



LONDON ARCHIVES

LIBRARIES

To gain access to exclusive archives, the British Archive in particular, it is important to steer clear of the word “undergraduate.” Generally, if the letter from your advisor merely states that you are completing “advanced research” you should not have a problem anywhere. It might also be helpful to mention that you will only need access for a few months and, if possible, to have a list of the sources you want to use from the library with call numbers. Make sure you bring your letters from your advisors with you, including the ones from the Dartmouth professor that accompanies you to London, and from Off Campus Programs.

Individual churches and livery companies often have an archive collection which may be helpful. Small libraries, reading rooms and record offices often require that you call in advance to make an appointment since they are not always open. Many large libraries will close one week per year for extensive re-shelving or reorganization. Be sure to call in advance to confirm the hours of operation; an ‘01 learned the hard way after traveling to Scotland only to learn the library he needed was closed for the week. When making appointments be formal so you don’t sound like a clueless foreign undergraduate.

Bank of England, Archive and Research Division

Location: Threadneedle St. (Bank).

Description: Archives for the Central Bank of England.

Access: write ahead to request permission to use certain materials (be as specific as you can be); when you arrive in London bring a letter from a British professor and proof that you are a student at Dartmouth the first time that you go to the Bank to make an appointment.

Resources: official Bank records; letters and diaries of the various Governors of the Bank.

Comments: the staff is very helpful; can only use pencil to take notes; non-circulating; dress nicely.

Barbican Library

Location: Barbican Center (Barbican, St. Paul’s or Moorgate).

Description: Primarily an art library.

Comments: non-circulating, big tables to write papers on.

British Film Institute Library

Location: 21 Stephen St. (Tottenham Court Rd.).

Access: program participants will receive membership cards – this means you do NOT have to pay the full viewing fee.

Resources: cinema and cinematography materials.

British Library of Political and Economic Science

This place looks like a library from a science-fiction movie. Outstanding architecture, but a confusing cataloguing system. It is a pain to get in to, but manageable if you can get a letter from your Dartmouth professor explaining that you need to go there. They are also friendlier if you have a list of specific books you will need and if you only need the archive department. The computers there are useful to do work on for those without a laptop.

Location: 10 Portugal St. (Aldwych).

Description: Library for the London School of Economics.

Resources: social science collection; extensive collections relating to Russia; Eastern Europe and Latin America; British Parliamentary papers; international law collection; local government collection.

Comments: non-circulating.

British Library

This is a fantastic resource, very close to UCL. And it even has a high-quality cafeteria. Strongly recommended, even if you don't need to do much research there specifically.

Location: Euston Rd. (King's Cross).

Description: research library in the British Museum. See also the British Library Newspaper Library.

Access: passes not normally given to those under 21 or to undergraduates for the manuscripts room. For the general teaching room, you shouldn't have a problem.

Resources: most comprehensive copyright library in the United Kingdom—see the *Catalogue of Printed Books*; manuscript collection, map library, official publications. Check out the website (www.bl.uk) before you leave Hanover or the US: it will give you a sense of the scope of this phenomenal library.

British Library Newspaper Library

A long tube ride, but a comprehensive collection. The staff were surprisingly helpful and friendly. Also there is free internet access if you're quiet about it.

Location: Colindale (Colindale).

Access: get a reader's ticket with proof of identity.

Resources: London papers from 1701; English provincial, Scottish and Irish papers from 1700; other Commonwealth and foreign papers. **British Library Department of Oriental Manuscripts and Printed Books**

Location: Store St. (Tottenham Court Rd.).

Access: minimum age is 18; a British Library pass should not be necessary.

Council for the Care of Churches

Location: Liverpool St. tube stop.

Description: council concerned with the preservation and care of churches.

Access: telephone appointment necessary.

Resources: ecclesiastical art and architecture; heraldry, law and music concerning churches, especially Church of England; illustrations, press cuttings, slides, etc. of churches.

Courtauld Institute

Location: 20 Portman Sq. (Marble Arch or Bond St.).

Description: library for the art gallery.

Resources: history of art; photograph library.

Comments: non-circulating

Financial Times Library—Business Information Center

Location: Bracken House, 10 Cannon St. (Aldgate East).

Access: service available by subscription only.

Resources: press releases and financial documents on companies.

Foreign and Commonwealth Office Library

Location: Sanctuary Building, Great Smith St. (Westminster).

