Secrets of a Lapsed Librarian

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How I Use Library Resources as a Bookseller

Patrick Olson

With special thanks to The Bibliographical Society of America (bibsocamer.org)
and the Independent Online Booksellers Association (ioba.org)

That rabbit hole discussion...

REFERENCES: USTC 836538; EDIT16 CNCE 37993 ¶ Binding context: Anthony Hobson, *Humanists and Bookbinders* (Cambridge Univ, 1989), p. 72 (on early fleurons in bookbinding), 163-164 (cited above; "The aspect of Fortune that Italian binders wished to emphasise was her fleetingness. They did this by placing her on the back of a dolphin. To a renaissance eye the dolphin symbolised speed...Fortune standing on a dolphin's back was a reminder to the reader that opportunity passes in a flash...The moral was one likely to appeal to men of action, aristocrats and businessmen rather than to churchmen or lawyers. The emblem is most often found in Italy on bindings from Venice, with its great mercantile interests, and from Bologna and Padua."), 174 ("the leading Venetian craftsman, the 'Mendoza Binder'"), 260 (On the Paduan shop: "Their business consisted principally in selling bound copies of the classics to foreign students. Figures of Fortune or Cupid or both were popular with their clients."); Curt F. Bühler, "The Binding of Books Printed by William Caxton," *Early Books and Manuscripts* (1973), p. 76 (on the early appearance of trade bindings: "While it is nevertheless probable that the bigger houses often sold their books in sheets, it is equally certain that some form of 'edition' binding was known in the fifteenth century; it is only reasonable to suppose that the smaller printers—having few or no representatives to retail their publications—probably sold their copies bound at the printing office."); Mirjam M. Foot, "A Binding Made in Bologna c. 1550," *The Book Collector* (Autumn 2020), p. 503-504 (for Bologna examples); David Pearson, "Bugs and Bindings: Insect Rolls Used on Eighteenty-Century Bookbindings," *The Book Collector* (Autumn 2020), p. 475; Mirjam M. Foot, *The History of Bookbinding as a Mirror of Society* (1997 Panizzi Lecture), p. 14 ("During the 1520s and 1530s tooling in gold became a practiced habit and the Parisian binders never looked back. From France the technique reached England where the earliest examples date from 1519 and the early 1520s."); Anthony Hobson, "Was There an Aldine Bindery?" *Aldus Manutius and Renaissance Culture* (1998), p. 243-244 (on the Mendoza Binder, but germane to trade bindings generally: "His typical trade binding is decorated with a rectangular frame of one gilt and multiple blind lines, rosettes and ivy-leaves at the corners and a smaller leaf between them, either in silver or in blind. The title and often the customer's initials are gilt on the upper cover. These are bindings made either for a bookseller's stock or a bookseller's customer. Binders in Venice were not allowed by the booksellers' guild to sell books directly to the public."); Anthony Hobson, *Renaissance Book Collecting* (Cambridge Univ, 1999), p. 35 (knotwork tool), 99 (on the Mendoza Binder: "The characteristic work of this craftsman is to be seen on bindings with standard decorative schemes, made either for display and sale in the bookshop employing him or to be ordered through it") ¶ Similar bindings with Cupid and/or Fortune: Mirjam Foot, *Henry Davis Gift*, v. 3, #250; Hobson, *Renaissance*, p. 98 ¶ Similar bindings without Cupid and/or Fortune: Davis, v. 3, #262 (Mendoza), #297 (Fugger), #298 (Fugger); Anthony Hobson, "Italian 16th-century Bindings," *Italian and French 16th-century Bookbindings* (1991), #9 (Fugger); *Fine and Historic Bookbindings from the Folger Shakespeare Library* (1992), #12.2 (Mendoza, "the leading binder in Venice in the period 1530-1555. The present binding is in his simplest style, mostly used on Aldines."); Hobson, *Renaissance*, p. 100-101 ¶ On the text: Silvia Castelli, "Josephus in Renaissance Italy," *A Companion to Josephus* (Wiley, 2016), p. 406 ("The Italian version of *Judean War* was published in Florence by Bartolomeo Presbitero, in July 1493, and lacks a dedication by the editor. The same version was republished...in Venice by Vettor and Piero Ravano della Serena.")

WorldCat to supplement bibliographies

232 *ed.* A. Politianus et A. Nebrissensis; *comm.* G. Juvenalis et J. B. Ascensius. Caesaraugustae, G. Cocus, 27 V 1524.

