IALS@70: the Growth of the IALS Library and its Development of Digital Initiatives for the UK Legal Community

Abstract: In this article, David Gee, Deputy Librarian & Academic Services Manager at the Institute of Advanced Legal Studies (IALS) in the University of London, writes about the launch of IALS Digital. As a way of placing the launch into context, he outlines the growth of the IALS Library over the past 70 years and describes the development of a wide range of digital initiatives over the past 30 years.

Keywords: academic law libraries; digital resources; Institute of Advanced Legal Studies

HISTORY

After many years of discussion and encouragement by senior legal figures in government, academia and the profession, the Institute of Advanced Legal Studies (IALS) opened its doors at 25 Russell Square in 1947 as a national and international centre for the advanced study of law. From the start IALS was based within the University of London, but it was always nationally-funded to provide a free national legal research collection for all postgraduates,

researchers and academics based at the law faculties across the UK and overseas. On opening, IALS Library started with 11,000 volumes and a focus on collecting foreign, international and comparative legal research materials. By the end of 1947 it had attracted 112 library members.

On closer inspection of the photograph of the interior of 25 Russell Square (figure 1, below) you might just notice the square ashtrays sitting on the library desks. This was no accident as it is interesting to note that

Figure 1. Exterior and interior of 25 Russell Square.

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smoking was perfectly acceptable in research libraries in the 1950s and early 1960s. Indeed a few of our older bound journal volumes still have slight nicotine tanning on the edge of the paper to add further proof of this point.

The IALS Library collections and membership grew rapidly and IALS expanded into 26 Russell Square in 1954. By the early 1960s it was clear that a larger, more modern space was needed to house our growing collections and to meet the research and seating needs of our expanding readership. Land was subsequently acquired by the University of London along Bedford Way and the north side of Russell Square in the late 1960s and IALS moved into Charles Clore House, 17 Russell Square on 1st April 1976. Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth the Queen Mother officially opened the new modern building which was designed by Sir Denys Lasdun in the favoured 'brutalist' style of the time. The IALS Library was allocated five purposely-designed floors in the new building.

Even in the last few years additional space was required, and extra space on floor L2 was re-purposed and allocated to the Library to accommodate our growing archive collections and rare book collections.

ACHIEVEMENTS

During the period 1976 to 2016, the IALS Library delivered a number of significant achievements. It continued to receive national funding and to act as the *de facto* national legal research library. Many of its library staff were awarded national and international awards for their work and projects. For example in 2003 Steven Whittle was awarded the Website Award by the International Association of Law Libraries (IALL) for his excellent and innovative website work and later in 2010 he was awarded the Wallace Breem Memorial Award by the British and Irish Association of Law Libraries (BIALL) and the Inner Temple for his considerable contribution to projects such as the FLAG (Foreign Law Guide) database, the CALIM (Current Awareness for Legal Information Managers) database and the FLARE Index to Treaties. In 2010 Jules Winterton was awarded the Wildy-BIALL Librarian of the Year Award, and in 2016 David Gee, Laura Griffiths and Katherine Read were jointly awarded the Wallace Breem Memorial Award in recognition of their innovative contributions in developing law librarianship. Furthermore, the IALS Library services were more generally recognised when they received the BIALL Customer Relations Initiative Award in 2008 and the Halsbury's Award for Best Legal Information Service in 2009.

By 2016 the IALS Library was registering over 5,200 members a year. PhD students, researchers and academics were still in the majority, but other key user groups had become important such as the 2,000 LLM

HER MAJESTY QUEEN ELIZABETH THE QUEEN MOTHER
with (*left to right*) Lord Denning, Lord Diplock, Sir Martin Gilliat (Private Secretary)
Professor Sir Norman Anderson and Professor K. R. Simmonds
on the occasion of the Opening Ceremony of Charles Clore House
1 April 1976

Figure 2. The official opening of the new building in 1976.

Figure 3. The exterior of 17 Russell Square.

students registered at the major University of London colleges. These were Birkbeck, King's College London (KCL), the London School of Economics (LSE), Queen Mary (QM), the School of Oriental and African Studies (SOAS) and University College London (UCL), as well as the 100 LLM and PhD students registered at IALS itself. By this time the Library's foreign, international and comparative research collections had grown to over 312,000 volumes and included a unique specialist legal education archive. Like many other research libraries, IALS Library was also subscribing to increasing numbers of commercial legal research databases, ejournals and eBooks which it made available to users via its online catalogue. This growth in admissions and specialist collections was ultimately recognised in a concordant between the British Library and IALS Library whereby the British Library explicitly acknowledged that our extensive legal research collections "are a major national resource in support of academic research in their field".

