

## British Library cyber-attack – some tips for workarounds

The information below has been reproduced with amendments with the kind permission of Isobel Holowaty at the Bodleian Libraries. The original content of this posting is available here: [British Library cyber-attack – some tips for workarounds | Bodleian History Faculty Library at Oxford](#)

Following the cyber-attack, our colleagues in the British Library are working very hard to restore operations and services. As the disruption is likely to continue for a few weeks, below is a list of tips for some workarounds.

### BL updates and contacts

Regularly check [the British Library blog](#) and their Twitter feed [@BLpressoffice](#) for updates on the current status of their services. You can contact the BL via Twitter or by emailing [customer@bl.uk](mailto:customer@bl.uk) (be prepared for delay in responses).

### Do you have a BL login? Reset your password

Following last week's confirmation that this was a ransomware attack, we now have evidence that indicates the attackers might have copied some user data, and additional data appears to have been published on the dark web. We will continue to work with cybersecurity specialists to examine what this material is and we will be contacting our users to advise them of the practical steps they may need to take. If you have a password for British Library services that you use on other websites, we recommend you change it elsewhere as a precaution. NCSC provides guidance on staying secure online, including how to create a strong password: <https://bit.ly/BLNCSC>. You can also find specific guidance for individuals who may have been impacted by a data breach: <https://bit.ly/BLNCSCData>

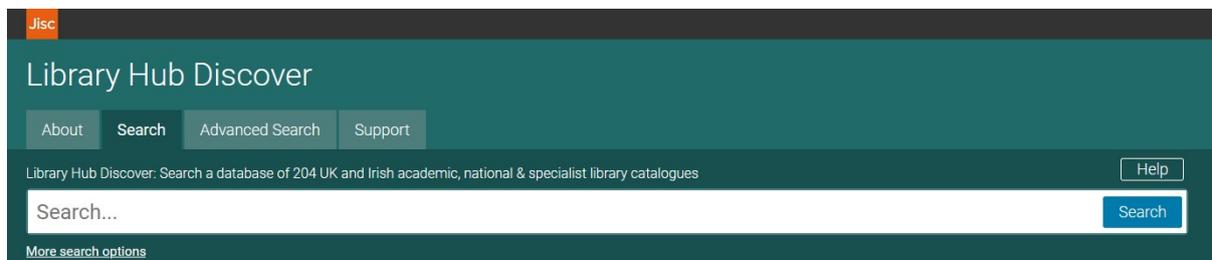
### Geospatial Data Application (GDAS) – Legal Deposit Map Data

Please note that Geospatial Data Application (GDAS) – the viewer on which the legal deposit digital map data is viewed – is not directly affected. Normal service is available from a single PC in the Map Room.

### Tip 1: Finding alternative copies

Researchers can obviously double-check [iDiscover](#) for alternative copies, but may also want to consider [HathiTrust](#) or [Archive.org](#) for older and out-of-copyright material.

Although the British Library catalogue is not available, you can still check for British Library published material in [Library Hub Discover](#). This resource is a database of 204 UK and Irish academic, national & specialist library catalogues. If you want to easily find a copy in another library in the UK, then make friends with Library Hub Discover!



The screenshot shows the top section of the Library Hub Discover website. It features a dark teal header with the 'Jisc' logo in the top left corner. Below the logo, the text 'Library Hub Discover' is displayed in a large, white, sans-serif font. Underneath this, there is a navigation bar with four buttons: 'About', 'Search', 'Advanced Search', and 'Support'. Below the navigation bar, a subtitle reads 'Library Hub Discover: Search a database of 204 UK and Irish academic, national & specialist library catalogues'. To the right of this subtitle is a 'Help' button. Below the subtitle is a search bar with the placeholder text 'Search...' and a 'Search' button to its right. At the bottom left of the search bar area, there is a link for 'More search options'.

Welcome to Library Hub Discover, giving you access to details of materials held in many UK national, academic and specialist libraries.

Library Hub Discover currently contains 51,612,311 records created from 152,616,854 records contributed by 204 institutions. See [About](#) for more information and our [Libraries list](#), for information about each contributor.

## Recommend a Purchase for the Cambridge University Libraries (Cambridge staff and students only)

The university library has a policy which allows for some purchasing of materials which usually are available via non print legal deposit terminals in the libraries. This policy is available [here](#).

If, when you check [iDiscover](#), an item is not held in Cambridge or it is not accessible because it is a Non-Print Legal Deposit item, you can suggest a book for purchase using our [Recommendation form](#).

