

Unlocking the Archives: A Quick Start Guide

How to Access Danish West Indies (DWI) Photos & Records

The majority of historical records and photos from 1672–1917 are held in Denmark. While many websites have English options, **the metadata (descriptions) attached to the photos are often in Danish**. If you search in English, you might find 10% of what is there. If you search in Danish, you find the rest.

1. The "Google Translate" Workflow

Don't let the language barrier stop you. Use this workflow to navigate Danish sites (like *kb.dk* or *natmus.dk*).

- **Step 1: The "Whole Page" Translation**
 - **In Chrome/Edge:** Right-click anywhere on the webpage and select **"Translate to English."** This helps you navigate menus (e.g., finding the "Search" button).
 - **Warning:** This translates the *interface*, but sometimes "breaks" the search bar if you type English words into a Danish search field.
- **Step 2: The "Keyword" Translation**
 - Keep a separate tab open with [Google Translate](#).
 - Type your search term (e.g., "Sugar Mill") Copy the Danish result (*Sukkermølle*) Paste that into the archive search bar.
- **Step 3: The "Description" Translation**
 - When you find a photo, copy the text in the "Beskrivelse" (Description) field and paste it back into Google Translate to understand the context, dates, and people identified.

2. The "Magic Words" (Keyword Cheat Sheet)

Copy and paste these directly into the search bars at the Royal Library (*kb.dk*) or National Museum (*natmus.dk*).

If you want to find...	Search for this (Danish):	Notes / Context
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Danish West Indies	Dansk Vestindien	#1 Most Important Term
St. Croix / St. Thomas	Sankt Croix / Sankt Thomas	Use "Sankt" instead of "St."
St. John	Sankt Jan	<i>Note: It is "Jan" not "John"</i>
Christiansted / F'sted	Christiansted / Frederiksted	Spelled the same as today
Charlotte Amalie	Charlotte Amalie	Sometimes listed as Charlotte Amalia
Sugar Mill	Suktermølle	
Plantation	Plantage	
Enslaved Person	Ufri or Slave	<i>Historical terms used in records</i>
Free Colored	Fri farvet	Refers to Free Gut / Free statuses
Worker / Laborer	Arbejder	Common in post-1848 photos
Harbor / Port	Havn	Good for maritime/shipping photos
Street	Gade	e.g., "Kongens Gade" (King St)
Market	Torv or Markedsplads	Good for social/people photos

Hurricane	Orkan	Finds damage reports/photos
Transfer / Sale	Overdragelsen	Refers to the 1917 Transfer

Navigating the Specific Websites

Links to Digital Archives with Virgin Islands

Photos/Documents/Maps/Newspapers

Royal Library West Indies Photos Archives	https://digitalessamlinger.kb.dk/images/billed/2010/okt/billeder/subject5672/en/?	 A square QR code with a black and white pixelated pattern. In the bottom right corner, there is a small logo consisting of four colored squares (red, green, blue, yellow) followed by the text 'TQRCG'.
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National Museum of Denmark West Indies Photo Archives	https://samlinger.natmus.dk/asset/browse?category=DNT+%7e+Tema+%7e+Dansk+Vestindien	 A square QR code with a black and white pixelated pattern. In the bottom right corner, there is a small logo consisting of four colored squares (red, green, blue, yellow) followed by the text 'TQRCG'.
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Schomburg Center for Research in Black Culture, Photographs and Prints Division	https://digitalcollections.nypl.org/collections/66b22740-c5eb-012f-4223-58d385a7bc34?filters=%5Bsubcollection%3Df57fdc00-c5eb-012f-6aa8-58d385a7bc34%5D	 TQRCG
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Virgin Islands Newspaper Database	https://www2.statsbiblioteket.dk/mediestream/avis	 TQRCG
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