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FIRST AMERICAN WOMEN DIPLOMATS: COURAGEOUS PIONEERS

Over 150 years of American history there were no women diplomats representing their country abroad. Diplomacy has always been considered a man's profession bastion and only men were examined for positions in the U.S. diplomatic service. An occasional, woman would apply for some officer position, such as a commerce agent or a consul, but would be turned down. With the coming of the World War I more women began to be interested in the diplomatic service and possibly overseas assignments.

Since World War I, with the growing needs of foreign trade and conduct of expanding U.S. diplomacy, advanced efforts were undertaken to reform U.S. consular and diplomatic service. There were also some attempts to grant American women work in diplomacy. Previously at the Department of State women played only traditional roles of secretaries, clerks or code-servants. After World War I, the aspirations of many women, particularly in terms of job and economic independence took on the new visibility. First of all, educated women, whose numbers rose gradually, were streaming into professional work. Many of them were attempting to connect careers and marriage¹.

Since the early 1920s and the adoption of the Nineteenth Amendment granting women right to vote (August 26, 1920) some women began to be interested in the Foreign Service examinations. Before it was rather unthinkable to do so. On March 25, 1921 Meta K. Hannay applied for an appointment to a secretaryship in the diplomatic service. Robert Woods Bliss, Third Assistant Secretary and

1 N. Woloch, *Women and the American Experience*, New York: Knopf: Distributed by Random House, 1984, p. 388; J. Hoff-Wilson, "Conclusion: *Of Mice and Men*", [in:] *Women and American Foreign Policy: Lobbyists, Critics, and Insiders*, E.P. Crapol, ed., New York: Greenwood Press 1987, pp. 173–174.

some official in the Department were confused with her application because... she didn't want a clerkship but to be an officer in the service [!H.P.]². Yet she did become the first woman ever to be examined for the appointment as secretary in the diplomatic service, although she did not pass exams³.

The next attempt was undertaken in the spring of 1921 by Louise M. MacNichol who requested a clerical position in Consulate General in London and became the most determined applicant. Consul Robert P. Skinner was surprised and confused by her application and asked for the instructions from the Department. He wrote: "It was the first time in my experience that an American woman has indicated a desire to enter the classified Service [...]. If they should be appointed to the classified Service and claim the right, as undoubtedly they would, to promotion to the higher grades, I am very much afraid that the inconvenience and embarrassment resulting there from would be considerable"⁴.

Skinner raised a problem if position of, let's-say Mrs. consul, in a foreign community would not "bring the whole arrangement into ridicule, destroy her usefulness and render the position of her husband intolerable". He argued that a woman consul would fail "to command in the foreign communities", so could not effectively fulfill duties. Skinner, as most of the governmental officials, remained resolutely opposed to recruiting women diplomats to any post or position. They were unwilling to permit such an "inconvenient precedent", objected mostly because of different customs, inconvenience in the protocol, etc. Sometimes they argued that women would not be taken seriously by the foreign governments and/or would embarrass male colleagues. An "argument" was also used that... ladies could not keep secrets!⁵ Anyway, MacNichol did not even pass the exams.

Wilbur J. Carr, the influential Director of the Consular Service for decades (1909–1924) had many hesitations and strongly opposed access of women to the diplomatic work. As other colleagues and professionals he raised many and various obstacles, such as the custom, climate, wealth condition, etc. They systematically argued that such a hard and intensive work, particularly in unfriendly surroundings overseas, would make it impossible for women to adopt and perform their service⁶. These arguments were repeated in many governmental discussions, because the whole issue of women's rights became timely after 1920 and the Nine-

2 H.L. Calkin, *Women in the Department of State. Their Role in American Foreign Affairs*, Washington: US Government Printing Office 1978, pp. 58–59.

3 H.L. Calkin, *Women in the...*, p. 59.

4 Quoted after: H.L. Calkin, *Women in the...*, p. 60.

5 R.D. Schulzinger, *The Making of the Diplomatic Mind. The Training, Outlook, and Style of United States Foreign Service Officers, 1908–1931*, Middletown: Wesleyan University Press 1975, p. 108.

