



Wichita State University Libraries

Early English Books on microfilm

What it is.

The Early English Books microfilm collection consists of over 3,400 reels of microfilm containing roughly 95,000 documents printed in England or North America between 1475 and 1700. These documents include literature, essays, drama, religious texts, ballads and carols, political tracts, pamphlets, medical writings, the earliest editions of *The Canterbury Tales* and the *Morte d'Arthur*, and on and on. The originals of these documents reside in libraries and museums all over the world, and in many cases, only one copy exists. The collection actually is made up of two parts which are named for the authors who originally indexed the documents, so you may hear the years 1475-1640 referred to as Pollard and Redgrave, while the years 1641-1700 are referred to as Wing.

How it works.

The documents contained on the microfilms have been cataloged. They can be discovered through the WSU Libraries Online Catalog, but there are three simple steps you can take to ensure relevant results.

Step One. When you access the catalog (libcat.wichita.edu), change the default to **Advanced Search**:

The screenshot shows the Wichita State University Libraries Catalog search page. At the top, there is a yellow header with the WSU logo and the text "Wichita State University Libraries Catalog". Below the header, there is a navigation bar with links for "New Search", "Item Request", "My Account", "Login", "My Bookbag", "Help", and "Library". The "Advanced Search" tab is highlighted with a red circle. Below the navigation bar, there are three tabs: "Basic Search", "Advanced Search", and "Course Reserve". The "Advanced Search" tab is selected. Below the tabs, there is a "Search For:" field and a "Quick Limits (Optional-See instructions below):" dropdown menu. The "Search by:" dropdown menu is open, showing a list of search options: "Keyword Relevance", "Title (Omit first word if: a, an, the)", "Journal Title (Omit first word if: a, an, the)", "Author (Last Name first)", "Subject Heading", "Keyword Title", "Keyword Anywhere (and, or, not)", and "Call Number".

Step Two. Place your search term in one box, or two if you are combining or excluding terms. You can leave the **Search in** option to the default **Keyword Anywhere** or change it to **Author** or **Title** if you are looking for a specific author or document. If **Keyword Anywhere** is producing too many results, you can try **Subject** instead, but it is usually best to keep your subject terms broad. Also note that you may use the ? truncation character.

Step Three. In the next search box, enter the words **early english books**. Leave the other defaults alone. Now press the **Search** button.

In the following example, we are looking for documents about monarchs or monarchy and Queen Elizabeth or King James. Note that in the second line we changed the default **as a phrase** to **any of these**. It is not necessary to insert the word OR between the words **elizabeth** and **james**.

The search produced 36 results, the first two of which are shown below.

Search Request: Guided Search = ("monarch?") [in Keyword Anywhere] AND (elizabeth OR james) [in Keyword Anywhere] AND ("early english books") [in Keyword Anywhere]
 Search Results: Displaying 1 through 30 of 36 entries.

[Next](#)

Sort Results By: Post Limit

#	Bib Format	Title Long	Author	Date	Cover
<input type="checkbox"/> [1]	Book	Secret history of the four last monarchs of Great-Britain, viz. James I, Charles I, Charles II, James II [microform] : to which is added an appendix containing the later reign of James the Second, from the time of his abdication of England, to this presen		1693	
		Location: Ablah 1st Floor- Early English Books Microfilm East Wall	Call No: PR1127 .U6	Status: No item data available	
<input type="checkbox"/> [2]	Book	Bibliotheca politica, or, A discourse by way of dialogue whether monarchy be jure divino [microform] / collected out of the most approved authors both antient and modern.	Tyrrell, James. 1642-1718.	1692	
		Location: Ablah 1st Floor- Early English Books Microfilm East Wall	Call No: PR1127 .U6 Reel 1344:22	Status: No item data available	

Note that the call numbers of these two results are the same, but the second one includes a Reel Number. You will need the Reel Number to locate the microfilm that contains the document you want. Frequently you will have to click on the document title to get this information. Let's do that for result #1.

Title: The Secret history of the four last monarchs of Great-Britain, viz. James I, Charles I, Charles II, James II [microform] : to which is added an appendix containing the later reign of James the Second, from the time of his abdication of England, to this present Novemb. 1693 : being an account of his transactions in Ireland and France, with a more particular respect to the inhabitants of Great-Britain.

Published: London printed : [s.n.], 1693.

Description: Microform
Microform
[8], 171 p.

Series: [Early English books, 1641-1700 : 1001:10](#)

Subject Headings: [Great Britain History Stuarts, 1603-1714](#)
[Great Britain Kings and rulers Biography](#)

Reproduction: Microfilm. Ann Arbor, Mich. : University Microfilms International, 1983. 1 microfilm reel ; 35 mm. (Early English books, [1641-1700 : 1001:10](#))

Notes: Attributed to Nathaniel Crouch by Wing.
Reproduction of original in the University of Illinois (Urbana-Champaign Campus). Library.

