

# The COBBOLD Family History Trust

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## TWO GREAT RECIPROCAL DUTIES.

In one of her letters leading up to the University's 800<sup>th</sup> anniversary, Professor Alison Richard, Vice-Chancellor of Cambridge University wrote 'we live in the present and have our eyes on the future'.

More than a hundred years earlier John Ruskin (1819-1900), the first Slade Professor of Art at Oxford; a writer and thinker who changed our world said rather the same thing;



*'Observe, there are two great reciprocal duties concerning industry, constantly to be exchanged between the living and the dead. We, as we live and work, are to be always thinking of those who come after us; that what we do may be serviceable, as far as we can make it so, to them, as well as to us. Then, when we die, it is the duty of those who come after us to accept this work of ours with thanks and remembrance, not thrusting it aside or tearing it down the moment they think they have no use for it. And each generation will only be happy or powerful to the pitch that it ought to be, in fulfilling these two duties to the Past and the Future. Its own work will never be rightly done, even for itself – never good, or noble, or pleasureable to its own eyes – if it does not prepare it also for the eyes of generations yet to come, And its own possessions will never be enough for it, and its own wisdom never enough for it, unless it avails itself gratefully and tenderly of the treasures and the wisdom bequeathed to it by its ancestors'.*

In preserving what we can of the past in preparation for its enjoyment in the future the Cobbold Family History Trust seeks to acquit itself of its two great reciprocal duties.