6 H.L. Calkin, *Women in the...*, p. 69; R.D. Schulzinger, *The Making...*, p. 109.

teenth Amendment. It resulted in increased public and political aspirations and activity of American women.

Lucille Atcherson was the next woman seriously interested in foreign affairs who wanted to enter the Foreign Service, a school for men. The director was horrified by such prospect, because “it would destroy morale of the young men”. She successfully passed exams in July 1922 and after a few months she was appointed as a secretary of the Diplomatic Service in Division of Latin American Affairs in December 1922. She became the first woman Foreign Service officer in the history of the State Department. Obviously her career expanded her own ambitions but also encouraged a few of more women who wanted to follow her in the field. Altogether, till 1924 ten more women attempted to pass the exams. In addition to Atcherson, three of them were successful but did not get any assignment⁷.

The main purpose of Rogers Act of May 24, 1924 was to establish the professional service of trained men and amalgamation of both branches, e.g. diplomatic and consular services, into U.S. Foreign Service. The act was the culmination of efforts to get Foreign Service out of politics and to establish it as a permanent career, based on merit for the appointment and promotion as well. According to the regulations, there were certain expectations about the “qualities” and “general education” of candidates to fulfill their duties, such as modern languages, elements of international law, marital law, American geography, history, political economy, commerce, etc.⁸

Although Rogers Act did not make distinctions between men or women still the “founding fathers” of U.S. Foreign Service were not fond of the prospects of opening doors to women into the field of diplomacy. They were quite critical or at least very skeptical about their qualifications and value for diplomatic jobs. There was a strong feeling that women would always have difficulty in fitting themselves into duties abroad in countries, which are customarily ruled by men. It should be noticed that there was only one woman (Atcherson) in the Foreign Service at the time of Rogers Act. In 1925 Foreign Service School graduated its first class of 17 officers including one woman⁹.

7 G. Stuart, *American Diplomatic and Consular Practice*, New York–London, D. Appleton-Century company, incorporated [1936], pp. 212–214; H.L. Calkin, *Women in the....*, pp. 60–65.

8 F.W. Ilchman, *Professional Diplomacy in the United States, 1779–1939. A Study in Administrative History*, Chicago: University of Chicago Press 1961, pp. 233–234; H. Parafianowicz, “Departament Stanu i narodziny profesjonalnej służby zagranicznej USA”, „Przegląd Humanistyczny” 2004 (6), pp. 79–82.

9 W. Barnes, J.H. Morgan, *The Foreign Service of the United States: Origins, Development, and Functions*, Washington, D.C.: G.P.O. 1961, pp. 205, 211; H. Parafianowicz, *Departament Stanu....*, pp. 78–79.

The admission of women to the Foreign Service, particularly to overseas posts, was occasionally placed on the agenda of the Board of Foreign Service Personnel. There were repeated hesitations and various “arguments” against access of women to the Foreign Service. Some officials persistently raised their worries about duties of ladies as consuls who couldn’t properly inspect ships and „work with rude and ill-mannered seamen”. Joseph C. Grew, influential Under Secretary in Department of State, shared with colleagues his fears that women “would ruin morale by demanding special treatment” and that they would not be prepared for their duties, particularly in Latin American countries because the sexual attitudes make it impossible. In other words, as he argued, if the Department was not free to send women to Latin America, “it would be manifestly unfair and inconsistent to send women to our more desirable posts in Europe, leaving the men to fill the undesirable ones”¹⁰.

A lot of attention of officers in the Department of State was placed then on the issue how to discourage women from taking the exams. Joseph C. Grew even suggested excluding women from examinations altogether or simply – as many others argued – failing them on oral examinations using arguments that they do not possess the necessary qualifications¹¹.

Members of the Board of Foreign Service Personnel had proposed a combined examination that would be difficult for women to pass. In the consequence it was meant to keep them out of the diplomacy. But the examination process to the Foreign Service was tough and strongly selective in general, so only a small group of candidates were successful anyway. In January 1925 during the examinations there were 8 women of 199 eligible applicants. Finally 144 took the examinations and only twenty of them passed, including one colored (Clifton Wharton, who went to Liberia) and two women, who passed the written examinations “brilliantly”¹².