In the early 2000's the Library had the foresight to recognise the importance of research training for the future of libraries and invested in creating a new group training room with an overhead projector and 20 desks with PCs on our 4th floor. Library staff now regularly train over 2,100 researchers a year in legal information research covering such subjects as literature reviews, an introduction to Lexis-Nexis and Westlaw legal databases, understanding the OSCOLA legal citation system, advanced legal database searching techniques, and creating bibliographies. Staff employ a variety of methods such as 'hands-on' group training in the training room, one-to-one reference advice sessions, online 'Skype for Business' reference advice sessions and self-paced online legal research training tutorials over the web.

DIGITAL INITIATIVES

In its role as the *de facto* national law library, the Library has also been keen and successful in creating a number of free digital initiatives for the UK legal research community over the past 30 years.

1. Open Access law initiatives:

It has developed Open Access law initiatives such as projects to digitise some of the rare legal materials in our collections and make them freely accessible to researchers worldwide via our library catalogue. For example, we completed a project to catalogue and digitise a collection of rare and historical maritime and shipping law treatises entrusted to the Institute by the Association of Average Adjusters through the London Shipping Law Centre: http://ials.sas.ac.uk/digital/digitisation-projects/association-average-adjusters-collection.

We are continuing to digitise selected early and 'at risk' items from:
- the Commonwealth Law Library: http://ials.sas.ac.uk/digital/digitisation-projects/selected-digitised-items-commonwealth-law-collection

- the Roman Law and Roman-Dutch Law Collections: http://ials.sas.ac.uk/digital/digitisation-projects/selected-digitised-items-roman-law-and-roman-dutch-law-collections

- the European Law Collections http://ials.sas.ac.uk/digital/digitisation-projects/selected-digitised-items-european-law-collections

- the early English law Collections: http://ials.sas.ac.uk/digital/digitisation-projects/selected-digitised-items-english-law-collections
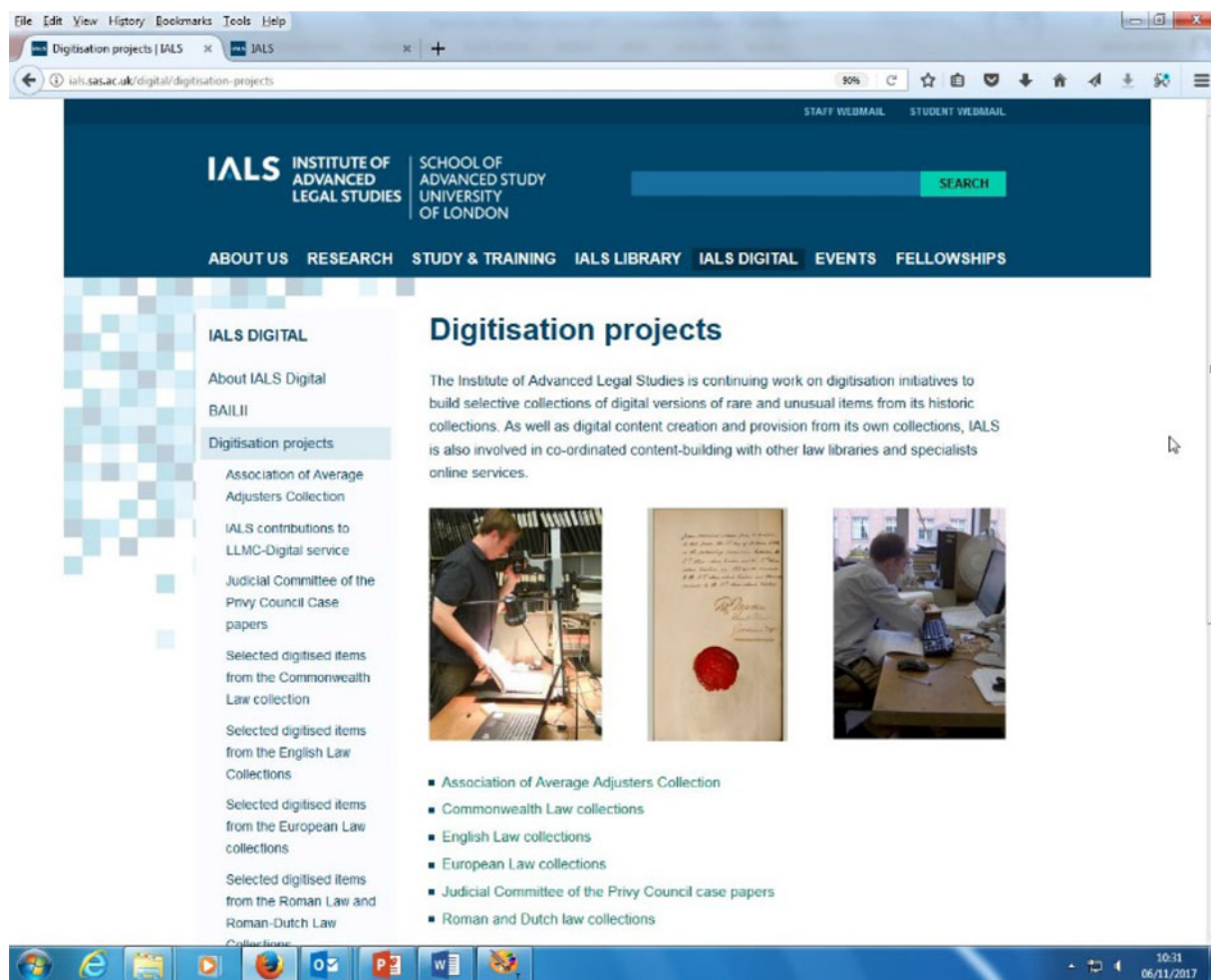
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Figure 4. The digitisation projects webpages on the IALS website.