Access: by appointment only.

Resources: publications on international relations and diplomacy; diplomatic memoirs; books on early travels; treaty collections; periodicals; map collection.

Comments: reference library only.

Gray's Inn Library

Location: South Sq. (Chancery Lane).

Description: research library at one of the Inns of Court where law is both taught and practiced.

Access: written application to the librarian.

Resources: legal subjects.

Greater London Council Library

Location: County Hall (Waterloo).

Description: library for the local government of London.

Access: written application to the librarian.

Resources: history, topography for Greater London; photographs, prints, maps and drawings.

Guildhall Library

Location: Aldermanbury (Bank, Mansion House, or Moorgate).

Description: library for the Corporation of London.

Access: none of the materials can be checked out; need a form of identification if you want to see some of the rare books.

Resources: probably the best collection of materials on the history of London; publications of national and local historical societies; House of Commons and House of Lords debates and journals; parish registers and other genealogical material; collection of maps, prints and drawings especially relating to London; deposited records concerning the City of London: parishes, wards, livery companies, other organizations.

Comments: very friendly staff—always willing to help. One student said, “It’s open on Saturdays, which is the best day to go because the city is empty, and is really cool and eerie with no one there.”

House of Commons Record Office

Location: Palace of Westminster (Westminster).

Description: library for the House of Commons.

Access: fill out an application on the first visit. Call at least 24 hours in advance to make an appointment and to tell them what records you want to look at.

Resources: Parliamentary Papers; periodicals and newspaper collection.

Comments: non-circulating; dress nicely; staff very helpful.

House of Lords Record Office

Location: Palace of Westminster (Westminster).

Description: library for the House of Lords.

Access: written application to the librarian.

Resources: parliamentary history and law; peerage and heraldry.

Comments: non-circulating; dress nicely.

Imperial War Museum

Location: Lambeth Road (Lambeth North or Elephant and Castle).

Description: library in the museum.

Access: by appointment.

Resources: materials on the First and Second World Wars plus other military operations since 1914 involving British and Commonwealth forces; photograph and film collections; sound recordings department; materials on war poets and artists.

Comments: library closed for two weeks in October for stock taking.

India Office Library

Location: 197 Blackfriars Rd. (Waterloo).

Access: minimum age is 18.

Comments: can only use pencil; closed for a week following the last complete week in October.

Inner Temple Library

Location: Inner Temple (Temple or Blackfriars).

Description: research library for one of the Inns of Court.

Access: written application to the librarian.

Resources: historical and legal materials; topography; genealogical records.

Institute of Advanced Legal Research

Location: 25 Russell Sq. (Russell Sq.).

Access: written application to the librarian.

Resources: legal subjects.

Institute of Bankers

Location: 10 Lombard St. (Bank or Cannon St.)

Access: written application to the librarian.

Resources: banking and finance, economics, law

Institute of Commonwealth Studies

Location: 28 Russell Square (Russell Sq.)

Access: application to be completed upon first visit

Resources: A relatively small collection, with specialized collections on certain aspects of British foreign policy.

King's College Library

Location: 160 Strand (Temple or Aldwych).

Description: college library.

Access: letter of recommendation, preferably from a U.K. professor.

Resources: general reference library; also contains Liddel Hart Centre for Military Archives.

Lambeth Palace Library

Location: Lambeth Palace Rd. (Lambeth North).

Access: written application to the librarian.

Resources: theology, inter-church relations, canon law and church history materials.

London Archives

Location: 40 Northampton Road Clerkenwell, London

Access: Acceptable form of identification

Resources: historical documents from the City of London

Middle Temple Library

Location: Garden Court (Temple).

Description: research library for one of the Inns of Court.

Access: written application to the librarian.

Resources: legal and medical materials, English literature, county histories.

Ministry of Defense (Whitehall) Library

Location: Old War Office, Whitehall (Westminster).

Access: written application to the librarian.

Resources: materials on defense policy, history of regiments, British army campaigns, scientific and technical information.

Museum of London Library

Location: London Wall (St. Paul's or Barbican).

Description: research library for the museum.

Access: by appointment only.

Resources: all London topics, suffragette movement materials, prints collection.

National Maritime Library

Location: Romney Road, Greenwich (Britrail from Charing Cross or London Bridge).

Description: library in the National Maritime Museum.