In speaking of women, who successfully passed exams, Grew mentioned Pattie H. Field who “passed with flying colors”, and was certified for the appointment on March 8, 1925. She started her duties as a Vice Consul in Amsterdam in November 1925 and was considered by the staff there as a „charming young lady”, with good mind and talent. But in June 1929, after almost four years of work and no perspective for promotion, she resigned from the Foreign Service to get a position at the National Broadcasting Company¹³.

10 Quoted after: R.D. Schulzinger, *The Making of the...*, p. 109.

11 H.L. Calkin, *Women in the...*, p. 69; R.D. Schulzinger, *The Making of the...*, p. 109.

12 H.L. Calkin, *Women in the...*, p. 72; F.W. Ilchman, *Professional Diplomacy...*, pp. 203, 235.

13 *Women in the Foreign Service*, <https://history.state.gov/about/faq/women-in-the-foreign-service> (accessed: September 8, 2020).

The subject of women in the Foreign Service became the hot and timely issue discussed at the Department and in the diplomatic circles. The opponents of women's access to diplomacy raised some problems, such as inconveniences and difficulties with the diplomatic protocol, even in terms of the official title for a woman as the chief of mission. They discussed what was more suitable: Her Excellency, Madam Ambassador, Mrs. Ambassador or simple Ambassador? Professional and career diplomats were involved in such discussions, mainly using the "arguments" against women's future involvement, so looking for the control of their aspirations. The most of the "elite" or "family", as they were named, were hesitant, skeptical or simply against opening the service for female candidates¹⁴.

Lucile Atcherson, successful at the Division of Latin American Affairs and eager for the service overseas, was assigned in April 1925 and then sent to the Legation at Berne, Switzerland as Third Secretary. Interestingly enough Minister Hugh S. Gibson was not fond of such a prospect and tried to persuade his colleagues at the Department not to send her to Bern. He repeatedly acknowledged that "a woman diplomat can never be successful simply because she does not have access and personality of the men with whom she works"¹⁵. Gibson, who strongly opposed the admission of women to the Foreign Service, was raising more and more objections against the candidacy of Atcherson, officially using mostly the protocol matters. He wondered how she would dress and where she would be seated at the official ceremonies¹⁶. He continued to have objections and reservations about service of women in diplomacy, after all considered to be a distinguished elite profession and not for amateurs. The officers and the Board of Foreign Service Personnel tacitly proposed "to watch and wait", and a policy of moderation.

Grew publicly supported the competitive examinations and promotion by the merit of both sexes, men and women. In practice it was another matter. Under Secretary also brought up the possibility of some other obstacles, difficulties and embarrassing situations awaiting Lucile Atcherson in expecting her duties and activities at the diplomatic post. He referred to the official dinners at which she... would be the only woman "in a room with a hundred men smoking cigars and drinking beer". She replied resolutely that she would find reasons to be absent in such situations¹⁷.

14 A.M. Morin, *Her Excellency: An Oral History of American Women Ambassadors*, New York: Maxwell Macmillan International 1995, p. 8; H.L. Calkin, *Women in the...*, pp. 68–71.

15 *A Woman of the Times*, www.nytimes.com/books/first/g/greenwald-times.html (accessed: September 8, 2020).

16 A.M. Morin, *Her Excellency...*, p. 8; H.L. Calkin, *Women in the...*, pp. 73–78.

17 H.L. Calkin, *Women in the...*, p. 75–76; R.D. Schulzinger, *The Making...*, pp. 109–110.

All in all, Lucile Atcherson was sent to Bern, and the quality of her diplomatic work was meant to be a test for women's future in overseas assignments. She had accomplished her wishes and ambitions of a dutiful service and became a "pioneering diplomat", but she found it almost impossible to be accepted in the male diplomat circles, both by her American colleagues and Swiss ones with whom she worked. As a female Foreign Service officer she was a "novelty" and was treated with reserve. It was a real challenge for her and a rather bitter disappointment, all the more so as she was positively evaluated by Gibson in reports, yet without proposal and prospect of promotion like her male colleagues. She asked Grew why she was not promoted which did not help in their relations and probably devastated her future career. After about two years, on February 11, 1927 she was transferred (without promotion) to the post of the Third Secretary of the Legation in Panama. The transfer did not please her and in letters to her fiancé, she complained openly about it. After a few years of employment she became discouraged and in the fall of 1927 she resigned from the Foreign Service¹⁸.