Schweiger 1057 Graesse VII 56, 1 Lawton 187 BLH III 5971 PalDul 330352 NUC 0102517

233 *comm.* A. Donatus, J. Calphurnius, G. Juvenalis, J. B. Ascensius et Servius (*sic*). Venetiis, G. de Fontaneto, 21 VII 1524.

Graesse VII 54, 1 Renouard, *J.B.A.*, 295, 36 Essling 880 Lawton 188 Sander 7220 BNP 52 Adams 318 NUC 0102516

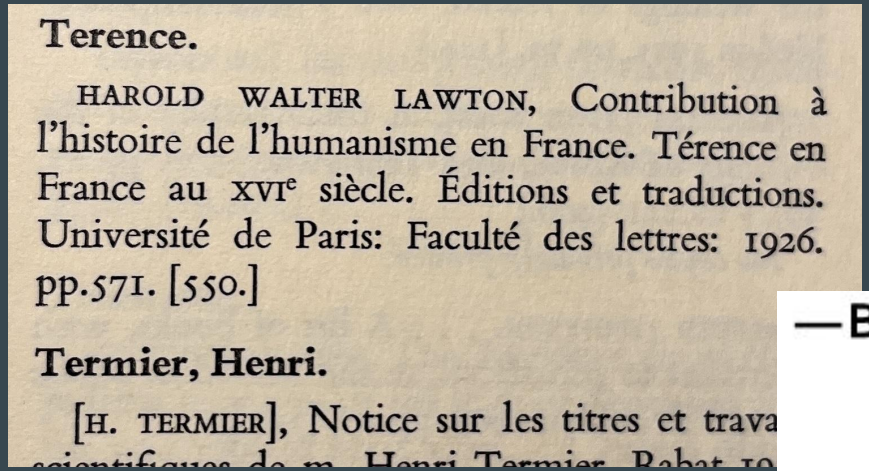
234 *ed.* J. B. Ascensius; *comm.* G. Juvenalis et J. B. Ascensius. Lugduni, J. Myt, 30 X 1525.

Panzer VII 337, 500 Schweiger 1057 Graesse VII 56, 1 Renouard, *J.B.A.*, III 295, 37 Lawton 189 Adams 319

235 *comm.* A. Donatus, J. Calphurnius, G. Juvenalis, J. B. Ascensius et Servius (*sic*). Tusculani apud Benacum, A. Paganinus, 1526.

Graesse VII 56, 1 Brunet V 712 Renouard, *J.B.A.*, III 295, 38 Lawton 193 Sander 7221 Pennink 2165 BNP 53 BMC[1] 302 Adams 320 Dokoupil[6] 1903 NUC 0102519

WorldCat to find bibliographies



Terence.

HAROLD WALTER LAWTON, Contribution à l'histoire de l'humanisme en France. Térence en France au XVI^e siècle. Éditions et traductions. Université de Paris: Faculté des lettres: 1926. pp.571. [550.]

Termier, Henri.

[H. TERMIER], Notice sur les titres et trava

Theodore Besterman's *World Bibliography of Bibliographies*, 4th edition–and its lonely single entry for Terence...

To supplement, harness the power of subdivisions!

