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The handwritten study enrollment of Nobel Prize winner Jaroslav Heyrovský or Czechoslovak President Edvard Beneš; the oldest Prague dissertation on the effects of coffee, chocolate, tea and nicotine; documents from the personal archive of Jan Palach and his family, or the oldest existing registry from the 17<sup>th</sup> century. All this will be on display during the extraordinary exhibition in Charles University Archive on Thursday, June 9. Charles University will thus take part in the International Archive Day.

“We're going to open our research room to public. People will be able to see documents handwritten by important figures. The visitors will see what information on university students and teachers we keep, and even order archived materials on their ancestors or themselves,” said Petr Cajthaml, head of Charles University Archive.

The visitors will also learn about the work of the archivists. Surprisingly, it doesn't involve much dusting of thick files. “Of course, we mostly take care of paper documents, but the share of digital data is increasing constantly, as they are facing quick destruction without proper archiving,” says Cajthaml. The visitors will get the opportunity to try digital databases for themselves: for example, find out whether their ancestors received a degree at the university, or see digital copies of medieval documents with restricted access.

The archive offered several tour times, and recommends applying in advance. The potential visitors may apply, stating their names and tour time, by e-mail: [Lenka Vašková](mailto:Lenka.Vaskova@uk.edu) . Of course, the event will be freely open to anyone without pre-booking, but in case of full capacity, it will be necessary to wait for the next time. Updated information is available at [facebook.com/udauk](https://facebook.com/udauk).

The visitors can also see the current exhibition The Second Life of Charles IV in the Carolinum cloisters.

## **International Archive Day in Charles University Archive**

- Thursday, June 9, 2016, Carolinum, Ovocný trh 3–5, Prague 1.

### **Guided tours**

[Charles University Archive](#) - 13:00, 14:00, 15:00, 16:00, 17:00 and 18:00

The International Archive Day is celebrated worldwide on June 9. In the [Czech Republic](#) , several dozens archives joins the event. The date commemorates the establishment of the International Council on Archives at UNESCO in 1948.

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### **About Charles University Archive**

Charles University Archive is part of the Institute of History and Archive of Charles University. It's located at the Rectorate in Prague 1, right next to the very heart of the university – Carolinum.

#### Charles University Archive – The past

Uncertain beginnings and armored chests

The archive at Charles University is first mentioned in 1360. That year, the constitution of the university said that the university vault and its contents, including university documents, are managed by the rector and two assistants. The documents were stored in a metal-mounted chest; official registers and manuscripts were managed by the university library. Besides, separate archives of colleges and faculties were established.

#### **19<sup>th</sup> century resurrection**

Over the centuries, the archive was re-organized for several times. In 1827, most of its contents were moved to new areas in the former shop in the ground floor of the Carolinum. The archive drew more attention during the preparations

of the university anniversary in 1848. After that, the interest ebbed, to increase again in 1882, when the university split into Czech and German part. Theoretically, the archive remained the property of both universities and should have been managed jointly, but in real life the management was in the hands of the German university, which led to many conflicts.

### **Eventful 20<sup>th</sup> century**

The era of dysfunctional joint management of the archive ended in 1918, when the Czech university took over. When the reconstruction of the Carolinum started in 1934, the contents were transported to the Faculty of Law. In 1939, after the German occupation, the archive was confiscated by the German university. The war years finished with a catastrophe – part of the archive with the rarest documents and insignia was picked for transport when the German university was evacuated, and disappeared without a trace along the way. After the war, the German university documents were added into the collections, and new material soon began to flow in. The breaking point came in 1958, with the establishment of the the research-focused Institute for the History of Charles University, also incorporating the archive. After centuries, the archive was therefore removed from the responsibility area of the Rectorate. In 1968, the archive returned to the Carolinum and has remained there ever since. For political reasons, the Institute for the History of Charles University was disbanded in 1969, to be reinstated in 1990 with a slightly different name - Institute of History and Archive of Charles University.

### **Charles University Archive today**

Pursuant to the archiving law, the Institute of History and Archive of Charles University is an accredited specialized archive. Its primary purpose is to take care of documents and other materials resulting from the operations and activities of Charles University and all its parts, from the establishment till now. Charles University Archive also supervises the filing operations at Charles University, selects the documents and other items for archiving, maintains their records, seeks for archive materials for research and official purposes, and provides drafts, abstracts and statements. Charles University Archive also manages the estate of several important members of the Czech research community and takes care of materials for documentation purposes.

### **The amount of archived materials**

At this moment, we have more than 7 km of archived materials, in 195 archive funds and collections. Their overview is displayed at the web pages [udauk.cuni.cz](http://udauk.cuni.cz) .

### **The storage areas**

Charles University Archive has two depositories – the first is located directly in the Rectorate premises at Ovocný trh 5; its capacity, hardware, is now completely full, so the second depository in Lešetice near Příbram is used. The Prague building of Charles University Archive also contains a vault room to store the oldest and worthiest documents.

### **Documents online**

We have digitized selected archived materials and made them accessible online. These include documents, registers, manuscripts, lists of Charles University doctors between 1882 and 1939, lists of German University doctors, and test protocols of Faculty of Law at the German University between 1882 and 1945. The digitization is a continuing process, and the amount of accessible materials will increase. For updated information, visit our web and Facebook pages.

### **Not just an archive**

The Institute of History and Archive of Charles University is an independent institute at Charles University. It consists of two parts, with areas of responsibility that are not strictly separated but mingle at some points. In addition to our care of archived documents, we're also involved in the research activities especially as concerns the history of Charles University, history of school systems and education, and of sciences and related subjects since the 14<sup>th</sup> century to present. Our results are presented in many expert papers and theses, including our specialized journal *Historia Universitatis Carolinae Pragensis*. We're also active in preparation of exhibitions or in providing guiding services in the Carolinum.

### **There's a library, too**

An integral part of the Institute of History and Archive of Charles University is a vast expert library (53,000 volumes) managed by two librarians. It's located in the Institute building at Ovocný trh 5. The books may be also borrowed by public (local loan only in the research room).

### **What does Charles University Archive offer?**

The research room of Charles University Archive is open five days a week, and we're happy to welcome you there. You may use our library, study digitized document, or, upon the agreement with the manager of the relevant archive fund, order archive materials of your choice for study purposes. The research room features all archiving tools of Charles University Archive, lecture lists, and essential textbooks on Charles University history. Via the secretariat of the Archive, we also provide study certificates, test certificates, diploma copies etc.

Source: OVV RUK