment of the Nobel Foundation this institution has been the keeper of *Alfred Nobels arkiv* until 1972 when it was deposited in the National Archives.

Assessment of physical state and condition

Both parts of these archives are stored in controlled environments set at 40% RH and 18 C. The written documents are mostly kept in boxes, while photos, paintings and drawings are stored in envelopes or bound volumes. There is no major damage. The most fragile documents are only available for research as copies.

4 JUSTIFICATION FOR INCLUSION/ ASSESSMENT AGAINST CRITERIA

4.1 Authenticity

Authenticity is guaranteed by the fact that the archives since their origin have been kept by the Nobel family and the Nobel Foundation. After their transfer to the Regional Archives in Lund in 1970 and to the National Archives in 1972 they have been the subject of professional examination and description.

4.2 World significance, uniqueness and irreplaceability

The significance of these archives is mainly found in the fact that they reflect the enterprising traditions and the inventiveness of Alfred Nobel and the Nobel family, which form the background of the industrial complex founded by the family and of Alfred Nobel's achievements as an inventor, industrialist and donor of world importance.

4.3 Criteria of (a) time (b) place (c) people (d) subject and theme (e) form and style

Time: The archives are good representatives of the late 19th century, as they reflect the industrial use of new inventions, the international expansion of industrial enterprises and the accumulation of great family fortunes.

Place: These archives are of great significance as testimony of the part played by Swedish inventions and enterprises in the industrialisation of Russia as well as taking part in this process all over the world.

People: The archives reflect the behaviour, activities and interests of the great industrialists of the late 19th century, particularly of Alfred Nobel and his family, whose name is connected with one of the greatest altruistic foundations of that period.

Subject and theme: The archives especially reflect the technical development of explosives and the industrialisation of modern warfare. They also reflect the eminent capacity of one of our most brilliant minds.

Form and style: The archives contain unique handpainted illustrations from ca 1850, which were used in connection with the marketing of war material. They also contain photo material which show unique moments in the forming of an industrial era.

4.4 Issues of rarity, integrity, threat and management

Rarity: As evidence of the activities of the Alfred Nobel family these archives may well be said to possess a high degree of rarity.

Integrity: *Nobelska arkivet* in Lund is of a moderate extent and have mainly the character of a collection of especially significant and important documents, which have been picked out and brought together by different members of the family. In this sense they form a rather comprehensive collection of family papers. *Alfred Nobels arkiv* in the National Archives is very complete, and the result of a conscious effort to create good and reliable records, necessary in performing daily negotiations and duties.

Threat: The archives are under no particular threat and normal archival procedures are enough to ensure their security.

Management plan: No further management plan has been drawn up for these particular archives. They are kept in the ordinary depositories of the Regional Archives in Lund and the National Archives where temperature, humidity and security are controlled according to current rules and standards for keeping of archives in Sweden.

5 LEGAL INFORMATION

5.1. Owner of the documentary heritage (name and contact details)

The Estate of Mr Olof Nobel
c/o Landsarkivet
Box 2016
SE-220 02 LUND
Sweden
Phone: + 46 46 19 70 01
Fax: + 46 46 19 70 70
E-mail: landsarkivet@landsarkivet-lund.ra.se

The Nobel Foundation (Nobelstiftelsen)
Box 5232
102 45 STOCKHOLM
Phone:+ 46 8 663 09 20
Fax 46 8 660 38 47

5.2 Custodian of the documentary heritage (name and contact details, if different to owner)

Landsarkivet
Box 2016
SE-220 02 LUND
Sweden
Phone: +46 46 197001
Fax: + 46 46 19 70 70
E-mail: landsarkivet@landsarkivet-lund.ra.se

National Archives (Riksarkivet)
Box 12541
SE-102 29 STOCKHOLM
Phone: + 46 8 737 63 50
Fax: + 46 8 737 64 74
E-mail: riksarkivet@riksarkivet.ra.se

5.3 Legal status:

(a) Category of ownership

Private property.

(b) Accessibility

The archives are open for research in the reading rooms of the Regional Archives in Lund / the National Archives in Stockholm.

(c) Copyright status

There is no copyright connected with these archives but an agreement with the owner is normally required if an item is to be reproduced for commercial use.

(d) Responsible administration

The Regional Archives in Lund and the National Archives are legally responsible for the safekeeping of the material. The responsibility is directly exercised through their staff.