—Bibliography

H 1095; H 1105; H 1110; H 1156; H 1160

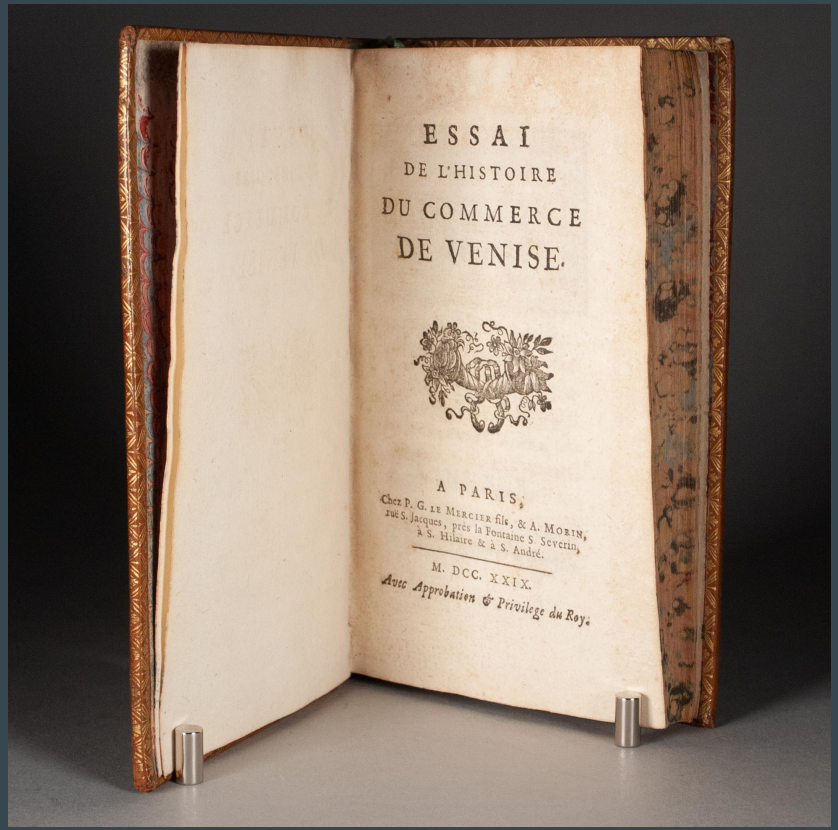
Use as a form subdivision under subjects for works consisting of bibliographies about the subject. Use under names of individual persons and corporate bodies for lists of works by or about the person or corporate body.

UF —Bibliographies

List of LC subdivisions: https://www.loc.gov/aba/publications/FreeLCSH/SUBDIVISIONS.pdf

You can use the Library of Congress authorities site to find the proper heading: https://authorities.loc.gov/webvoy.htm

Unleash the awesome power of subdivisions



You might find what you're looking for without understanding LC subdivisions, but your success and efficiency will improve with some basic skills

LC subdivisions can help you...

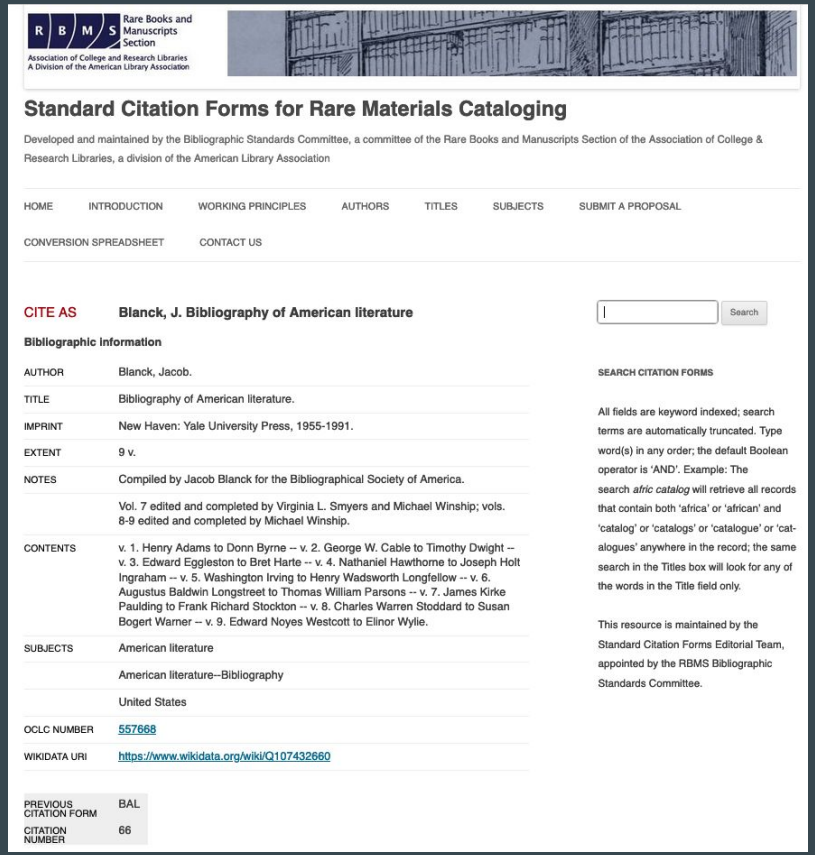
- Find books on similar topics
- Place your book in a given topic's chronology
- See what similar material exists at specific libraries

The fundamental trick is to map the descriptive subject words in your head to those in the LC Authority File: https://authorities.loc.gov

Browsing subdivisions may help: https://www.loc.gov/aba/publications/FreeLCSH/SUBDIVISIONS.pdf