- IALS contributions to the LLMC-Digital service: http://ials.sas.ac.uk/digital/digitisation-projects/ials-contributions-llmc-digital-service

- the Judicial Committee of the Privy Council Case papers: http://ials.sas.ac.uk/digital/digitisation-projects/judicial-committee-privy-council-case-papers

IALS Library has also been keen to take part in collaborative Open Access ventures. A good example of this was our role as a founding initiator of the *BAILII* legal gateway, which continues to be hosted here at IALS. *BAILII* provides free online Open Access to full-text versions of UK legislation and law reports and many more legal materials. It provides a sophisticated and powerful searchable database to access its rich online primary legal resources, and importantly for its many regular users, the resources are updated daily. So far it has made a huge contribution to freeing the law for students, educators and the general public, and is increasingly important in difficult financial climates as an alternative to expensive commercial databases. It was recently included among *The Guardian's* top 100 UK websites and in 2016/17 it had over 58 million page views.

2. Award-winning legal research tools:

IALS Library staff have used their expertise to develop a number of award-winning legal research tools which are freely available over the web, and I have listed the four most popular examples below:

- The **Current Legal Research Topics database** contains the details of PhD in law theses which are currently underway in universities across the UK. Its purpose is to provide postgraduate students, their supervisors and law schools with a comprehensive, searchable listing of legal research currently being undertaken at doctoral level. It is updated annually. http://ials.sas.ac.uk/clrt-current-legal-research-topics-database

- The **Eagle-i Internet Portal for Law** is the successor to the award-winning national Intute law gateway and SOSIG law gateway. It provides a description and evaluation of selected high quality legal information sources on the web. Eagle-i now freely lists thousands of high quality law websites from all over the world. The portal can be easily searched by subject, keyword, jurisdiction, or type of legal

Figure 5. LawPORT

material. By agreement IALS has harvested and enhanced law records rescued from the Intute law gateway - helping to ensure the continued free availability of quality-driven facilities for the national legal research communities and to encourage inclusion in skills training. http://ials.sas.ac.uk/digital/ials-digital-resources/eagle-i-internet-portal-law

- The **FLAG Foreign Law Guide database** is an award-winning database forming a collaborative web gateway to paper and microform holdings of foreign, international and comparative law in UK national and university libraries. FLAG identifies the locations and provides detailed descriptions of the collections in libraries throughout the UK. Increasingly FLAG proves to be a foundation upon which a national strategy for the acquisition and retention of foreign, international and comparative primary law materials can be built. In a time of reduced budgets it provides an important tool to identify gaps and overlaps in coverage aiding informed decisions on cancellation or rationalisation of resource provision. http://ials.sas.ac.uk/flag-foreign-law-guide

- The **FLARE Index to Treaties database** provides details of over 2,000 of the most significant

multilateral international treaties concluded from 1353 onwards and a number of significant bilateral treaties signed between 1353 and 1815, with web links to the full-text versions where available. It therefore provides a useful research tool aiding scholars, students, lawyers and librarians in researching the international law of treaties - whether they are new or experienced in the field. http://ials.sas.ac.uk/digital/ials-digital-resources/flare-index-treaties

3. Online legal research training tutorials:

And finally, IALS Library staff have recently created and published free online legal research training tutorials under the collective banner of 'Law PORT' on the School of Advanced Study's PORT (or Postgraduate Online Research Training) website.