So, as we see, in 1925 there were only two women Foreign Service officers – Atcherson and Field, whose duties raised many questions and problems to solve for them as well as for the officials. Their assignment became a sort of "very radical experiment", which pushed the governmental circles towards further steps, namely how to accommodate them in the overseas service and stop possible others. After all, the distinguished diplomats wanted to control and limit the number of women in the service¹⁹. In private talks and in the correspondence many officials quite openly claimed that diplomacy is "not a suitable place" for women. Though they did not say this publicly or officially, such an opinion was a fact.

These two examples/cases (Atcherson and Field) received a lot of mostly critical response from the career diplomats and raised various doubts and skepticism, all the more as both women, after a short time of work at service, resigned from the overseas posts. These facts were also used against appointment of women in the diplomatic ranks, because, as it was argued, such a "novelty" and "investment" did not work, neither for the Foreign Service, nor for women.

The years to come did not change the situation of women and their careers in the field of diplomacy. Between 1926 and 1929 73 women took examinations with 10 of them passing the written tests. Yet, only four of them passed the oral exams and were appointed to the Foreign Service. Among them was Frances Elizabeth Willis, the third woman FSO and the most successful in the near future. She was

18 *A Woman of the...* In Bern in 1926 she met dr. George Morris Curtis from the Chicago University, who studied at the University of Berne. Two years later, on January 26, 1928 they were married.

19 F.W. Ilchman, *Professional Diplomacy...*, pp. 234–235.

well-educated (Ph.D. in political science from Stanford University) and taught at Vassar College until 1927. Her ambitious goal was to do more than be a teacher at private women's college. According to her own opinion, she "didn't just want to teach political science" but "wanted to be a part of it". In August 1927, after the successful exams – she became the Foreign Service officer. On February 24, 1928 she was assigned as Vice Consul to Valparaiso in Chile. A few years later, in 1931 she was transferred to the legation at Santiago. She continued her service at the U.S. posts in various countries in the 1930s and during the World War II and made diplomacy her lifetime career²⁰.

In 1928 the Department of State distributed the pamphlet "Opportunities for Women as Officers in the Foreign Service of the United States" in which it stated that the entrance examinations are opened to all American citizens, regardless of sex. But the same pamphlet warned that women should bear in mind that over 450 diplomatic and consular posts included many, which are "unhealthy" and at which a woman would find "living conditions much more difficult than a man". Some geographic areas were considered particularly not suitable for women because of climate or social and political reasons²¹. Strangely enough such a rule did not affect women typists, secretaries or clerks, who worked at the posts where climatic conditions were questionable and where they might be confronted with social and political problems as well.

In conclusion of the pamphlet it was stated that if a woman had not become discouraged by such information and awaiting her obstacles but still desired to realize her ambition she could take exams. In the years to come a few of them did so successfully. Constance R. Harvey, who received her education at Sorbonne, Smith College, Geneva School of International Studies and MA at Columbia Law School, was the sixth woman as Foreign Service officers. Later she recalled that she had two wonderful professors, understanding her aspirations about a professional career in Foreign Service, and father who was very supportive of her plans. After years she recollected: "The examinations lasted three days. We had 17 examinations, I think all together, and then there was the oral. I didn't do so wonderfully one the written, but I got through it. I did very well on the oral [...]. There

20 www.diplomacy.state.gov/discoverdiplomacy/explorer/people/historical/170214.htm; <https://diplomacy.state.gov/people/frances-elizabeth-willis-diplomat> (accessed: September 8, 2020). She was not only the first career women Ambassador but also first Ambassador sent to Switzerland (1953–1957), and later to Norway, (1957–1961) and Ceylon (1961–1964). For more, see N.J. Willis, *Frances Elizabeth Willis: Up to the Foreign Service Ladder to the Summit – Despite the Limitations of Her Sex*, Self published 2013.