More resources still if you like this rabbit hole: https://www.loc.gov/aba/cataloging/subject/

Standard Citation Forms



Rare Books and Manuscripts Section
Association of College and Research Libraries
A Division of the American Library Association

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CITE AS **Blanck, J. Bibliography of American literature**

Search

Bibliographic information

AUTHOR	Blanck, Jacob.
TITLE	Bibliography of American literature.
IMPRINT	New Haven: Yale University Press, 1955-1991.
EXTENT	9 v.
NOTES	Compiled by Jacob Blanck for the Bibliographical Society of America.
	Vol. 7 edited and completed by Virginia L. Smyers and Michael Winship; vols. 8-9 edited and completed by Michael Winship.
CONTENTS	v. 1. Henry Adams to Donn Byrne -- v. 2. George W. Cable to Timothy Dwight -- v. 3. Edward Eggleston to Bret Harte -- v. 4. Nathaniel Hawthorne to Joseph Holt Ingraham -- v. 5. Washington Irving to Henry Wadsworth Longfellow -- v. 6. Augustus Baldwin Longstreet to Thomas William Parsons -- v. 7. James Kirke Paulding to Frank Richard Stockton -- v. 8. Charles Warren Stoddard to Susan Bogert Warner -- v. 9. Edward Noyes Westcott to Elinor Wylie.
SUBJECTS	American literature
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CITATION NUMBER	66

SEARCH CITATION FORMS

All fields are keyword indexed; search terms are automatically truncated. Type word(s) in any order; the default Boolean operator is 'AND'. Example: The search *afric catalog* will retrieve all records that contain both 'africa' or 'african' and 'catalog' or 'catalogs' or 'catalogue' or 'catalogues' anywhere in the record; the same search in the Titles box will look for any of the words in the Title field only.

This resource is maintained by the Standard Citation Forms Editorial Team, appointed by the RBMS Bibliographic Standards Committee.

https://rbms.info/scf/

Especially useful for:

- Quickly identifying standard bibliographies referred to by common short titles
- Browsing useful bibliographies–it's like a convenient, peer-reviewed list of standard bibliographies
- Locating authorized subject headings you can use in WorldCat searches

Note the "Previous Citation Form" at bottom, which is searchable from the main page

Virtual International Authority File (VIAF) (viaf.org)

A massive database of national authority record databases

Its predictive search default can help identify individuals from incomplete names

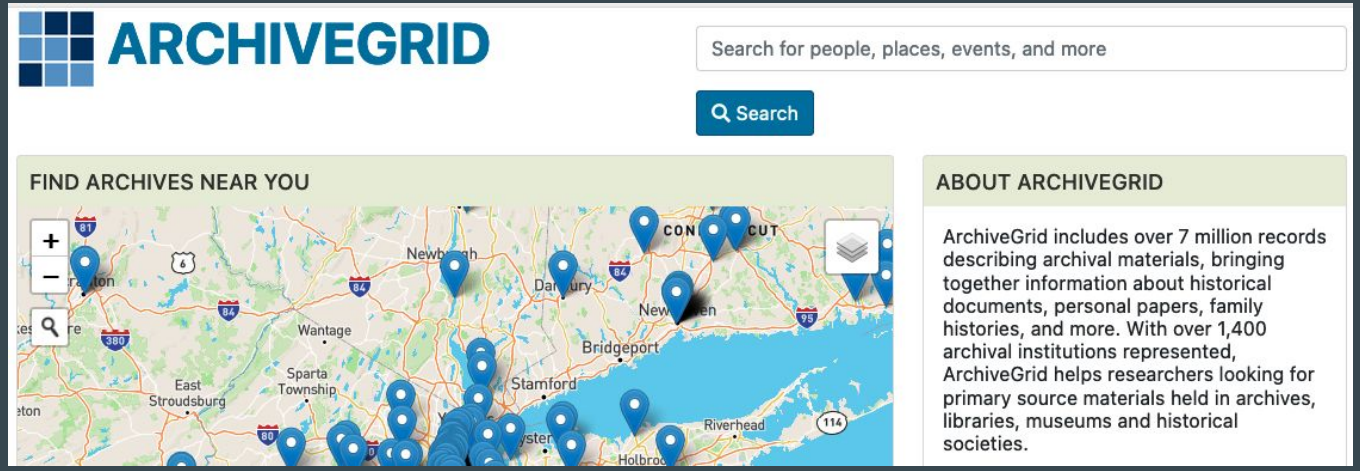
And each record is a trove of useful information

