

Problem and Context

- Samford University has uncovered a bigger need to promote their rich special collections and drive more students to the library.
- Libraries put in a considerable amount of time, money and effort developing special collections, but in today's digital landscape, they can struggle to increase visibility and usage.
- Patrons don't always start their research at the library, and often must step outside their workflows to access library content.
- Special collections are still very much viewed as physical collections, and as a result, patrons aren't aware they can find them in the online digital library space.

Impact

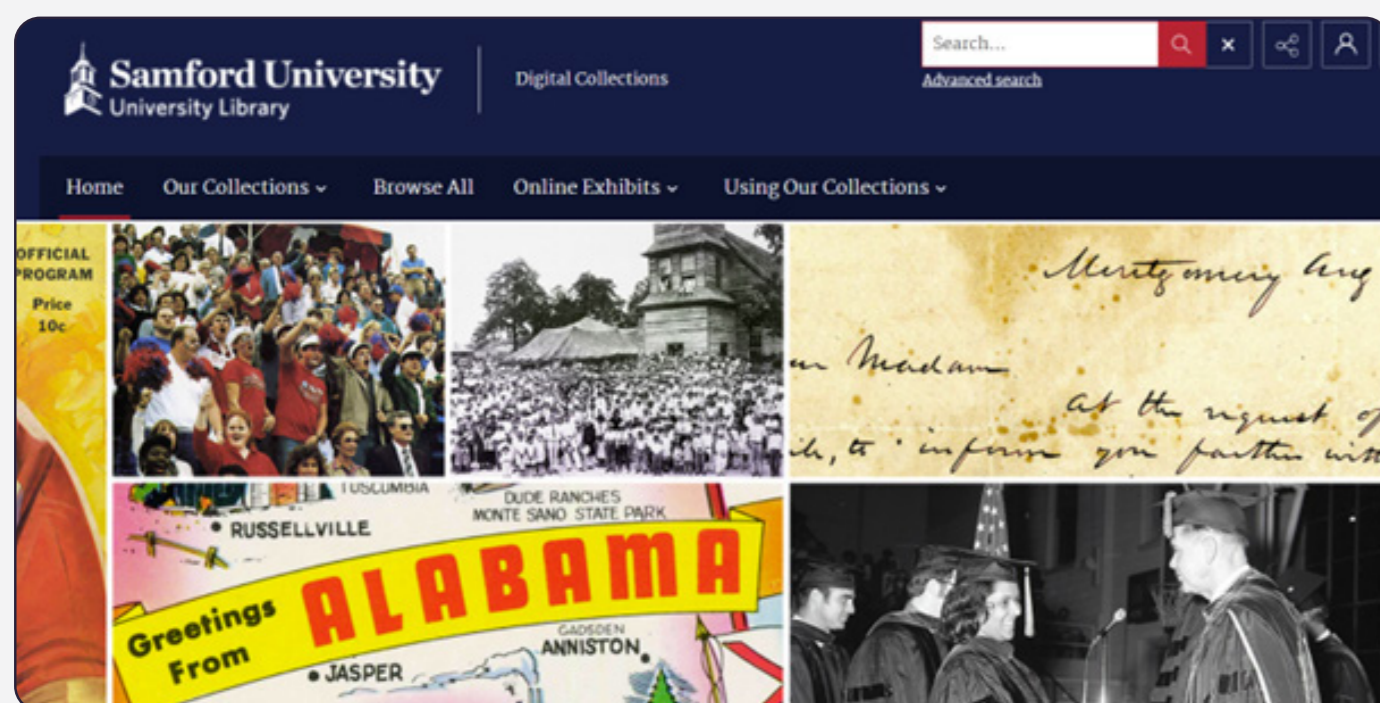


"Quartex provided us an opportunity to bring all our digital collections to one location online and at the same time, highlight unique and important materials found in Samford's Special Collection."

Jennifer Taylor
MLIS, DAS, Chair of University Archives and Special Collection, University Archivist, Samford Library

- Samford began using Quartex in November 2022 and chose Quartex for its ease of use, accessibility, and user engagement opportunities.
- In the first year of using Quartex, digital collections were accessed 4,509 times. Using Quartex has helped to surface collections to students online, making them more accessible for students of all learning styles.

