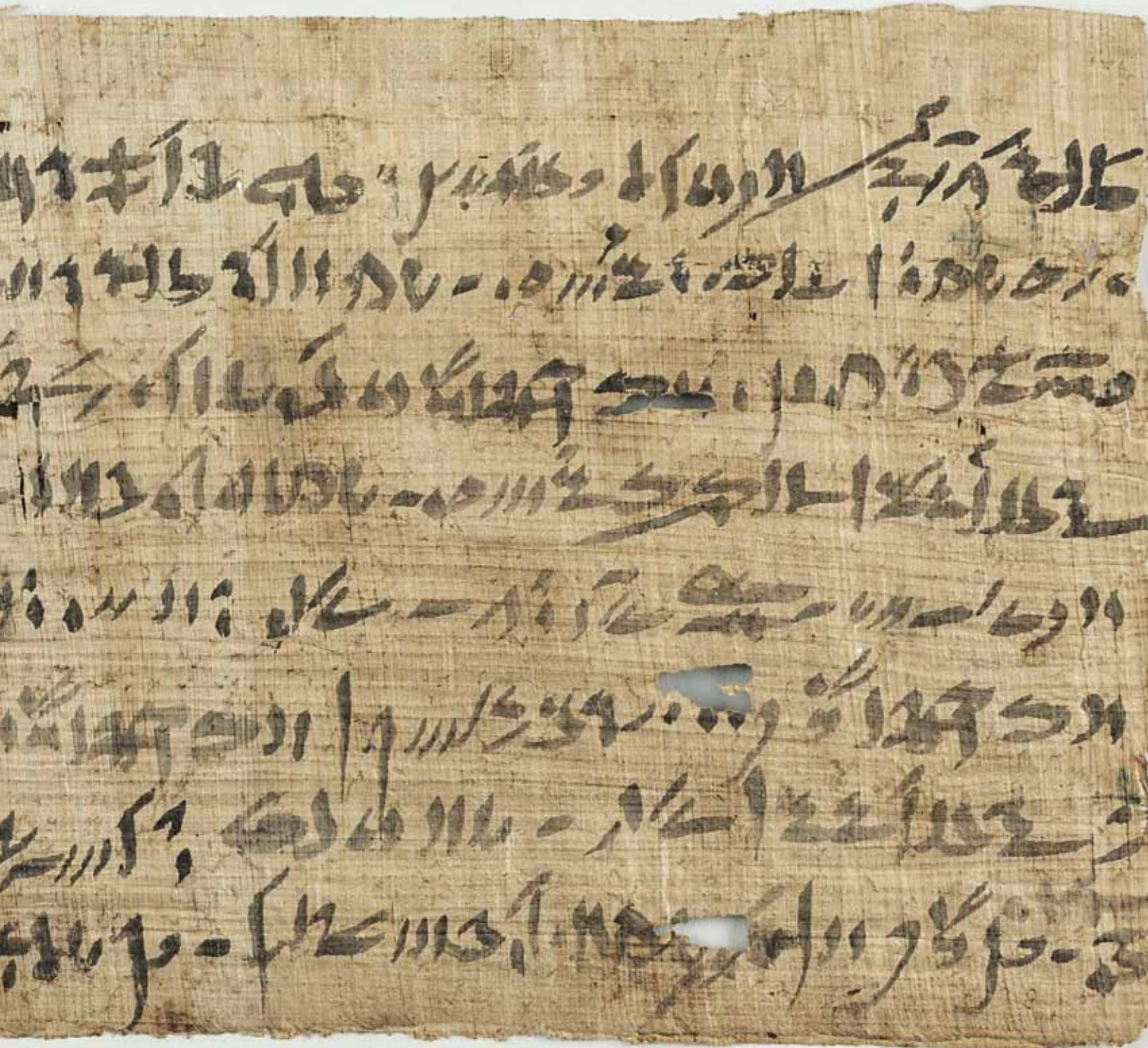




## CHICAGO DEMOTIC DICTIONARY



### ALSO INSIDE:

★ Statue of Liberty & Egypt ★ Marj Rabba ★ Hammurabi Stele



## IN THIS ISSUE

From the Director's Study	2
Chicago Demotic Dictionary	3
Members' Lectures	9
Archives Storage	10
Statue of Liberty	13
Marj Rabba	14
Calendar of Events	16
Sunday Films	17
Oriental Institute in the News	21
Conservation	22
Adult Education	24
Suq Corner	Back Cover

## NEWS & NOTES

A Quarterly Publication of  
The Oriental Institute,  
printed exclusively as one of  
the privileges of membership

Amy Weber, Editor  
Megan Anderluh, Contributing Editor

### THE ORIENTAL INSTITUTE

1155 East 58th Street  
Chicago, IL 60637

Telephone: (773) 834-9777  
Facsimile: (773) 702-9853  
E-mail: oi-membership@uchicago.edu