21 F.W. Ilchman, *Professional Diplomacy...*, p. 234; H.L. Calkin, *Women in the...*, p. 84.

were five examiners”²². She also took orals in languages in which she got a pretty good ranks, which opened her chance for a diplomatic service.

In April 1930 Harvey was assigned to her first post in Ottawa as Vice Consul and stayed there for about a year. In August 1931 she was assigned as Vice Consul to Milan and later to a various posts in Europe. During the WWII she worked with the Belgian and French Resistance²³. Like Willis she devoted her life to the diplomatic career and spent there 34 years.

Although six women had entered the Foreign Service by 1930, only two of them remained at their posts a year later. In the subsequent years a few more women passed the written examinations but all of them were disqualified by male examiners in the more subjective part of it, that is the oral examinations. One slippery question was about marriage – “Do you expect to marry someday?”. The answer “yes” could fail a woman²⁴.

American women were not successful in the field of diplomacy, although during the decade 1930–1941 more than 200 of them, eligible to take the examinations, did try to do so. What is surprising and astonishing indeed is that no women passed the oral examinations and none were appointed to the Foreign Service. Indeed, from 1930 to 1937 Harvey and Willis were the only two remaining as FSO, the other four resigned²⁵. Not surprisingly then the Examining Board had been perceived not only by women as an anti-feminist and discriminating body.

A very narrow option for women service in foreign affairs was a chance to be promoted according to the Executive Order of September 11, 1929. So, a woman who worked for more than five years in the Department of State was eligible to transfer to the Foreign Service upon the recommendation of the Board and with the approval of the Secretary of State. That was the case of a few women, who took advantage of this order, including Margaret M. Hanna. After nearly 42 years in the Department, she was assigned in July of 1937 to the U.S. consulate in Geneva. In the late 1930s seven other were assigned under special arrangements²⁶.

Eleanor Roosevelt and her extraordinary position in American life and politics influenced in many ways the New Deal as well as the whole policymaking, including foreign affairs and diplomacy. There was a group of women, female “net-

22 A.M. Morin, *Her Excellency...*, p. 15–16.

23 A.M. Morin, *Her Excellency...*, p. 17; <https://adst.org/oral-history/fascinating-figures/constance-ray-harvey-diplomat-and-world-war-ii-heroine> (accessed: September 8, 2020).

24 H. McCarthy, *Women of the World. The Rise of the Female Diplomat*, London: Bloomsbury 2014, pp. 98–99.

25 H.L. Calkin, *Women in the...*, pp. 84–85; J. Hoff-Wilson, *Conclusion: Of Mice...*, pp. 174–175.

26 E. Plischke, *U.S. Department of State. A Reference History*, Westport: Greenwood Press 1999, pp. 289–290; F. W. Ilchman, *Professional Diplomacy...*, pp. 234–335.

works” who “had unprecedented access to the corridors of political power both because of their skills and knowledge were needed and because of Roosevelt’s wife, Eleanor, was one of them”²⁷. They were female reformers, devoted and passionate, working with the First Lady on appointing women to the governmental offices and positions, including numerous “first” women not only in the cabinet (Frances Perkins) but also in the judiciary (Florence Allen), and in the foreign service (Ruth Bryan Owen, Florence “Daisy” Jaffray Harriman). Mrs. Roosevelt took advantage of the influence and access to her husband President, Secretary Cordell Hull and Under Secretary Sumner Welles and lobbied strongly for the promotion of women to the important governmental posts²⁸. She had been supported by women friends and advocated to send some well-educated, eligible and professional women to the European posts (for instance to Prague). Mary Dewson and some leaders of Women’s Division, Democratic National Committee recommended dr. Rowena Morse Mann from Chicago as the U.S. Minister to Czechoslovakia²⁹.

Ruth Bryan Owen (1885–1954) was the first American woman to head a diplomatic legation, although it was a typical political appointment. As daughter of William Jennings Bryan, prominent politician, three-times presidential nominee and Secretary of State, she grew up in the political atmosphere and had a natural interest in politics. Owen was an activist and devoted feminist, elected to Congress in 1928 and 1930. She was the first Congresswoman from the Deep South, strongly involved in designating the Florida Everglades as a national park. She fought for extending rights for the governmental positions for well-educated professional women³⁰.