- Business addresses–useful for differentiating printers with common names
- Full names–useful to fully identify those referred to simply as “widow of” in imprints
- Titles associated with the individual–useful for sorting out unclear authorship
- Further reference sources–because catalogers are typically required to cite their sources

An attendee asked about the CERL Thesaurus: https://data.cerl.org/thesaurus/

- For early book people, it’s definitely worth bookmarking, likewise CERL’s other resources
- It draws on many (but not all) of the same sources as VIAF and is limited to roughly pre-1850 subjects – so it won’t cover more recent owners and binders, for example
- But it has a cleaner interface and is certainly better for searching geographic place names

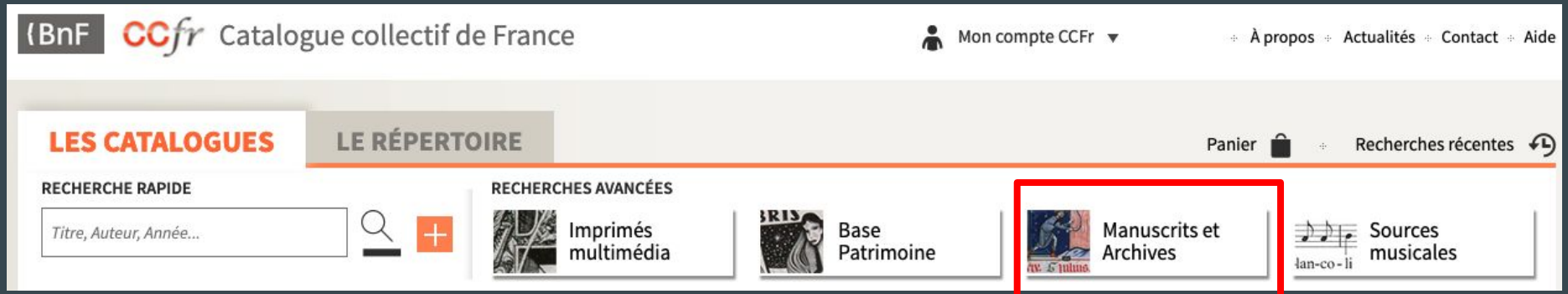
Finding archives and manuscript material



Archive Grid is a huge database of archival collections–heavily US, but global in coverage