All inquiries, comments, and  
suggestions are welcome

World-Wide Web site:  
<http://oi.uchicago.edu>

Cover illustration: Demotic Letter to "the Ibis, Thoth"; papyrus, ink  
Late Period, Dynasty 27, reign of Darius I,  
between 25 June 502 BC and 24 July 502 BC  
Hermopolis, Tuna el-Gebel  
Purchased in Cairo, 1950; donated by Alan H.  
Gardiner to the Oriental Institute via George  
R. Hughes, 1956  
L: 27.0; H: 11.5 cm; OIM E19422

## FROM THE DIRECTOR'S STUDY

The most visible aspect of the Oriental Institute's work is what we could call our "direct explorations" of ancient sites and the translations of texts; this is the process in which our archaeologists and textual scholars make the actual discoveries that enhance our understanding of ancient civilizations. However, from the time of the Institute's founding in 1919, one of the most important aspects of our mission of discovery has been our commitment to developing new research tools that we make available to researchers across the world so that all of us can do better work and gain deeper insights into the early cultures of the Near East. For example, the researchers in our CAMEL (Center for Ancient Middle Eastern Landscapes) Lab have developed procedures to use declassified intelligence satellite images as a way to enhance archaeological surveys so powerfully that we can actually locate 95% of the sites in a region before even setting foot in the field. We share these protocols and procedures widely, and they have now become the new standard for how to study ancient landscapes and settlement systems.

Of all the research tools developed by the Oriental Institute, none have had greater or more widespread impact than our dictionary projects. The main article this issue of *News & Notes* by Professor Janet Johnson (editor in chief of the Demotic Dictionary) celebrates the completion this year of the Chicago Demotic Dictionary as perhaps the single most important research tool for the worldwide community of scholars devoted to understanding the Egyptian component of Egyptian civilization in its final millennium before the Islamic conquest. Demotic is the late stage of Egyptian best known from its use on the Rosetta stone and during the rule of the Ptolemaic dynasty, including Cleopatra, that controlled Egypt in the Hellenistic period until the Roman conquest in the time of Octavian/Augustus Caesar. During the Hellenistic period, Egypt was a richly textured multicultural society in which a small ruling class of Greek-speaking Macedonians in their newly founded capital of Alexandria controlled a vast population of Greek and Egyptian speakers, the latter continuing to speak and write in their native language. These two parallel systems of writing and administration — Greek and Demotic — together provide a vast and rich body of written information about Egyptian society in the Hellenistic and Roman eras.

However, traditionally, scholars had focused on the Greek texts, rather than the Demotic papyri. As a result, we had a skewed view, in which we were only seeing Egyptian society through the eyes of its conquerors and immigrants. The Chicago Demotic Dictionary is revolutionary in that it encourages study of the full range of Demotic texts available to scholars worldwide. This extraordinary research tool now allows hundreds of scholars and their students to each make major discoveries about the vast expanse of Egyptian society that flourished alongside the Macedonian ruling class. The Egyptians can now speak to us in their own voice. The completion of the Demotic Dictionary and its "multiplier effect" on research are virtually certain to facilitate an explosion in Demotic studies. The work of Janet Johnson and her team will have a transformative effect on our understanding of ancient Egypt. It is hard to imagine any place other than the Oriental Institute that could have undertaken and supported this thirty-five-year effort and seen it to completion. This is an accomplishment in which the entire Oriental Institute community of scholars, members, and supporters can take great pride.



*Mill J. Johnson*

# PROVISIONING THE TEMPLE OF THE MUSES

## *EXPANDING CAPACITY IN THE RESEARCH ARCHIVES THROUGH COMPACT STORAGE INSTALLATION*

*By Foy Scalf, Head of Research Archives*

Academic librarians have faced and will always face seemingly insurmountable problems of adequate acquisition along with commensurate facilities for storage and access. The explosion of publishing and increased access to academia over the last century have increased the size of our fields several fold. At times, one feels like Demetrius of Phaleron, who, according to the Letter of Aristaeas, responded to King Ptolemy by telling him that the library of Alexandria had 200,000 manuscripts on hand, but that Demetrius would do his best to quickly increase the number to 500,000.<sup>1</sup> How such manuscripts would have been stored, we do not really know, although we do have ancient descriptions of shelving systems for papyri, and actual cuneiform libraries have been discovered in situ (fig. 1).<sup>2</sup>