On April 13, 1933 Owen was appointed by Roosevelt as the Minister to Denmark and unanimously confirmed by the Senate the same day. Before her departure to Copenhagen President Roosevelt invited her to the White House to chat about her new diplomatic duties³¹. Soon she crossed the ocean with her children and “two young women to help her out in legation and a newswoman along as observer”. Owen presented her credentials on May 23 and quite efficiently organized her household and work of the small staff. As U.S. Minister she enjoyed welcome visitors of the host country and her official duties. She started to learn the language

27 S.M. Evans, *Born for Liberty. A History of Women in America*, New York: Free Press; London: Collier Macmillan c1989, p. 205.

28 For more see, H. Parafianowicz, *Eleanor Anna Roosevelt (1884–1962). W cieniu wielkiego męża*, Warszawa: Wydawnictwo Uniwersytetu Warszawskiego 2000.

29 F.J. Harriman, *Mission to the North*, Philadelphia, New York: J.B. Lippincott Company [c 1941], pp.18–24; M. Polišíenská, *Diplomatické vztahy Československa a USA, 1918–1938*, Praha: Nakladatelství Libri 2012, pp. 776–779.

30 See more, S.P. Wickers, *Ruth Bryan Owen. Florida’s First U.S. Congresswoman and America’s First Ambassador to Denmark*, Tallahassee 2009.

31 S. Ware, *Beyond Suffrage. Women in the New Deal*, Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1981, pp. 150–151.

of her assignment, which she used occasionally in short speeches. Soon she became widely popular with Danish people and positively viewed by Americans³².

Minister Owen was doing a good job at the post of not particular importance, yet recognized as a good observatory of the north-European countries. In reports to Washington she regularly and quite professionally informed the Department of State and sometimes directly President Roosevelt about European situation in the 1930s.³³

There were some rumors about sending her to a more important post. She dreamt about Court of St. James, which was rather unrealistic and “never in the cards”. She continued her successful diplomatic service in Copenhagen until it was challenged, according to her daughter, because “she decided to follow her heart rather than her head”³⁴. On July 13, 1936 at the chapel at Hyde Park she married Borge Rohde, a captain in the Danish Royal Guards and soon after resigned from the post of U.S. Minister, because of her marriage and new dual citizenship³⁵.

Owen, as a gifted speaker, took active part in the presidential campaign of 1936. From 1938 to 1954, she served on the Advisory Board of the Federal Reformatory for Women. In America she was lecturing and wrote several well-received books on Scandinavia, including *Picture Tales from Scandinavia*. In 1949, President Harry Truman appointed her as an alternate delegate to the United Nations General Assembly. She died in Copenhagen of heart attack on July 26, 1954 during a trip to receive a royal award from King Frederick IX recognizing her contributions to the American-Danish relations³⁶.

The second woman diplomat, the chief of the U.S. diplomatic mission was Florence “Daisy” Jaffray Harriman (1870–1967), appointed also by President Roosevelt. She was a suffragist and reformer, organizer of Women’s Motor Corps of the Red Cross in France during the World War I. She participated in the Paris Peace Conference and became an active supporter of the League of Nations. In 1922 Florence Harriman became the first President of the Women’s National Democratic Club. In 1932 she supported Newton Baker for the presidency, so was banished by

32 R. Brown, *Ruth Bryan Owen. Congresswoman and Diplomat. An Intimate Portrait*, Pasadena: Create Space Independent Publishing Platform 2014, pp. 127–131.

33 There is interesting collection of her reports and correspondence at the Roosevelt Institute of American Studies (RIAS) in Middelburg,

34 R. Brown, *Ruth Bryan Owen...*, p. 137. She remained in Copenhagen till the end of June 1936.

35 E. Wilder Spaulding, *Ambassadors Ordinary and Extraordinary*, Washington 1961, p. 179; G.H. Stuart, *American Diplomatic...*, pp. 144–145

36 R. Brown, *Ruth Bryan Owen...*, p. 185–186.; S. Ware, *Beyond Suffrage...*, pp. 150–151. For more on Ruth Bryan Owen’s diplomatic career, see H. Parafianowicz, *O pionierkach w dyplomacji amerykańskiej i Ruth Bryan Owen – pierwszej Madame Posel USA*, „Dzieje Najnowsze” 2018, nr 3, pp. 161–184.

the elected Franklin D. Roosevelt for several years. But her constant activities and female “networks” a few years later gave her a new chance to serve in diplomacy³⁷.

