

THE
LONDON
LIBRARY

A guide to Economics and Finance

The London Library holds a vast array of books, periodicals, journals and online resources that can help support research in Finance and Economics. However, you may find that your search for resources requires you to visit many different areas of the Library. This guide aims to pinpoint the most useful areas of the Library's collections.

History and coverage of the book collection

The initial selection of books on political economy for the Library in the 1840s fell to John Stuart Mill. William Baker provided a brief outline of Mill's work as a selector in *The Early History of the London Library*, 1992. Today the subject 'economics' is covered at The London Library by a variety of shelfmarks in the monograph collection and by a number of periodicals both defunct and current. However, country-specific economic history works are shelved in the History sections, e.g. H. England, Social & Economic, H. France, Social & Economic. The collection has a strong 19th century base but some shelfmarks, notably S. Trade, have a good 18th century core. There is a good smattering of European languages, particularly in the early period. We continue to collect actively in economic and business history and in most of the special subject sections when relevant books appear.

The content of a selection of the most relevant shelfmarks is outlined below.

S. Political Economy

This is the largest section directly relevant to the study of economics covering capitalism, economic theory, 19th century introductions to economics, economic growth, general economic histories of Europe, neoliberalism, criticism of writers on economics. The earliest work on the open shelves is 1803-16 *Scrittori classici italiani di economia politica* (50v). Other works here include Marx's *Kapital* ; Adam Smith's *Inquiry into the wealth of nations* and Malthus' *Essays on political economy* in 8 volumes.

S. Capital & Labour

Subjects covered include: producers and consumers, some individual skills, apartheid in South African mines, histories of labour, imperial aspects, peasantry, international labour movements, migrant labour, working class histories, official reports (e.g. Industrial Fatigue Research Board 1919-1937), labour relations, and the General Strike. The period 1840-1870 is particularly strong, as is 1890s onwards. Works include 1844 *The claims of labour – duties of the employer to employees*; 1861 *Workman's earnings*; 1861 Mayhew's *London labour London poor*; 1868 *The great unwashed*; 1871 *Workman's rights*; 1889 Booth's *London life & labour*.

S. Corporations

Works covering the history of companies, and early professional guides to running companies.

S. Finance &c.

The full shelfmark is S. Finance & Banking. Subjects include investment, wealth distribution, credit/debt, foreign exchange and currency, financial markets, bank histories, interest rate tables, South Sea Bubble. Many of the early titles have a more practical bent but they gradually move into more serious study of the subjects. Early titles include 1705 John Broughton's *Remarks upon the Bank of England with regard to trade and government*; 1802 William Fairman's *The stocks examined and compared, or, a guide to purchases in the public funds*; and 1828 William Cobbett's *Paper against gold*.

S. Friendly Societies

Includes works on Building societies, savings clubs etc.

S. Industries

Works on industries from cottage to international, rural craft workers, government papers on industrial policy, histories of industries by county.

S. Insurance

Covers life insurance, Lloyds, county fire office, pensions, government papers including the Beveridge report.

S. Petroleum

Covers the industry and politics/economics of oil.

S. Political Science

Although these titles concentrate on politics rather than economics, some general works on communism and totalitarianism can be found here. More, including works on Marxism, are shelved at S. Social Science. As with Political Economy, works relating to a specific country are shelved in the history of the country.

S. Prices

Theory of pricing, wage control, Beveridge on prices and wages. Nothing was apparently considered too esoteric at one time, e.g. F. Waugh, *Quality as a determinant of vegetable prices: a statistical study of quality factors affecting vegetable prices in the Boston wholesale market*, New York, 1929.

S. Protection

Subjects covered include: free trade, and the Corn laws.

S. Taxation

Histories of taxation, principles, customs & excise, death duties.

S. Trade

Subjects covered include: commerce (both local & international), trade & tariffs, merchants, some company histories, trade routes, trade cycles, theory & policy, some specific trade subjects e.g. grain.

R.R. Dicts, Political Economy

Located in the Reading Room, these reference works include dictionaries of sociology, encyclopaedias of political institutions and social science, social thought, political organizations, industrial relations, British politics, House of Commons procedures. Terminology also is quite well covered in the *Oxford companion to the politics of the world*, which is a useful background to the political thought shoring up economic theory.

Bibliography, Political & Social Sciences (8vo & 4to)

The Library's holdings include Higgs' *Bibliography of Economics 1751-1775* and the 6 volume *Catalogue of Goldsmith's Library of Economic Literature* (1970-1995) which covers the period up to 1850. It is noticeable that most of the bibliographies stop around 1850. Possible reasons for this could be early collectors' interests, the recognition of a 'classic' period of writing up to this time, and the revolutions in Europe in 1848. This early period covered a great many pamphlets on relevant subjects and the bibliographies have tried to pull them together from highly diverse sources.

Special collections

The Library's Pamphlet Collection was undoubtedly strong in early works on economics and still contains items of interest. Monograph material in the Anstruther Wing includes works by Ricardo, Ruskin, JS Mill, Jevons, Senior, and Pigou plus a donation from the Political Economy Club in 1857 of a volume of scarce 17th & 18th century tracts.

We also have 50 or more publications from the Cobden Club whose interests covered 'economics' as we are dealing with it here. They date from 1870 through to 1944 and are best retrieved through a catalogue search under Cobden Club as they are well scattered throughout various shelfmarks.

Periodicals and online resources

The Library maintains a subscription to *The economist* and a complete backrun of issues can be found in the Basement. The eLibrary allows access to JSTOR and resources such as *British history online* where a plethora of primary sources can be accessed.