Although the revolution in digital publishing is changing the landscape, we have not moved very far from the ancients in terms of our printed media;<sup>3</sup> physical books continue to be stored and organized through shelving systems, even if those systems are entirely automated like the robotic cranes in the underground retrieval system of the University of Chicago Mansueto Library. Over the past forty years, the Research Archives has faced a problem well known to Demetrius of Phaleron: an exponential growth in the number of books published and a consequent growth of acquisitions. In 1969 our library collection reached nearly 50,000 volumes. With the consolidation of all university libraries into the Joseph Regenstein Library in 1970, the Oriental Institute was left bereft of a single tome. Faculty and staff resolved to rectify the situation by establishing the Research Archives in 1972, and funds



Figure 1 (above). Library niches used to organize cuneiform tablets at Khorsabad  
Figure 2 (below). The full shelves of the monograph stacks in 2006



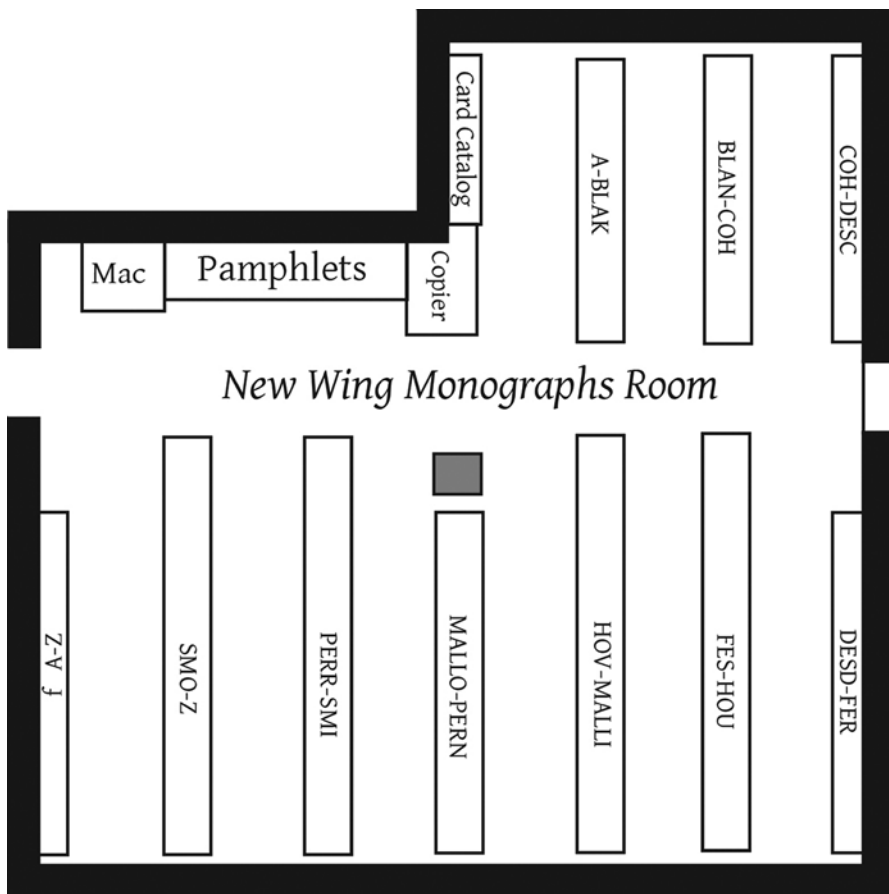
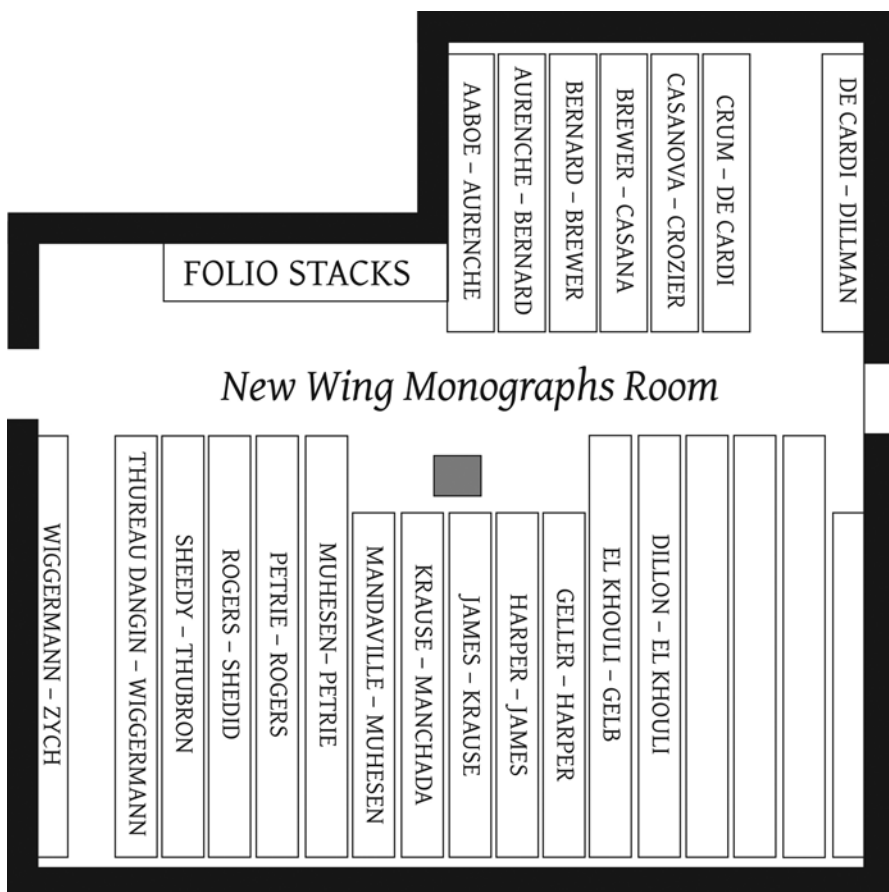