6 MANAGEMENT PLAN

6.1 There is no further management plan in existence for these particular archives. The general rules and regulations which apply to public archives and the practices and routines at the Regional Archives in Lund and the National Archives can be presumed to give fairly good protection against damages and threats. The fonds are kept in the ordinary depositories where humidity, temperature and security are controlled according to the current rules and standards for the keeping of archives in Sweden. If damage is detected it will be handled by the Conservation Departments, where the staff possesses the necessary professional skill.

Where *Nobelska arkivet* in Lund is concerned, it is desirable that a digital reproduction of more frequently consulted parts of the archive - especially photos, paintings and drawings - be carried out.

7 CONSULTATION

7.1 Provide details of consultation about this nomination with (a) the owner of the heritage (b) the custodian (c) your national or regional *Memory of the World* committee

Consultations with the Swedish National Memory of the World Committee have taken place.

PART B – SUBSIDIARY INFORMATION

8 ASSESSMENT OF RISK

8.1 Due to frequent use at exhibitions and demonstrations there is a slight risk that some of the paintings may be damaged (Regional Archives in Lund). *Alfred Nobels arkiv* at the National Archives runs no foreseeable risk.

9 ASSESSMENT OF PRESERVATION

9.1 In connection with the transfer to the Regional Archives in Lund and to the National Archives in 1970 and 1972 respectively the archives were arranged and catalogued according to professional principles. Volumes and documents were put in boxes, drawings and paintings were placed in envelopes. In the 1990s all photos were placed in separate envelopes.

PART C - LODGEMENT

This nomination is lodged by:

(Please print name)..... Tomas Lidman

(Signature)..... (Date).....

The Alfred Nobel Family Archives

Archive schedule

The Nobel Family Archive (Nobelska arkivet, Lund)

A. The papers of Immanuel Nobel, 10 volumes, ca 1840-1870.

Documents concerning different uses of explosives for military purposes, especially mines. Hand-painted descriptions of mines, used in connection with the marketing of war material. Documents concerning various inventions and industrial projects. Autobiographical notes.

B. The papers of Robert Nobel, 7 volumes, ca 1855-1895.

Documents concerning various industrial enterprises, inventions and patents. Business correspondence and accounts.

C. Various subjects, 3 volumes, ca 1850-1925

The papers of Alfred Nobel (a patent, some letters), the papers of Ludvig Nobel Sr (documents concerning the construction of guns, some letters), the papers of Ludvig Nobel Jr (letters, documents concerning the Nobel Foundation), documents concerning the petroleum enterprises of the Nobel Brothers.

D. Maps and drawings, 361 objects, ca 1830-1900

Drawings and paintings concerning the construction and use of mines, machine guns, gun-boats and other war material. Drawings of buildings, machinery and equipment at the Nobel industries in Sweden and Russia (Baku).

E. Printed matter, 5 volumes, ca 1860-1914

Books and prints in Russian, annual reports from the Nobel petroleum enterprises in Russia.

F. Newspaper articles, 4 volumes

Articles on members of the family and their activities.

G. Photos, 396 objects, ca 1880-1950

Photos of the Nobel enterprises in Russia, photos from Alfred Nobel's funeral, various pictures of family members and friends.

Alfred Nobel's Archive (Alfred Nobel arkiv, Stockholm)

B. Copy books and other record copies

B I Alfred Nobel's copy books 1868-1896 (30 books in 10 boxes)

Fragile letterpress copies of Alfred Nobel's enormous correspondence (it happened that he wrote 20-40 letters per day). His letters mainly concern business and patents but they also reveal a great deal about Alfred Nobel as a private person.

B II Alfred Nobel's manuscripts and notes (4 boxes)

Manuscripts and printed copy of Alfred Nobel's tragedy "Nemesis". Other literary manuscripts. Scientific manuscripts chiefly concerning explosives. Miscellaneous notes.

D Lists and catalogues

Address books. Inventory of Alfred Nobel's papers. Catalogue of books (2 boxes)

E Letters and correspondence

E I Letters to Alfred Nobel from relatives 1847-1896 (4 boxes)

Letters from Carl Nobel, Emanuel Nobel, Ludvig Nobel and other relatives.

E II Letters to Alfred Nobel from other private persons 1870-1896 (7 boxes)

Letters from Ragnar Sohlman, Alarik Liedbeck, A.E. Nordenskjöld and Bertha von Suttner. Letters from Sofie Hess as well as from relatives of Sofie Hess and others in the so-called "Hess affair". Letters from and press cuttings concerning Gregoir Aristarchi Bey with copies of letters from Alfred Nobel to the same. Begging letters, letters of thanks and proposals.

E III Commercial correspondence 1885-1896 (1 box)

Chiefly order confirmations, invoices and the like.