Researchers can also access the Law PORT tutorials via the IALS website: http://ials.sas.ac.uk/digital/ials-digital-resources/law-port

The tutorials were created to support researchers with public international law research and the use of OSCOLA (the Oxford University Standard for the Citation of Legal Authorities). They are self-paced and contain interactive elements such as video demonstrations

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of online databases and quizzes to test and consolidate learning. Library staff used the sophisticated *Articulate Storyline* software that allows users to create professional-looking, interactive training resources. Though the basic functions of *Articulate Storyline* are easy to learn, the team relied partly on an assigned project learning technologist and an IT systems colleague who had the required technical skills to help make our resources engaging, interactive and visually appealing. Library staff also drew on their in-depth knowledge of foreign and international legal information and materials and their experience of creating and providing training for researchers.

In May 2017, after a thorough testing process, the first three tutorials were published on Law PORT:

Treaties and international conventions

This tutorial covers the fundamentals of treaty research such as understanding treaty citations, how to find treaties, checking the status and party information, and tracing *travaux préparatoires*. It focuses on searching and identifying authoritative sources of treaties in both print and online. The learning outcomes are based on the International Association of Law Libraries' Guidelines for Public International Law Research Instruction. This tutorial was created by Lisa Davies, Access Librarian at IALS.

Researching customary international law

This tutorial gives an overview of the key print and online resources for researching customary international law. It covers finding evidence of state practice in individual state's legislation concerning international obligations, and in their records of diplomatic practice and foreign relations activity. The tutorial also shows how to research the practice of the UN General Assembly, UN Security Council and the various UN human rights committees. The learning outcomes are based on the International Association of Law Libraries' Guidelines for Public International Law Research Instruction. This tutorial was created by Hester Swift, Foreign and International Law Librarian at IALS.

An introduction to citing references using OSCOLA

This tutorial offers an introduction to the guidelines and rules for the citation of legal and other authorities according to the OSCOLA standards (Oxford University Standard for the Citation of Legal Authorities). It covers primary sources of law such as legislation and law reports for the UK and EU, as well as secondary sources including websites, journals and books. The general principles are also covered, allowing students to apply these with confidence to sources not explicitly covered in the OSCOLA guidelines, along with information about various other sources of help and information. This tutorial was created by Laura Griffiths, Academic Services Librarian at IALS.

These Law PORT tutorials are primarily designed for postgraduates and researchers and have received excellent feedback so far. We plan to publish a fourth tutorial on judicial decisions in public international law soon.

CONCLUSION

To conclude, the many digital legal information initiatives developed by IALS Library over the past 30 years have in fact grown out of the expertise of library staff, their in-depth knowledge of the Library's national collection of paper and digital legal materials, and their long experience of creating and providing training for postgraduates and researchers using a variety of methods. These three key elements will, I am sure, continue to be contributed by library staff to the newly-formed IALS Digital in the years ahead.

Biography

David Gee has more than twenty-five years' experience working in academic libraries and legal information management and is currently Deputy Librarian & Academic Services Manager at the Institute of Advanced Legal Studies in the University of London. He was a member of the BIALL Council and a senior member of the Editorial Board of Legal Information Management for many years and has written a number of articles for UK and international professional journals. For eight years he was a member of the CPD25 Steering Group and Chair of the CPD25 Career Development Group (CPD25 is the training arm of the M25 Consortium of Higher Education Libraries in the London Area: http://www.cpd25.ac.uk). In 2011 he was appointed 'member-at-large' of the Scholarships Committee of the International Association of Law Libraries (IALL) and undertook an extensive survey of major law libraries around the world which was published in the International Journal of Legal Information and is available in pre-print format at: http://ials.sas.ac.uk/library/lawlibs/report.htm. In 2012 he was awarded the Chartered Management Institute (CMI) Level 5 Diploma in Management and Leadership (equivalent to degree-level) and is currently a CMI Chartered Manager. He was a Visiting Fellow at the Max Planck Institute for Comparative and International Private Law in Hamburg in September 2012. In July 2013 he was elected to the Board of the International Association of Law Libraries (IALL) as a member for the 2013–2016 term, and in July 2016 he was elected to the IALL Board as Secretary for the 2016–2019 term.