

## **Project to make maritime and shipping law treatises from the London Shipping Law Centre available for research at the Institute of Advanced Legal Studies Library**

The London Shipping Law Centre and the Association of Average Adjusters transferred a unique collection of historical maritime and shipping law volumes to the Institute of Advanced Legal Studies Library under a trust deed. In 2009 IALS Library obtained special funding from within the University of London to make these volumes publicly available to researchers worldwide by cataloguing the whole collection; creating digital images of all the title pages and any interesting annotations; and digitising the full text of selected titles which are out of copyright.

The digital images and full details of each title are all freely available on the web via the Library's catalogue. The Library has provided several ways to find them to ensure that it is easy for researchers to locate the material:

Search for them by author or title on the library catalogue at <http://catalogue.urls.lon.ac.uk/search~S6/>.

This will take you to the detailed individual record and to the digitised images

Look at the two lists focussed on the maritime titles which are available on the project pages of the Library's website. The first, "[Access the Association of Average Adjusters Collection](#)" takes researchers to a featured list which links directly to the individual catalogue records and the digitised images.

The second, located at [List of books donated](#), is a simple word processed list of the titles (with no links) arranged by century of publication.

The Library recruited two specialised librarians for the six month project to assist the permanent IALS library staff. One was experienced in creating digital images and the other in creating catalogue records of historical material. Detailed inspection showed that the 120 volumes in the collection actually contained a total of 144 separate titles. A book plate was put into each volume to show that it has been transferred to IALS by the Association of Average Adjusters and the London Shipping Law Centre and each catalogue record also records details of the gift. All of the volumes are shelved in the secure area of the IALS Library where the reserve collections of historic and more valuable volumes are held and can be brought to researchers immediately on request.

The project team identified all the titles which were out of copyright and thus potentially available for full text digitisation. We then excluded all titles which had already been digitised by another organisation and therefore already available to researchers; thirty seven of these were available for free on the web and we added links to the IALS catalogue record. We then took advice from Dr Sheppard of the London Shipping Law Centre to identify which of the remaining volumes should be digitised in full.

The full text of 31 titles were digitised and these can be read and downloaded from the catalogue on the web. Two volumes were fully digitised at IALS and the remaining twenty nine were digitised by an outside professional scanning agency.

A more detailed description of the project is available on the IALS Library website at [IALS cataloguing and digitisation project](#)

By providing detailed records of the volumes, title page images and some full-text online access to these historic legal research materials, IALS is helping to attract both additional UK use and the international attention of scholars and librarians.

IALS Library is most grateful to Dr Sheppard of the London Shipping Law Centre for transferring the maritime law collection to the Institute of Advanced Legal Studies and for providing expert advice on which titles to digitise completely.

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