F Documents arranged by subject

F I Documents concerning laboratories 1874-1896 (8 boxes)

Correspondence, laboratory journals, notes and other documents concerning the laboratories in San Remo, Sévran, Paris and at Björkborn and the work that took place there.

F II Documents concerning patents 1875-1897 (11 boxes)

Correspondence with patent agencies. Receipts for various expenses. Copies of applications for patents. Patent documents: gunpowder, safety fuses, artificial caoutchouc, detonating fuses, pressure regulators, etc, etc.

F III Documents concerning lawsuits and disputes 1876-1895 (9 boxes)

Documents mainly concerning The Cordit lawsuit, with correspondence between Frederik Abel/James Dewar and Alfred Nobel, printed court proceedings, etc. Also letters and documents concerning the Kleman-Nobel lawsuit and the Dittmar lawsuit.

F IV Documents concerning various industries 1864-1898 (36 boxes)

Documents concerning for example Alfred Nobel et Co Hamburg, Dynamit Actien Gesellschaft Hamburg, Nobel's Explosives Co Glasgow, British Dynamite Co, Nitroglycerin AB Stockholm, Nitroglycerin Companiet Kristiania, various American companies, Dynamite Nobel Fabrica d'Avigliana, Bofors-Björneborg-Björkborn, Die Vereinigten Rheinisch-Westphälischen Pulverfabriken, Dynamit Nobel Isleten, Société Centrale de Dynamite, Naftabolaget, The Maxim Nordenfelt Guns and Ammunition Co London, Société Générale pour la fabrication de la dynamite Paris, Société Anonyme Espagnole de Dynamite, Société Belge de Dynamite, Nobel Automatic Rifle Syndicate, Sulitelma AB, Norska Undersökningsbolaget, Südafrikanische Sprengstoff Agentur Gesellschaft, Viscose Syndicate Ltd, Nobel's Explosives Co, Bickford, Smith & Co.

F V a Bank documents 1882 -1896 (9 boxes)

Statements of accounts, documents concerning transactions and correspondence with Russian, French and German banks.

F V b Stockbroker documents 1883-1896 (4 boxes)

Documents emanating from contacts with French, English and German stockbrokers.

F VI Documents concerning particular inventions and products 1863-1897 (9 boxes)

Documents concerning for example artificial caoutchouc, aluminium and the aluminium boat "Mignon", ballistite, telemeter, artificial silk, projectiles, firearms, etc, etc. Documents on explosives. Correspondence concerning nitroglycerin and dynamite.

F VII Documents concerning Alfred Nobel's properties 1871-1897 (8 boxes)

These documents mainly concern Villa Nobel in San Remo (bills, drawings, sketches, photographs) and the house on Avenue Malakoff 51-59 Paris (mémoires des travaux).

F VIII Other documents arranged by subject 1864-1896 (4 boxes)

Documents concerning the polar expedition by S. A. Andrée, Swedish donations, and Gold Mining Company. Notes of Evidence before committees on Explosive Substances. Contracts, agreements and correspondence.

G Accounts 1864-1897 (10 boxes)

Alfred Nobel's account books. Also invoices which give insights into the life and housekeeping of Alfred Nobel (home furnishing, food and drink, etc, etc.).

H Printed matter ca 1860-1895 (29 boxes)

This collection of prints mostly concerns patents, arms and explosives, mineralogy, financial questions and questions of war and peace. For example *Blue-book specifications* (English patent descriptions), *Alphabetical index of patentees and applicants for patents of invention* (1870), brochures on dynamite and other explosives, reports from Her Majesty's Inspector of Explosives, Henry L. Abott: *Report upon Experimental Investigations to develop a system of Submarine Mines* (1881), *Arms and explosives*, papers on military science and papers, newspapers and brochures concerning the question of peace.

J Drawings and photographs (1 roll, 2 boxes)

Drawings by Alarik Liedbeck and George McRobert. Photos from Bofors.

Ö Documents of foreign provenance added to Alfred Nobel's Archive

Ö I Letters from Alfred Nobel to Sofie Hess 1878-1895 (2 boxes)

Ö II Other documents of foreign provenance 1860-1896 (7 boxes)

Letters from Alfred Nobel to A. Werner Cronquist. Letters from Alfred Nobel, Immanuel Nobel, Ludvig Nobel and Robert Nobel to J.W. Smitt. Letters from Alfred Nobel to Oscar Lamm, Ragnar Sohlman and Carl Åmark. Letters from Alfred Nobel to Jöns Johansson and Alarik Liedbeck. Photograph album belonging to Alarik Liedbeck. Documents concerning Alfred Nobel and his family.