Printers’ Devices

Many printer records contain a description of their devices and marks. In cooperation with the Royal Library in Copenhagen and the State Library in Berlin, CERL has undertaken the digitisation of important reference works on printers’ devices. To date, the CERL Thesaurus links to digital reproductions of the works of McKerrow, Renouard and Vindel, and to images of printers’ devices made available by the Italian Institute for the Union Catalogue (ICCU).

CERL Electronic Resources

The Heritage of the Printed Book Database (HPB)
The HPB offers scholars in all disciplines convenient and reliable access to over 4 million records of the European printed heritage from c. 1455 to c. 1830.

The CERL Thesaurus (CT)
The CERL Thesaurus contains forms of names for imprint places, persons and corporate bodies, printers and their devices, as well as provenance information.

The CERL Portal (CP)
The CP enables scholars to search across the contents of online manuscript databases, in combination with selected large databases of printed materials, thereby overcoming the historical differentiation of printed books and manuscripts in libraries.

Material Evidence in Incunabula (MEI)
MEI is a database for recording and searching the material evidence of 15th-century printed books: ownership, decoration, binding, manuscript annotations, stamps, prices, etc.

Can You Help? – Identifying Provenance Evidence
This is a resource for public discussion and identification of provenance queries. It allows the sharing of queries with an extensive network of specialists and the contribution of expertise.
The CERL Thesaurus

The CERL Thesaurus contains forms of imprint places, imprint names, personal names and names of institutions as found in material printed before the middle of the nineteenth century – including variant spellings, forms in Latin and other languages, and fictitious names. As such, it is an essential research tool for scholars and researchers of the period.

So far, more than 70 authority files from CERL member libraries and other projects concentrating on the history of the book have been brought together and made searchable in one single system.

Names of Persons and Institutions

The largest section of the CERL Thesaurus relates to records describing persons that have been involved in the intellectual production of books. This gives you access to more than 830,000 authors, translators, editors, artists, etc. identified through c. 2,500,000 different name forms and c. 20,000 institutions with more than 58,000 different name forms.

Wherever possible, persons and institutions are linked to their relatives, predecessors, successors, members and co-workers. Many records contain short summaries on the person's biography, their occupation and work. A growing number of records link to external resources, such as biographies.

Printers

The CERL Thesaurus contains more than 41,000 names of printers and other persons or institutions involved in the physical production and distribution of books (e.g. publishers, booksellers, etc.), with c. 105,000 variant name forms. Wherever possible, printers are linked to their predecessors and successors, and addresses of their workshops are given.

Printing Places

The CERL Thesaurus records include more than 16,000 printing places with more than 44,000 name forms (variant spellings, vernacular forms, etc.). Many of these places are also georeferenced and link to records for printers who were active there.

Provenance Information

More than 17,000 records of persons and institutions already link out to library catalogues where books are recorded that once belonged to them. This number of records increases as provenance indexes and authority files are integrated into the CERL Thesaurus. Thus, it will become increasingly less difficult to reconstruct the library of a historic person or institution.

Currenty the CERL Thesaurus links to more than 20 external bibliographic resources.

Writers, Printers, Publishers and Owners of books at your fingertips

The CERL Thesaurus is freely available http://thesaurus.cerl.org