Harriman was appointed as the U.S. Minister to Norway by President Roosevelt on May 4, 1937. Before departure she met President and talked about her diplomatic mission. She later recalled that it was an exceptional event for her to chat and have lunch together. “It was his suggestion that I travel slowly to my post, taking ten days in Paris and ten in London to study the general European situation, especially through talks with our ambassadors in the two capitals”³⁸. Interestingly enough, Ambassador William C. Bullitt during her stay in Paris presented her loudly and in the most enthusiastic way ‘This is the American Minister to Norway, not the wife of the American Minister but the Minister in her own right’³⁹.

Harriman served at the post in Oslo for nearly three years, since she presented credentials on July 1, 1937 till spring of 1940. In April 1940, after the German invasion of Norway, seventy-year-old Harriman helped in the evacuations of Americans and the royal Norwegian family to flee to Sweden and then to the U.S. She returned safely to America, lecturing and writing extensively about her diplomatic experience⁴⁰.

In her memoirs Harriman noticed, “I was not a ‘first’ in the Department’s experience for, after all, Ruth Bryan Owen had broken the ice, four years before, when she had been sent as Minister to Denmark, and many things were easier for me because she had distinguished her office so well in Copenhagen”⁴¹.

On April 18, 1963 President John F. Kennedy awarded her the Presidential Citation of Merit of Distinguished Service. During the presentation of the award at the White House he said: “In her illustrious career in public service, Mrs. Harriman has made singular and lasting contributions to the cause of peace and freedom [...]. As the American Minister to Norway during the most trying time, she served with great energy, skill, and dedication to the cause. In all of her endeavors, Mrs. Harriman has exemplified the spirit of selflessness, courage, and service to the Nation, reflecting the highest credit on herself and on this country. She has, in-

37 S. Ware, *Beyond Suffrage...*, p. 147.

38 F.J. Harriman, *Mission to the...*, p. 38.

39 Ibidem, p. 41.

40 M. Folly, N. Palmer, *Historical Dictionary of U.S. Diplomacy from World War I through World War II*, Lanham: Scarecrow Press 2010, pp. 145–146.

41 F.J. Harriman, *Mission to the...*, p. 37. More on her diplomatic mission in Oslo see, H. Parafianowicz, *Florence “Daisy” Harriman i jej praca dyplomatyczna w Norwegii*, „Dzieje Najnowsze” 2019, nr 2, pp. 99–119.

deed, earned the esteem and admiration of her countrymen and the enduring gratitude of this Republic”⁴².

Women remained a distinct minority in the Department of State and overseas assignments during the inter-war period. In the 1920s and 1930s rank and place of a very few exceptionally well-prepared women in the service were marginalized by the “old boy network”. Only a few of them passed the examinations and served overseas at their secondary and rather minor posts. No American woman served as chief of U.S. diplomatic mission until 1933 and appointment by President Roosevelt of Ruth Bryan Owen in Copenhagen and a few years later in 1937 sending Florence “Daisy” Jaffray Harriman to Oslo. Both of them were strictly political appointees but had high not only symbolic value for women. These assignments broke a certain psychological barrier and seemed to anticipate an increasing role for women in Roosevelt’s administration

U.S. diplomacy long stood as a male traditional bastion, excluding women out of the gentlemen’s club (*esprit de corps*). Women’s attempts to serve in diplomacy were very limited, but the slow process of changes inaugurated by the courageous pioneers was obvious, subsequent and necessary. Certainly, their good service opened the doors a little for women in the U.S. Foreign Service in decades to come after the World War II.

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42 J.F. Kennedy, *Remarks Upon Presenting a Presidential Citation of Merit to Mrs. Florence Harriman*, www.presidency.ucsb.edu/ws/index.php?pid=9153 (accessed: September 8, 2020).