https://researchworks.oclc.org/archivegrid/

Explore other catalogs, which may have similar functionality



Biographical resources

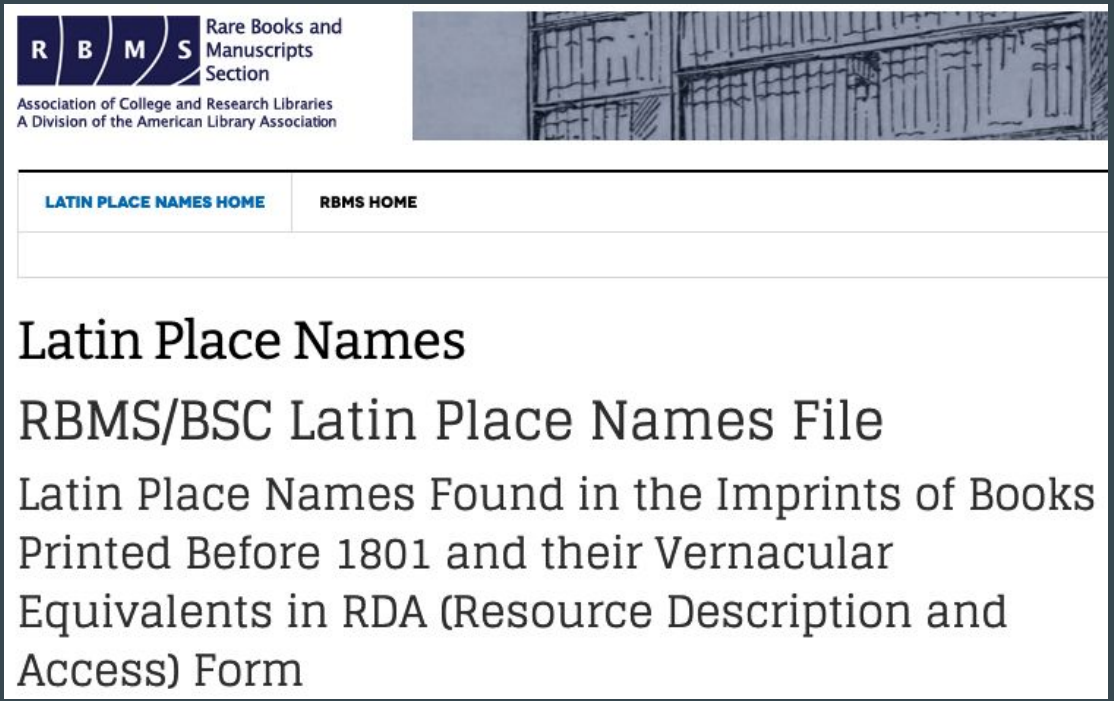
Source:	Chambers Biographical Dictionary. Sixth edition. Edited by Melanie Parry. New York: Larousse Kingfisher Chambers, 1997. [ChamBiD]
	Chambers Biographical Dictionary 2011-2012, 9th Edition. London: Chambers Harrap Pub, 2013. [ChamBiD 9]
	Encyclopedia of the Renaissance. Six volumes. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1999. [EncRen]
	The Houghton Mifflin Dictionary of Biography. Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 2003. [HouMifDB]
	The Oxford Companion to English Literature. Fifth edition. Edited by Margaret Drabble. Oxford, England: Oxford University Press, 1985. [OxCEng 5]
	The Oxford Companion to English Literature. Revised fifth edition. Edited by Margaret Drabble. Oxford, England: Oxford University Press, 1995. [OxCEng 5R]
	The Oxford Companion to English Literature. Sixth edition. Edited by Margaret Drabble. Oxford, England: Oxford University Press, 2000. [OxCEng 6]
	The Oxford Companion to English Literature. Revised sixth edition. Edited by Margaret Drabble. Oxford, England: Oxford University Press, 2006. [OxCEng 6R]
	The Riverside Dictionary of Biography. Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 2005. [RivDcB]
	Chronology of World History Vol I: The Changing World Prehistory-1491
	Chronology of World History Vol II: The Expanding World 1492-1775

Your local library may subscribe to a number of biographical databases, including the Biography & Genealogy Master Index.

They probably subscribe to all kinds of databases, so take a few minutes to explore their electronic resources.

BGMI's results for *Manutius, Aldus*

Latin place names



RBMS's Latin Place Names directory is still my first stop for unfamiliar locations in imprints

It's not overwhelming, contains the most common places, and provides links to additional sources if you need more

https://rbms.info/lpn/

Paleography and language help

Roman numeral converter: http://www.novaroma.org/via_romana/numbers.html

Fraktur table: https://web.library.yale.edu/cataloging/music/fraktur

LC romanization tables: https://www.loc.gov/catdir/cpso/roman.html

Secretary hand: https://folgerpedia.folger.edu/mediawiki/media/images_pedia_folgerpedia_mw/2/21/Alphabet_Abbreviations.pdf

Some major European library catalogs

- Karlsruher Virtueller Katalog – pan-European search, with the US and Canada; I also use this to search German, Swiss, and Austrian libraries
- Library Hub – UK libraries, heavily academic, but does include the British Library
- Catalogue collectif de France – for French libraries
- OPAC SBN – for Italian libraries
- Catálogo colectivo del patrimonio bibliográfico español – for Spanish libraries
- Nederlandse Centrale Catalogus – for Dutch libraries
- UniCat – for Belgian libraries
- Porbase – for Portuguese libraries
- More may be found among ACRL's Libguides: https://acrl.libguides.com/ess

What I have access to and use

Library access:

- See what your library offers – I have JSTOR access through Boston Public Library, for example
- Those with limited access may consider a New York Society Library e-membership ($100/year) for access to JSTOR, ProjectMUSE, Oxford Reference Online, ProQuest Historical Newspapers, Books in Print, Oxford DNB, the Loeb Classical Library, and more

Individual subscriptions:

- *The Book Collector* – starting at $74.99/year for digital only
- *Gutenberg-Jahrbuch* – comes with membership in the Gutenberg-Gesellschaft (€72/year)
- *Papers of the Bibliographical Society of America* – comes with BSA membership, a bargain at $80/year! (also in JSTOR)
- *The Library* – comes with membership in the The Bibliographical Society, UK ($65/year)

And don't forget about interlibrary loan!

Questions?

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