Access: need ticket for the museum.

Resources: maritime affairs; special collection of atlases; special collection on piracy.

National Monuments Record

Location: Fortress House, 23 Savile Row (Oxford Circus).

Resources: historic buildings archaeology of England; photographs and drawings.

Oxford University Press

Location: Ely House, 37 Dover St. (Green Park or Piccadilly Circus).

Resources: all books published by Oxford University Press; some reference books.

Comments: non-circulating.

Public Records Office (now called The National Archives)

This is the most modern place in Britain, and a cornerstone of the arguments of those who contend that Great Britain is in fact a first-world country. Excellent.

Locations: Ruskin Ave., Richmond (Kew Gardens).

Description: National Archives for Great Britain from 1086.

Access: Get a reader's ticket with proof of identity—a passport is required. It is easy to get a pass. Just go to the appropriate office upon arriving at Kew.

Resources: historical manuscripts, medieval and early-modern, map and large document room; all twentieth-century records.

Comments: see *Guide to the Contents of the PRO* in Baker Reference Room; non-circulating. Very organized and efficient. Individual archivists are available to give you free help in finding things. Closed first week in December for inventory. Be sure you know what you're looking for before you go. Kew Gardens is a 45-minute tube ride and is not very helpful for those looking for earlier records. Also has complete State Papers (domestic & foreign) from the medieval period to the present day. Decent cafeteria and free internet access

Royal on Historical Manuscripts

Location: Quality House Quality Court (Chancery Lane).

Access: written application to the librarian.

Resources: Indexes of manuscripts, including the location of specific manuscripts.

Royal Institute of British Architects

Location: 66 Portland Place (Great Portland St. or Regent's Park).

Resources: architectural materials.

Comments: only for reference.

Royal Commonwealth Society Library

Location: 18 Northumberland Ave. (Charing Cross).

Access: written application to the librarian.

Resources: all aspects of the British Empire and Commonwealth.

Royal Institute of British Architects

Location: 66 Portland Place (Great Portland St. or Regent's Park).

Resources: architectural materials.

Comments: only for reference. A day ticket costs £10.

Royal Institute of International Affairs Library

Location: Chatham House, 10 St. James Sq. (Piccadilly Circus).

Access: written application to the librarian.

Resources: international affairs; UN depository.

Senate House, University of London

Location: Malet St. (Goode St.). Close to UCL.

Description: main library for the University of London.

Access: UCL ID (will need photograph) and Senate House Library card.

Resources: early European economic and social history; English literature; Latin American studies; paleography; British government publications; United States library; music library; education Library; SIAS (Asian Studies). Most branches are located near the main library, some may not let you borrow books. Full information on each branch is available at the Senate House Library main desk.

Comments: The further back in history you are looking for, the more this library will help. The librarians are happy to help and very knowledgeable about all kinds of things!

Society of Antiquaries of London

Location: Burlington House, Piccadilly (Piccadilly Circus).

Access: written request with a letter of recommendation.

Resources: British and foreign archaeology; British history and heraldry; early printed books; brass rubbings.

Supreme Court Library

Location: Royal Courts of Justice, Strand (Aldwych or Chancery Lane).

Access: written application to the librarian.

Resources: common law library.

Treasury and Cabinet Office Library

Location: Parliament St. (Westminster).

Access: written request to the librarian.

Resources: economics, finance and public administration information; library of the Central Statistical Office.

Victoria and Albert Museum Library

Location: Brompton Rd. (South Kensington).

Description: national collection of works on fine and applied arts.

Resources: history of illustrated books; collection of bookbindings; Dickens manuscripts.

The Women's Library (formerly The Fawcett Library)

Location: City of London Polytechnic, Calcutta House, Old Castle St. (Aldgate East).

Description: collection primarily concerning women's issues.

Access: £5 for a student subscription.

Resources: women in society, law and economics; photos, press cuttings, etc. especially on the suffragette movement.

Westminster City Libraries

Location: Central Reference Library, St. Martin's St. (Leicester Sq.).

Resources: government papers including House of Commons papers and Command papers; good periodical collection; documents of International bodies including UN, EEC, GATT and OECD; Fine Arts collection.

In addition, Manchester, Oxford, and Cambridge have libraries and they are only an hour or two away. Be advised that in order to gain access to these libraries you may have to make extra arrangements in advance, including reference letters.