Database of missing books - Royal Library, Copenhagen

The Royal Library in Copenhagen recently published a list of missing books [http://www.kb.dk/kb/missingbooks/index-en.htm](http://www.kb.dk/kb/missingbooks/index-en.htm). The site is of interest because of the detailed information that is provided. After having suffered numerous thefts, the Royal Library conducted an inventory of its stacks, from 1979 to 1999. A list of books in the older collections that were then found missing is published on the website (though the list also includes some items which were known to be missing before the 1970s). At present the list of missing books comprises books printed in the period 1501–1800, chronologically arranged by year of publication, and provides antiquarian book traders and auction houses with an efficient way to establish whether a given book is listed among the books missing in the Royal Library.

The list is based on shelflists dating from c. 1820 and onward, but every record has, as far as possible, been verified in other library catalogues, and the bibliographical information has been expanded and brought up to date. Bibliographical data was collated from information retrieved from the Hand Press Book database, the Karlsruher Virtueller Katalog (KVK), and from bibliographies and other printed sources, e.g. the VD 16 (Vergleich der im deutschen Sprachraum erschienenen Drucke des 16. Jahrhunderts). Copy-specific information (e.g. hand-written notes, important provenance information, binding features) on the shelflist has also been included in the list of missing books.

Of particular interest is the website’s survey in pictures and words of physical means of identifying items belonging to the Royal Library collections. The site gives detailed information on owner's marks, both inside and on the binding, the way shelfmarks were constructed in the Royal Library, and also details on royal monograms and the Danish national coats of arms.