



A word of welcome from the Library

Dear Development Staff,

A very warm welcome to our current Friends and to those who might be new to receiving this newsletter! Though we call ourselves the 'Friends of the Old Library', we extend our news and events to all who take an active interest in the Old Library and its collections, and we wholeheartedly encourage you to get in touch or join us at a future event, should you wish.

We have certainly had a lot of exciting recent developments and are delighted to share updates on the Library team, the Old Library building project, as well as conservation work undertaken on our more vulnerable Special Collections.

Catherine Ascough, College Librarian



Save the date: Treasures of the Old Library!

We are thrilled to announce that we will be hosting a special event on **Thursday 20th March 2025 at 5.30pm!** The event will showcase two of our Coptic Arabic manuscripts that have recently been restored and will feature talks from renowned Egyptologist, Dr Alexandre Loktionov and Flavio Marzo, Head of Conservation at Cambridge Colleges' Conservation Consortium. There'll also be time for a Q&A and networking at the end. Alumni are encouraged to attend the Evensong service after the event and book a place in formal hall if they want to make a real evening out of it!

[Sign up here!](#)

Old Library Renovation

The initial phase of the Old Library Renovation has been successfully completed! However, additional internal works may still be undertaken whilst the Library is empty, so we anticipate that the books will be returned and the Library re-opened towards the end of 2025, though this may be subject to change. We endeavour to keep you updated and look forward to having our books returned to their rightful home.

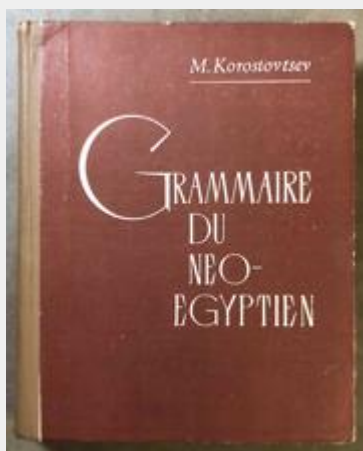


Recent staff changes

In September 2023 we were pleased to welcome our new Senior Library Assistant, Ashley, who joined us from the University of Plymouth, and in March, we welcomed Holly as our new Assistant Librarian, from the University of Oxford. We also welcome Jessie who joins us this year from Bristol as our new Graduate Trainee Librarian. We are thrilled to have a full library team and we hope the opportunity arises to meet you all soon!



Highlights from the Collection



Grammaire du néo-égyptien

The College is delighted to have recently acquired a rare copy of Mikhail Korostovtsev's *Grammaire du néo-égyptien*, signed by the author himself. Korostovtsev was one of the most consequential Egyptologists of the twentieth century, best known today for his pioneering edition of the *Voyage of Wenamun*, now widely considered the standout composition of the Late Egyptian literary tradition. The story provides a remarkable insight into political and logistical challenges faced by traders in the eastern

Mediterranean in the late second millennium BCE, as told by an accident-prone cedar merchant.

[Read more here!](#)

Coptic Arabic Manuscript conservation

The generous contributions of alumni have helped to support the conservation of our collection to enable its preservation for the generations ahead.

Amongst these contributions is the sponsorship of two Coptic Arabic manuscripts by Mr Andrew Loader, (m. 1983) a medieval historian who studied the transmission of lost knowledge back into the western world from the twelfth century onwards.



[Read more here!](#)



John Milton's 'Doctrine and Discipline of Divorce' conservation

Another item recently returned to us from conservation was written by one of Christ's most notable alumni, John Milton. Whilst most commonly known for writing the epic poem 'Paradise Lost', 1667, Milton also actively wrote many essays and tracts regarding his views on politics and society.

[Read more here!](#)



We would love to hear from you!

If you would like to send us comments about this Newsletter, make a donation to support our conservation work, or simply find out more about the Old Library, please contact us at alumni@christs.cam.ac.uk.

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