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PIONIERKI AMERYKAŃSKIEJ DYPLOMACJI

Streszczenie

Przez blisko 150 lat Amerykanki nie sprawowały żadnych funkcji w dyplomacji będącej tradycyjnie bastionem męskim. W latach 20. XX wieku – w związku z ratyfikowaną 19. poprawką do Konstytucji nadającą prawa wyborcze kobietom – po raz pierwszy Amerykanki zaczęły ubiegać się również o pracę w dyplomacji. Wywołało to nie małą konsternację i zamieszanie w elitach rzą-

dowych, a zwłaszcza Departamentu Stanu i zawodowych dyplomatów, pilnie strzegących dostępu do tej elitarnej profesji. Zupełnie nieliczne Amerykanki, znakomicie wykształcone, zdolne i ambitne, mimo rozmaitych barier i utrudnień ze strony czynników rządowych i zdania stosownych egzaminów, podjęły pracę w służbie zagranicznej USA. Ale powoływane na podrzędne stanowiska i jak się okazało – bez realnych szans awansu – zazwyczaj po kilku latach same rezygnowały z pracy w służbie zagranicznej.

Mimo wszystko, to właśnie te prekursorki w rezultacie doprowadziły do przełamania swego rodzaju psychologicznej bariery i powołania przez prezydenta Franklina D. Roosevelta w 1933 roku Ruth Bryan Owen, pierwszej kobiety kierującej amerykańskim poselstwem. Jej kilkuletnia praca w Kopenhadze (do lata 1936 roku) była oceniana pozytywnie przez rodaków, jak również przez Duńczyków, ale małżeństwo z kapitanem Gwardii Królewskiej Danii przerwało jej karierę dyplomatyczną.

Drugą Amerykanką samodzielnie kierującą placówką zagraniczną USA była Florence „Daisy” Jaffray Harriman, wysłana przez Roosevelta do Norwegii w 1937 roku, gdzie znakomicie sprawdziła się w misji dyplomatycznej, pozostając w Oslo do ataku Niemiec na państwa skandynawskie wiosną 1940 roku. Fakt, że były to pierwsze Amerykanki w randze posłów, postrzegano wówczas jako *novelty*, ale też jako gest wobec kobiet oraz wyraz uznania nie tylko dla konkretnych osób, co w ogóle aktywistek w Partii Demokratycznej, konsekwentnie zabiegających o wprowadzenie kobiet na ważne stanowiska w administracji Roosevelta.

Słowa kluczowe: dyplomacja USA, Amerykanki, Ruth Bryan Owen, Franklin D. Roosevelt, Florence “Daisy” Jaffray Harriman.

HALINA PARAFIANOWICZ – prof. dr hab., polska historyk specjalizująca się w dziejach powszechnych, zwłaszcza w społecznej i politycznej historii Stanów Zjednoczonych i Europy Środkowo-Wschodniej w XIX–XX wieku. Ważnym obszarem jej zainteresowań badawczych są stosunki międzynarodowe, jak również biografistyka (zwłaszcza amerykańscy prezydenci i First Ladies) oraz szeroko rozumiana problematyka kobieca, a w szczególności aktywność publiczna i polityczna kobiet. Kierownik Katedry Historii Najnowszej Powszechnej na Wydziale Historii i Stosunków Międzynarodowych UwB. Z jej inicjatywy od kilku lat w Białymstoku odbywa się „Forum zaawansowanych studiów nad Stanami Zjednoczonymi im. Profesora Andrzeja Bartnickiego”. Autorka monografii: *Polska w europejskiej polityce Stanów Zjednoczonych w okresie prezydentury Herberta C. Hoovera (1919–1933)* (1991), *Zapomniany prezydent: biografia polityczna Herberta Clarka Hoovera* (1993), *Czechosłowacja w polityce Stanów Zjednoczonych w latach 1918–1933* (1996), *Eleanor Anna Roosevelt (1884–1962): w cieniu wielkiego męża* (2000), *Great War, Good War. Historia i pamięć Amerykanów* (2020).