Scientific article

УДК 930.2:001.891:548 (092)(234.851)+94(47)+930.25

doi 10.28995/2073-0101-2022-4-1056-1066

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Study of the Northern Urals in the Documentary Heritage of Academician E. S. Fedorov

Abstract

The article focuses on studying the role of scientific community in study of the development of the northern territories of Russia at the turn of the 20th century. Expanding the source base of this area of research is one of the key tasks of the author. An integral part of the history of

scientific knowledge is documentary heritage of scientists who conducted field research in the northern territories of the country. The turn of the 20th century was a defining period in understanding the North of Russia, when scientific and government circles heightened their interest in the resource potential of these territories. The article is based on thematic and chronological analysis of archival sources and published works of the famous scientist, crystallographer, mineralogist E. S. Fedorov (1853–1919); it reviews his expeditions involving geological examination of the Northern Urals. From 1884 to 1889, following the instructions of the Mining Department, the scientist conducted detailed study of this little-studied territory in search for mineral deposits and mapped the area. It has been established that informative sources on scientific activities of E. S. Fedorov in the Northern Urals are documents from his personal provenance fond stored at the St. Petersburg Branch of the Archive of the Russian Academy of Sciences. The most informative is his correspondence with his wife L.V. Fedorova over the years of expeditions. E. S. Fedorov in detail described to his wife the course of expeditions and the living conditions in his trips. Memoirs of L.V. Fedorova "Our days, joys, and sorrows," preserved in the fond and later published, deserve special attention: they detail E.S. Fedorov's scientific work throughout his life. The author has analyzed publications of E. S. Fedorov presenting results of his northern expeditions. They include detailed diary entries made at the time, which are very useful, as they contain not only geological information, but also facts of the expedition's activities, living conditions, E. S. Fedorov's impressions of the trips. The analysis of sources permits to assess main tasks and results of E. S. Fedorov's scientific research in the Northern Urals, to study the conditions of field work. It has been established that E. S. Fedorov's research laid the foundations for further scientific development of the Northern Urals territory. The documentary heritage of the scientist is an important component in the history of scientific knowledge of the North of Russia.

Keywords

Historical source, epistolary heritage, scientist, expedition, documentary heritage, geology, 19th century, North of Russia.

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Submitted 19.01.2022, published (for citation):

FILIPPOVA, T. P. Izuchenie Severnogo Urala v dokumental'nom nasledii akademika E. S. Fedorova [Study of the Northern Urals in the Documentary Heritage of Academician E. S. Fedorov. In Russ.]. IN: Vestnik arhivista / Herald of an Archivist, 2022, no. 4, pp. 1056-1066. doi 10.28995/2073-0101-2022-4-1056-1066

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Полностью материал публикуется в российском историко-архивоведческом журнале ВЕСТНИК АРХИВИСТА. Ознакомьтесь с условиями подписки <u>здесь</u>.