

The Archives of the Department of Ancient Egypt and Sudan The British Museum

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Gli archivi del Department of Ancient Egypt and Sudan del British Museum sono attualmente in corso di catalogazione sul database Merlin del Museo. I materiali si riferiscono alla storia delle collezioni egizie e costituiscono una risorsa importante per i curatori. Si ricevono anche molte domande da parte degli studiosi e del grande pubblico. Le priorità sono la conservazione, l'archiviazione e l'accessibilità di tali documenti.

The outstanding collection of Egyptian antiquities held by the Department of Ancient Egypt and Sudan (AES) is well-known to the general public. Less well-known is the amount and variety of archive material within the department relating to its collections.

When the British Library moved out of the British Museum building to new premises, the subsequent relocation of the AES department provided the space and opportunity, in 2002, to create a dedicated archive room from part of the old departmental library. Although there had always been a secure store for the most valuable of the archives, the rest had been stored in different areas of the department's offices and library and most of them had never been catalogued. Over seventy crates of miscellaneous items were collected during the move. These were then unpacked and arranged in the purpose-built storage space of the new archive room, comprising open metal shelving with a secure cupboard and three Polstore units of ten drawers. The top of the latter forms a large flat work surface on which material can be examined, adjacent to the archivist's desk. A vertical rack unit provides additional storage for framed items.

The British Museum was founded in 1753, and its Central Archive holds records created through the Trustees and Director's Office. These cover every aspect of the Museum's activities including the meetings of its Trustees, its acquisitions and administration. Copies of Departmental Reports and sections of the Trustees' Minutes relevant to individual departments were, however, issued to the individual departments, who increasingly accumulated their own correspondence and administrative records. The Museum addressed the problems of retention criteria for departmental archives in 2000, based on National Archive guidelines, by creating an Archive Working Group of representatives from all departments. The Freedom of Information Act (2000) has also informed our policies as our records are now open to public view. The British Museum