July 2023 to June 2024, Samford's digital collections (with Quartex) were accessed 4,509 times.	May 2024 to October 2024, Samford's digital collections (with Quartex and Lean Library) were accessed 2,834 times revealing a 5.85% average monthly increase in views.
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Accessibility



With Quartex's platform, Samford ensure that the wide scope of resources available at the library are accessible to students by:

- Having accessible and responsive websites to comply with WCAG.
- Using transcriptions for audio and for some handwritten documents.
- Using automated Handwritten Text Recognition (HTR) for manuscript documents.

LeanLibrary

- Samford began marketing Lean Library to campus in August 2024. They chose Lean Library to make their resources more discoverable and had heard positive testimonials from other libraries' experiences.
- Lean Library directs Samford students to the university's rich digital collections with content integration capabilities and personalized notifications. Samford will be able to set up keywords that link directly from webpages such as Wikipedia and Google Scholar, driving **discovery** and **usage**.
- Since August, they have seen an **196%** increase in engaged users, and **441** hours have been saved for students whilst searching for resources.

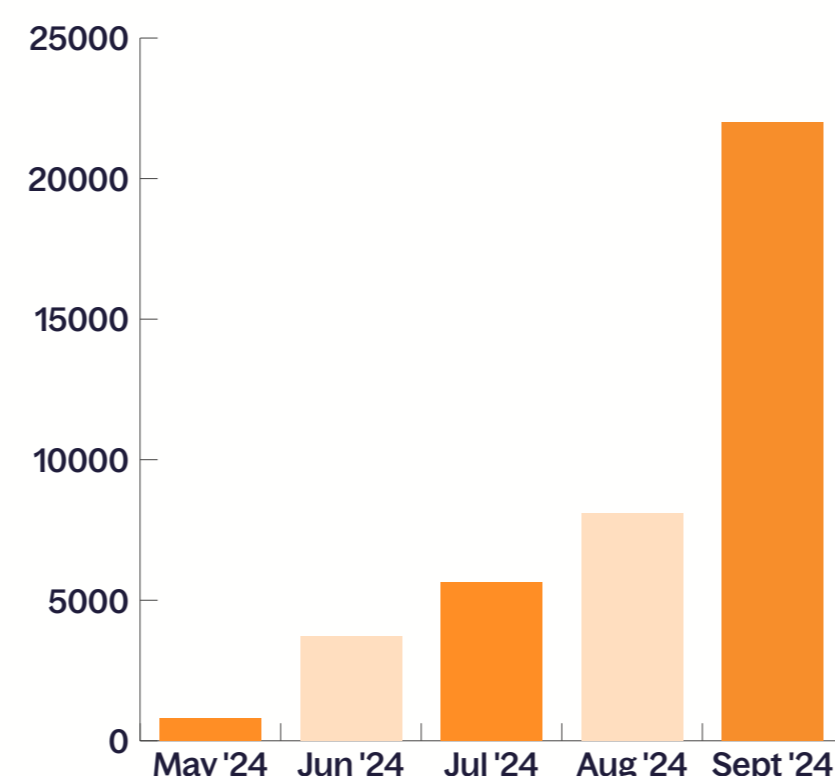
From August 24 to October 24

674 Engaged Users	441 Total hours saved for patrons	Nearly 29k Access feature use	1679 Personalised message views
429 times Google Scholar search improved	4175 Article Alternatives viewed	836 Open Access views	5495 DDS/ILL views

- Using both Quartex and Lean Library in collaboration, Samford has increased discoverability of all their resources, ensuring that students are able to view special collections in the digital library space.
- Samford are using these library technologies to share their collections with AlabamaMosaic.org and the Atla Digital Library.