## Document delivery services

These alternatives are available to Cambridge University staff and students. Although Interlibrary Loan services mediated by the British Library have been impacted by the cyber attack, there are alternative sources of materials such as RapidILL. The Scan and Deliver service can also provide copies of materials from within Cambridge University Libraries. You can find out more about what is available [here](#).

## Tip 2: Finding and locating BL open shelf collections

The BL reading rooms are still open for private research and collections which are on the open shelves, can therefore be used. So, how do you find those when the BL catalogue is down?

In Library Hub Discover's [Advanced Search](#), you can limit your search to *BL St Pancras* in the Library section. You can at least copy the shelfmark and make your way to London.

The screenshot shows the British Library website interface. At the top, there are navigation tabs: About, Search, Advanced Search, and Support. Below the navigation is a breadcrumb trail: Discover > Search result > Record 8 of 593 for Author: george.orwell ; Library: bli:stpancras > British Library. A 'Help' button is visible in the top right corner.

The main content area displays the search results for 'In defence of English cooking / George Orwell.' There are buttons for 'Back to results' and 'Back to item'. A 'Show more' button is also present.

The author information is listed as: Author: Orwell, George 1903-1950. Series: [Pocket Penguins ; 23](#). Other titles: Essays. Selections. Published: London : Penguin 2005. Physical description: 55 p. ; 18 cm. ISBN: 014102237X (pbk.). Local notes: Formerly CIP.

Below the author information is a section titled 'Holdings information at British Library' with a note: 'Live circulation data is not available.' A table follows with columns for 'Location of copy', 'Shelfmark', and 'Availability'. The table contains one row: 'General Reference Collection, St Pancras Reading Rooms' with shelfmark 'YK.2007.a.5059'.

On the right side, there is a book cover image and a 'book' icon. Below the cover, it says 'Printed resource' and 'Disable Google Preview'. A list of 'Holding libraries' is provided, including Birmingham City University, British Library, University of Cambridge Libraries, National Library of Scotland, National Library of Wales / Llyfrgell Genedlaethol Cymru, Oxford Brookes University, and University of Oxford Libraries.

## Admissions

The BL can only issue temporary reader tickets at the moment. If you already have a card and it needs renewing, this will probably be slightly easier than those who need to register for the first time. Contact [customer@bl.uk](mailto:customer@bl.uk) if you need help but be prepared for a delayed response as our colleagues will be terrifically busy with enquiries.

## Tip 3: Accessing British Library website content

BL websites will have been archived, probably to varying degrees of depth, by the Internet Archives [Wayback Machine](#).



INTERNET ARCHIVE  
Wayback Machine  
3 captures  
20 Oct 2015 - 12 Oct 2021

<http://www.bl.uk/collection-items/ann-oakley-motherhood-and-depression>

BRITISH LIBRARY

Search our website  
Our website Main catalogue

Catalogues Collections Discover Services Visiting About Information for...

## Collection items

All Sisterhood and After interviews

SOUND RECORDING

### Ann Oakley discusses motherhood and depression



**Title:** Ann Oakley discusses motherhood and depression  
**Date:** 11 May 2012  
**Interviewee:** Ann Oakley  
**Duration:** 2:04  
**Format:** Sound recording  
**Collection:** Sisterhood and After: The Women's Liberation Oral History Project  
**Held by:** British Library  
**Copyright:** © British Library  
**Shelfmark:** C1420/56

Full catalogue details

Description Transcript

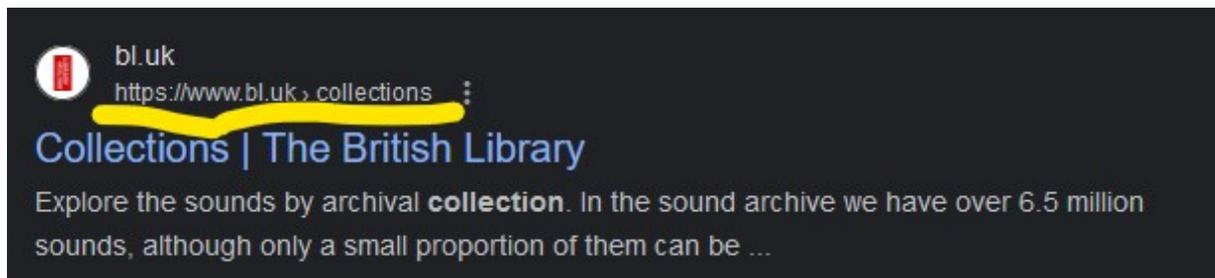
Ann Oakley talks about the difficulties she faced as a mother with two small children. She comments on the frequency with which post-natal depression is diagnosed, when perhaps the feelings experienced by many new mothers are of 'normal human distress' brought about by