Figure 3. Plans of the monograph stacks: above: Before compact storage installation; below: After compact storage installation



were immediately granted to collect anew the necessary research volumes, with the donated personal collections of several prominent Institute scholars serving as a foundation. From these impressive but humble beginnings, the Research Archives has continued to build its collections through both donations and purchases. In the forty years since, the library has expanded to nearly 60,000 volumes, and it became increasingly clear over the last five years that our room for growth had disappeared.

The idea for compact storage had been raised already in the late 1990s during the renovations of the Oriental Institute resulting in the construction of a new wing that provided the space for Research Archives growth as well as a lab for the Department of Conservation. At the time, budgetary restraints did not allow for compact storage installation, and by 2010 the space provided by the new wing had been filled to capacity. With the help of Oriental Institute Director Gil Stein and Executive Director Steve Camp, the Research Archives was granted a budget request to install compact storage at the end of academic year 2011–2012. University of Chicago Project Manager Denise Davis coordinated the entire project, and MDC Architects advised on consulting and design issues. Following the compact storage project’s completion in the Museum Archives in 2010–2011, all shelving components would be designed, installed, and serviced by Bradford Systems Corporation.

The organization of the monograph stacks prior to this project consisted of eighty-eight separate bookcases consisting of 2,000 linear feet of shelving. With the installation of compact storage, we have more than doubled the linear shelf space in this area to 246 bookcases consisting of 4,275 linear feet of shelving. At the end of the academic year in June 2012, the roughly 20,000 volumes from our monograph stacks were moved by Hogan & Son Moving and Storage Ltd and temporarily stored in the LaSalle Banks Room while Bradford Systems Corporation began work on removing the old shelving units and





Figure 4. Moving the books: (left) The empty monograph stacks with new floor and rails for shelving; (right) LaSalle Banks Room filled to the brim with books from the Research Archives

installing the new Eclipse powered compact storage system.

The project was completed after five weeks, and the books were returned to the shelves in early July 2012. We have more than doubled the space in our monograph stacks and can accommodate current acquisition rates for the next twenty years. These developments will ensure that the Research Archives maintains its status as one of the premiere research centers for ancient Near Eastern studies in the Western Hemisphere. Like the library of Alexandria, the Research Archives is part of a museum: a temple dedicated to the muses, “Greek deities of artistic and intellectual pursuits.”<sup>4</sup> While our modest efforts to collect the comprehensive reference works for the study of the ancient Near East is dwarfed by Demetrius’s goal of obtaining a copy of every written work in existence, our ever-expanding collection of research materials will continue to allow for scholars to be inspired by the muses within the ideal setting for such intellectual pursuits: the Research Archives of the Oriental Institute.



## NOTES

<sup>1</sup> Robert Barnes. “Cloistered Bookworms in the Chicken-Coop of the Muses: The Ancient Library of Alexandria,” in *The Library of Alexandria: Centre of Learning in the Ancient World*, edited by Ray MacLeod, pp. 61–77. London: I. B. Tauris, 2000. Roger S. Bagnall. “Alexandria: Library of Dreams,” *Proceedings of the American Philosophical Society* 146/4 (2002): 348–62.

<sup>2</sup> Gordon Loud and Charles B. Altman. *Khorsabad, Part 2: The Citadel and the Town*. Oriental

Institute Publications 40 (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1938), pl. 19c.

<sup>3</sup> Recent news providing behind-the-scenes views of Google’s enormous warehouse, with racks of processors and hard drives, suggests that even the most sophisticated digital media are ultimately organized and stored very much like the clay tablets of yore.

<sup>4</sup> Andrew Erskine. “Culture and Power in Ptolemaic Egypt: The Museum and Library of Alexandria.” *Greece and Rome* 42/1 (1995): 38.



Figure 5. The monograph stacks, 2012