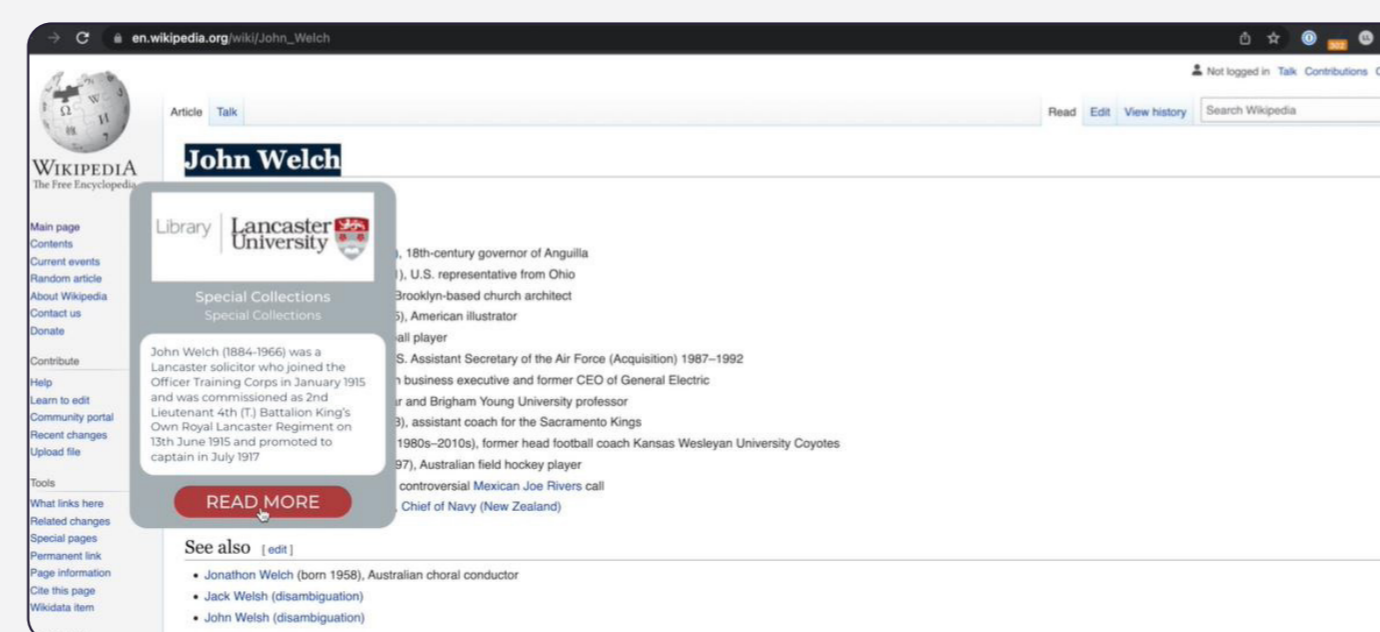
Usage of features that lead students to library-owned resources



What's the wider impact of Lean Library?



Using Lean Library's content integration capabilities, Lancaster University set up keywords that link directly from webpages like Wikipedia and Google Scholar, directly to their special collections.



This has enhanced their user-centred strategy by ensuring their patrons can find the right content at the right time, without leaving their workflow.

"We want to move away from having our special collections and archives locked away in rooms and, of course the physical is important, but we want to make sure that people who have an interest in our collections can see it and make use of it be they in Lancaster or be they in Texas, China or wherever. So, using Lean Library to help us surface that content within Lancaster Digital Collections will be absolutely key."

Andrew Barker
Director of Library Services & Learning Development, Lancaster University

How has Lean Library helped students across North America?

In 2023 there were over 16.5 million uses of our Access features which help students get to the paid for library content they need in one click.	In 2023 there were over 700k uses of our Assist feature which allows the library to help the student at their point of need.
In 2023 Open access resources were made available to students over 500,000 times	In 2023 there were over 3.7 million uses of our Alternatives feature which allows students to access the research materials they need an alternative way when they reach a paywall.

Conclusion

Using Lean Library and Quartex together has helped Samford library in two ways:



1. Using Quartex to present Samford's digitized collections has meant that Samford is making rare or fragile materials freely available online to provide equal opportunities to users regardless of location or ability.

Using Lean Library has enabled Samford students to more easily access library resources and digital collections (Quartex), making them even more discoverable in student workflows. This has been via personalized Assist messages, content features and enhanced Google Scholar search which directs students to library-subscribed materials and collections even when they begin their search outside of the library.



2. By using learning technology, Samford has been able to share resources with other institutions via AlabamaMosaic.org and the Atla Digital Library. This shows how technology can contribute to longer-term strategies to promote cross-institutional collaboration and increased availability of primary sources to a wider pool of students.

"Lean Library and Quartex provide opportunities for more discoverability and accessibility in a digital research heavy environment for patrons. The unique resources held within Samford University's Special Collection are highlighted demonstrating Samford's place as a source for Baptist, Alabama, religion, and local history resources."

Jennifer Taylor
MLIS, DAS, Chair of University Archives and Special Collection, University Archivist, Samford University Library

