

Załącznik 5. Streszczenie doktoratu w języku angielskim

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An outline of the history of Archivistis and records management in the United States in the years 1774-1940. Summary

The research problem of the work was to show the genesis and development of the American archival field and to seek answers to the resulting questions. What caused the changes that led to the creation of the most modern National Archives in the world in the first half of the 20th century? Why exactly in Washington was the foundations of modern documentation management developed and the scientific model of the documentation life cycle born? And finally, what made the United States, having no tradition of archival research, placed in the first league of world archival science at that time?

The paper presents the history of the broadly understood American archival field. It developed slowly, meandering through various meanders, but consistently aimed at obtaining the proper rank. The solid foundations of the whole process were laid in 1774 by Charles Thomson, the first Secretary of the Continental Congress, who created his initially one-person secretariat. Documentation was produced there, collected in an orderly manner and permanently stored. The office gradually developed and was subject to numerous reorganisations.

The work also describes the activities of individual archival institutions, starting from the seat at the table for the first secretary of the Congress, through the first fireproof repositories, to the monumental building of the National Archives. The focus was mainly on central actions, on state and local initiatives, writing essentially only when they preceded or inspired the actions of federal authorities.

Social initiatives, so typical of American activities, found a separate place in their work. From the very beginning of the archival field, there was no shortage of dynamic activists who cared at heart to preserve for posterity souvenirs of the past. That is why the role of libraries was briefly discussed, which, characteristic of the United States, often also had archival or even museum functions. State archives were also created from social initiatives, often by individual history enthusiasts. Various national and local associations also played a huge role in shaping the archival field. Their members, through numerous initiatives and appeals to federal and state legislatures, were able to put pressure on parliamentarians and effectively contribute to the development of the archival field. The role played by the American Historical Society, and especially its co-founder, prof. J. Franklin Jameson with his student Waldo G. Leland.

There was also a description of the administrative reforms carried out from time to time and their impact on the development of the archival field. There is also a place here to present the revolutionary changes that the office system underwent at the turn of the 19th and 20th centuries (introduction of a typewriter, preparation of index cards, introduction of a system of case files). It was shown how, during this period, office work management had to move from the micro scale, i.e. the point of view of a single official, to the macro scale, i.e. the strategic perspective and planning of the director of a large institution employing thousands of officials.

Throughout the nineteenth century, parliament discussed the need to erect a fireproof building that would permanently protect the "ancient records" of the young state, but unfortunately for over a hundred years these plans were not implemented. The process of discussion and activities

culminated in the involvement of President Franklin D. Roosevelt in the 1930s. It is thanks to his dynamism and financial possibilities that not an archival repository was established, but the most modern National Archives in the world.

The next part shows the hardships of the system of the National Archives, who were its employees and how they gradually became involved in activities such as evaluation and modern records management. There was also a description of the activities of the Association of American Archivists established in 1936 and the specialist journal "The American Archivist" published by them. This periodical contributed to the consolidation of the community and became a professional forum for exchanging experiences and describing practical and scientific achievements. His role cannot be overestimated for the development of not only American, but also world archives.

The establishment of the National Archives was a milestone in the development of American archival science for one more reason. It was a gathering of a large number of educated people forming a specific intellectual elite, who were united by the desire to learn and develop the archival field. Thanks to it, the security of the national heritage was ensured and a methodology for dealing with the massively received documentation was developed. After ensuring physical and intellectual control over the national resource, the time has come for an in-depth look and for scientific reflection on the professional experience gained. Initially, it took the form of training employees and new students of archival science, and with time turned into regular university classes. An employee of the Archives and the future Chief Archivist, prof. Solon J. Buck, and an exile from Germany, Dr. Ernst Posner, and an archivist from the Department of the Treasury, Helen L. Chatfield.

The natural stage after the introduction of academic classes was the search for a scientific summary of the activities carried out so far, an attempt to find a model that would show the entire complex reality of the archival field in a synthetic way. The greatest merits in this field were made by pioneering Helen L. Chatfield and Dr. Philip Coolidge Brooks and Emmett J. Leahy. The result of their reflections and their followers was the creation of the documentation life cycle model. This idea gained widespread recognition and to this day is the basis for the analysis of the archival field, not only in the USA but also in the world.

Summing up, it can be said that the successful development of the archival field was achieved by many eminent people, but two of them left the most lasting mark. The first was Philadelphia merchant Charles Thomson, who laid a solid foundation for the stable, professional development of the secretariat of the emerging state. He is therefore rightly called the godfather of American archivists. Later, after a century of stagnation, an amateur archivist with huge political potential, President Roosevelt, appeared. It was he who, thanks to his position, created an explosive, archival critical mass. He quickly recruited professional and well-educated workers at the National Archives. He provided them with good financial conditions and excellent technical facilities with the most modern devices of that time. In the ensuing situation, the United States had no other path of development - it had to take a place in the first league of world archivistics within a few years.