**This item is featured in:**

A sound recording from the BL Collections website 'Sisterhood and After: The Women's Liberation Oral History Project' where Ann Oakley discussed motherhood and depression. Interview 11 May 2012. Shelfmark: C1420/56

#### So, how do you find the URL of a BL website?

This becomes a little more 'interesting'. The easiest is to Google, hopefully find the webpage you are interested in, make a note of the URL string and put it into the [Wayback Machine](#). Please note that this may not always work, if e.g. names of URL were changed over time.



bl.uk  
<https://www.bl.uk/collections>

Collections | The British Library

Explore the sounds by archival **collection**. In the sound archive we have over 6.5 million sounds, although only a small proportion of them can be ...

You may also come across links to the BL webpages from other sources. This can of course include the BL's own Blogs which don't appear to be affected by the cyberattack. A list of BL blogs is webarchived at the Wayback Machine, you will need to enter <https://www.bl.uk/blogs/> into the search bar.

Please note that this technique will not work for URLs of content in databases with dynamic content such as library catalogues, archive catalogues, etc. none of these are crawled by the Wayback Machine.

#### Tip 4. Looking for the ESTC?

The [English Short Title Catalogue](#) (ESTC) is the definitive union catalogue for early British or English language books, covering publications printed before 1800. The BL website for ESTC is down. A temporary version of the pre-1700 ESTC is hosted at <https://estc.printprobability.org/>.

However, if you are fortunate enough to have access to a library which has [Early English Books Online](#) and the [Eighteenth Century Collections Online](#), then that is a great alternative because you can then also look at the digital copy.

### Tip 5. Looking for BL Special Collections?

You may be able to use other sources to find descriptions of BL Special Collections. It can be a bit tricky but here are some suggestions:

Both [The National Archives](#) and [The Archives Hub](#) describe collections held in repositories in the UK, including the British Library. You can limit your search to just the British Library and get some description and shelfmarks. In some instances, the description also mentions microfilmed versions which may be accessible in another library.

The screenshot shows the search results page for 'india AND office' on The National Archives Discovery tool. The search bar contains 'india AND office' and shows 447,180 records and 0 record creators. The page includes a filter sidebar with 'Your filters' (Other archives, British Library: Asian and African Studies) and a 'Date' filter with various ranges. The main content area shows a description of records and a list of results, including a link to 'Canning, Charlotte Elizabeth, (1817-1861) Countess Canning, artist and Lady of the Bedchamber to Queen Victoria, ...'. The page also includes a message about sorting and a list of other references.

A search in The National Archives Discovery tool for India Office material held in the British Library.

Many BL archival and rare book materials have been digitised in source databases, such as the [East India Company](#). You can get a list of these databases by searching our A-Z Databases for "British Library". Current staff and students can then of course access these, using Raven for remote access.

The screenshot shows a web browser window with the Cambridge LibGuides website. The page title is "Cambridge LibGuides" with the subtitle "Find out more about our library services, facilities and resources". The breadcrumb trail is "Cambridge Libraries / LibGuides / A-Z Databases". The main heading is "A-Z Databases: 'british library'" with the instruction "Find the best library databases for your research." Below this is a search filter interface with three dropdown menus: "All Subjects", "All Database Types", and "All Vendors / Providers". A search input field contains "british library" and a "Go" button. A "Help" button is visible on the right. Below the search filters, it says "16 Databases found for 'british library'" and includes a "Clear Filters/Browse All Databases" button. On the right side, there is a "Chat with us" section with the text: "Have a question about eJournals and eResources? Chat with us using our new LibChat service! Currently, the chat is live Monday to Friday 1000-1200". The Windows taskbar at the bottom shows the time as 10:45 on 22/11/2023. Below the screenshot, the text "A-Z Databases with a phrase search 'british library'." is displayed.

If you are an external reader and would like to register with the Cambridge University Libraries, check out our information [who can use the library](#).  
**NEED HELP? THEN JUST GET IN TOUCH!**

There are a few other things one can try. If you need any help, do get in touch by emailing your subject librarian, details can be found on this [list](#).  
If you have a disability, you can also contact [disability@lib.cam.ac.uk](mailto:disability@lib.cam.ac.uk) to ask if we can find an alternative.