Other Author(s), etc.: [R. B., 1632?-1726?](#)

Location: Ablah 1st Floor- Early English Books Microfilm East Wall

Call Number: [PR1127 .U6](#)

Map Direction: [Find Where It Is](#)

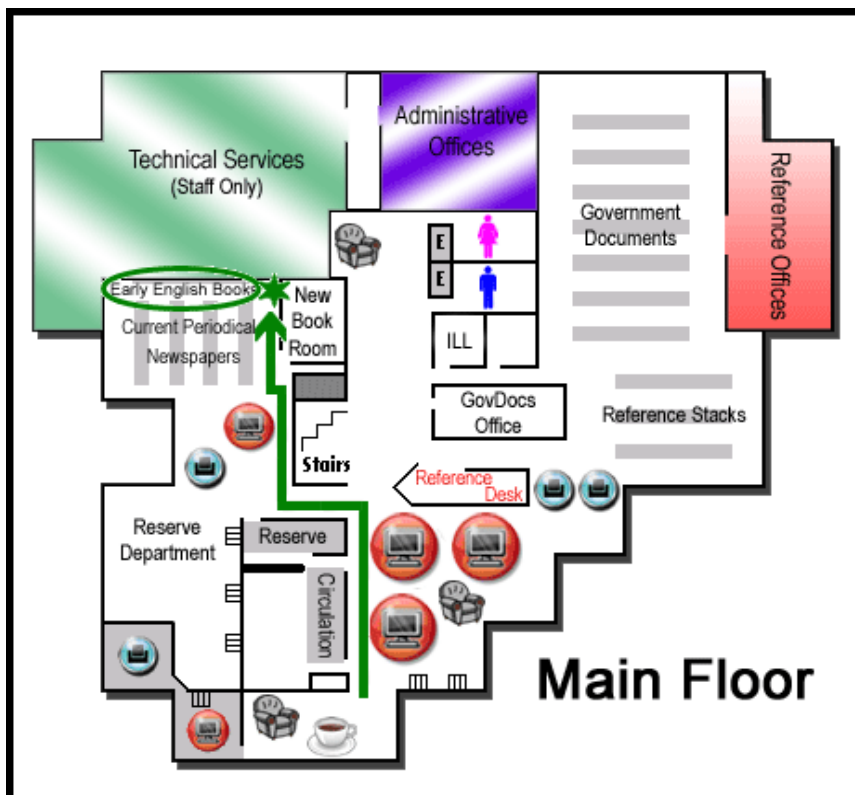
Text It: [Text this record to your cell phone](#)

Permanent Link: <http://libcat.wichita.edu/cgi-bin/Pwebrecon.cgi?BBID=1287672>

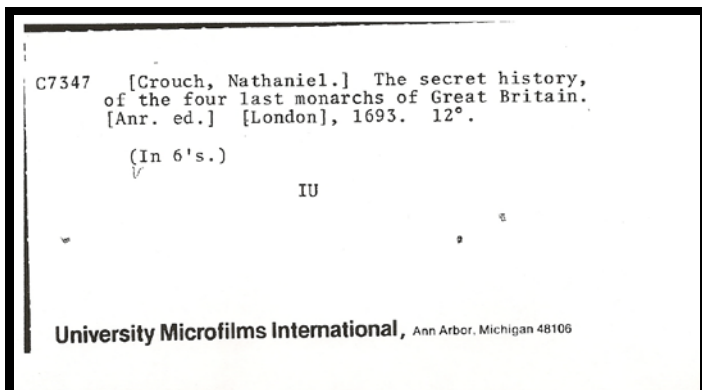
Since Early English Books is really made up of two collections, one ranging from 1475-1640 and the other from 1641-1700, the catalog information tells you to which set the document belongs. The first number after the set tells you which reel of film you need (Reel 1001 in this case), and the number after that indicates that, in this case, the document is the 10th one on that reel. *Documents may not have been filmed according to any pattern, so it is important to get this information.*

I found the citation. Now what?

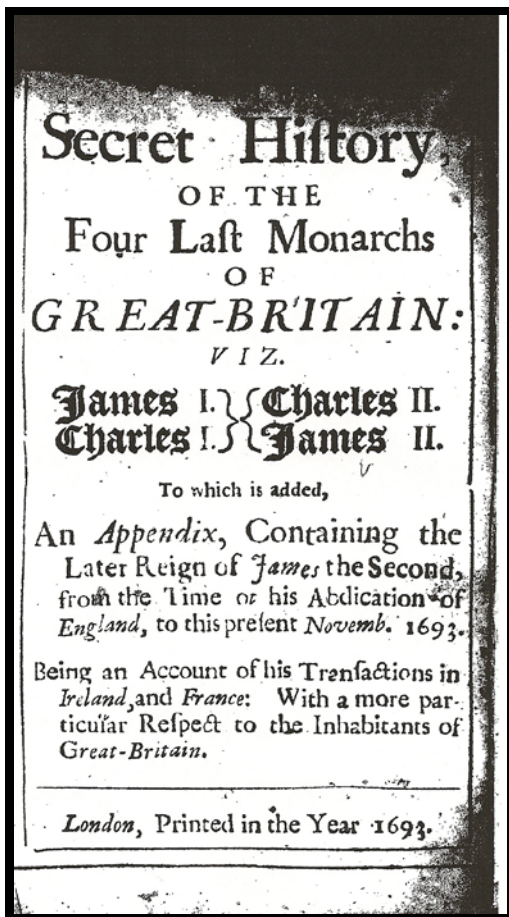
The next step is to get the film you need out of the microfilm drawer. The film is located in green cabinets on the East Wall of the Reserve Room, near the Current Periodicals. If the Location "East Wall" doesn't mean much to you, follow this map:



If you only need to view your document, proceed to the Microfilm Readers near the Reserve Desk. If you think you'd like to print, you'll need to get a paper tray from the Reserve Desk. Likewise, if you need a lesson on operating the Microfilm Reader, stop by the Reserve Desk and someone will help you.



A card like this precedes each document.



And here is the image of the first page of your document. If it looks a little less than pristine, remember, it's over 300 years old!

Now you're on your way to better, more effective use of the Early English Books collection. As always, if you need more help, Ask a Librarian! We can be reached **in person** at the Reference Desk; by **phone** at (316) 978-3584; or by **chat** or **e-mail** from the Wu_Knows page: <http://library.wichita.edu/wuknows/>. Happy researching!

Created by [Liorah Golomb](#), Humanities Librarian, February 2009.