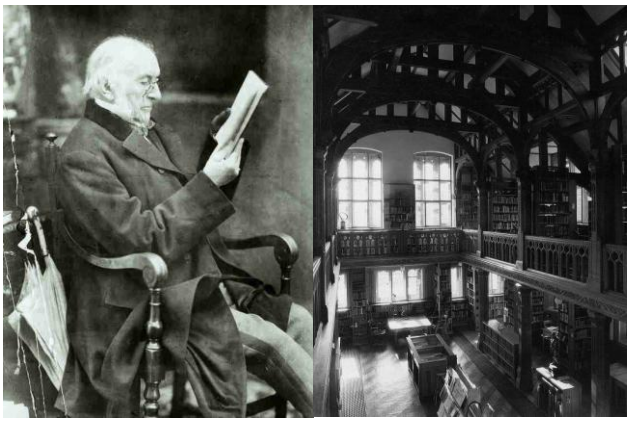
GladCAT

An online catalogue of the books and reading of William Ewart Gladstone



GladCAT is the end result of a three year AHRC funded research project undertaken by Gladstone's Library (formerly St Deiniol's Library) and the University of Liverpool between 2006 and 2009, which aimed to identify and catalogue the books personally owned by William Ewart Gladstone. It is an electronic research resource invaluable not just for Gladstone scholars, but for all students of nineteenth century literature and culture, as well as for historians of the book and of reading.

GladCAT is an online catalogue, separate from the main library catalogue, which contains records only for those books known to have belonged to Gladstone himself. Many of these – like Gladstone's copies of works by Dante, Shakespeare, Walter Scott, Newman, and Tennyson - contain his own annotations and are irreplaceable. GladCAT not only provides a unique insight into the scope of his library, but provides extensive, searchable details of his many annotations and marginalia. It is designed as a research tool for scholars interested in Gladstone's reading, and for literary and cultural historians interested in reading practices, the nineteenth-century 'reading experience', and libraries as cultural institutions. These are dynamic and relatively new areas of cultural investigation, and no other project in the world offers such an insight into the habits of an individual reader over so many years and across so many volumes.

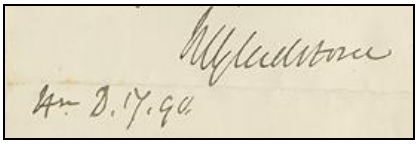
The project to identify Gladstone's books and create GladCAT was headed by Dr Juliet John as principal investigator. The postdoctoral researchers on the project were Dr Mark Llewellyn (2006-7) and Dr Matthew Bradley (2007-9). Also working on the database were Dr Karen McDonaugh-Nicholls, Jessica Thomas, Michela Baldo, Stewart Manifold, Mark Bradley, Deirdre Boleyn, Gregory Morris and Patsy Williams.

I) IDENTIFYING GLADSTONE'S BOOKS

Books in the library have been identified as WEG's by means of one or more of the following:

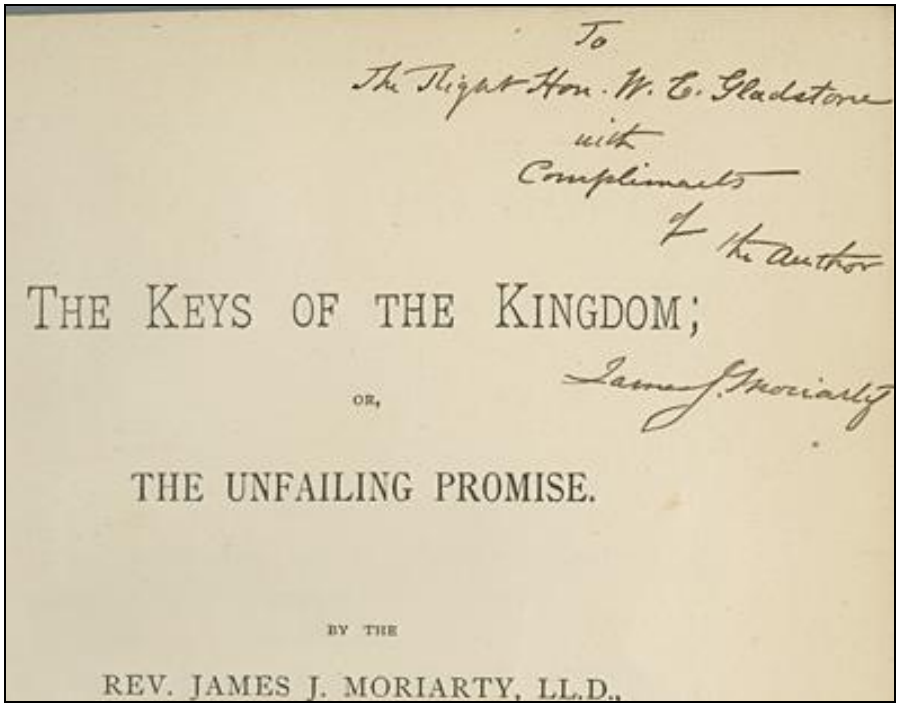
1) The presence of WEG's bookplate
WEG's personal bookplate, easily distinguishable from that of the Library bookplates, is a clear identifier of ownership:

2) The presence of WEG's signature
Sometimes abbreviated to 'WEG' and/or dated, this is another clear identifier:



3) Accession number
St Deiniol's Library only began the formal accessioning of books in 1897. It was estimated in 1907 by the then Warden that 29,000 volumes had been brought down by Gladstone from his personal collection, and a further 2,000 as a bequest. The accession register begins at approximately 28,214, and was begun in 1897. The fact that most of Gladstone's personally owned books thus predate the accession system means that many do not have an original accession number (new accession numbers, beginning with an 'R', have since been generated for cataloguing purposes). However, certain books can nevertheless be positively identified in this way in the absence of other identifiers. Books with original accession numbers lower than 32,000 are almost always WEG books.

4) Dedications


To
The Right Hon. W. E. Gladstone
with
Compliments
of the Author
James J. Moriarty

THE KEYS OF THE KINGDOM;

OR,

THE UNFAILING PROMISE.

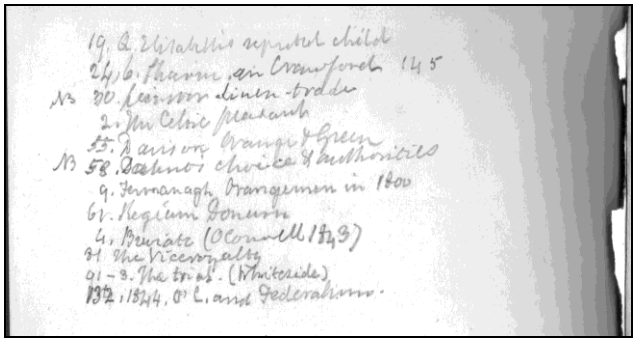
BY THE

REV. JAMES J. MORIARTY, LL.D.,

Dedications from authors, publishers, editors can often be clear (i.e. when they mention Gladstone by name or clearly refer to him). Unspecific dedications ('From the Author' etc) without some other corroborative evidence of ownership are relatively rare, but in the absence of any evidence to the contrary they are treated as a positive identifier. It is certainly possible that books would have been dedicated to or specifically sent to other members of the Gladstone family before 1898, but the balance of probability seems against dedications on these being non-specific in character. Likewise, it would seem likely that any such books would have eventually been housed as part of WEG's own collection in any case. There remains the potential problem of non-specific dedications on books that may have been acquired at second-hand, but it was judged that un-accessioned books that fell into this category would likely be very few in number.

5) Annotations on the text in WEG's handwriting
These are dealt with fully in Section III.

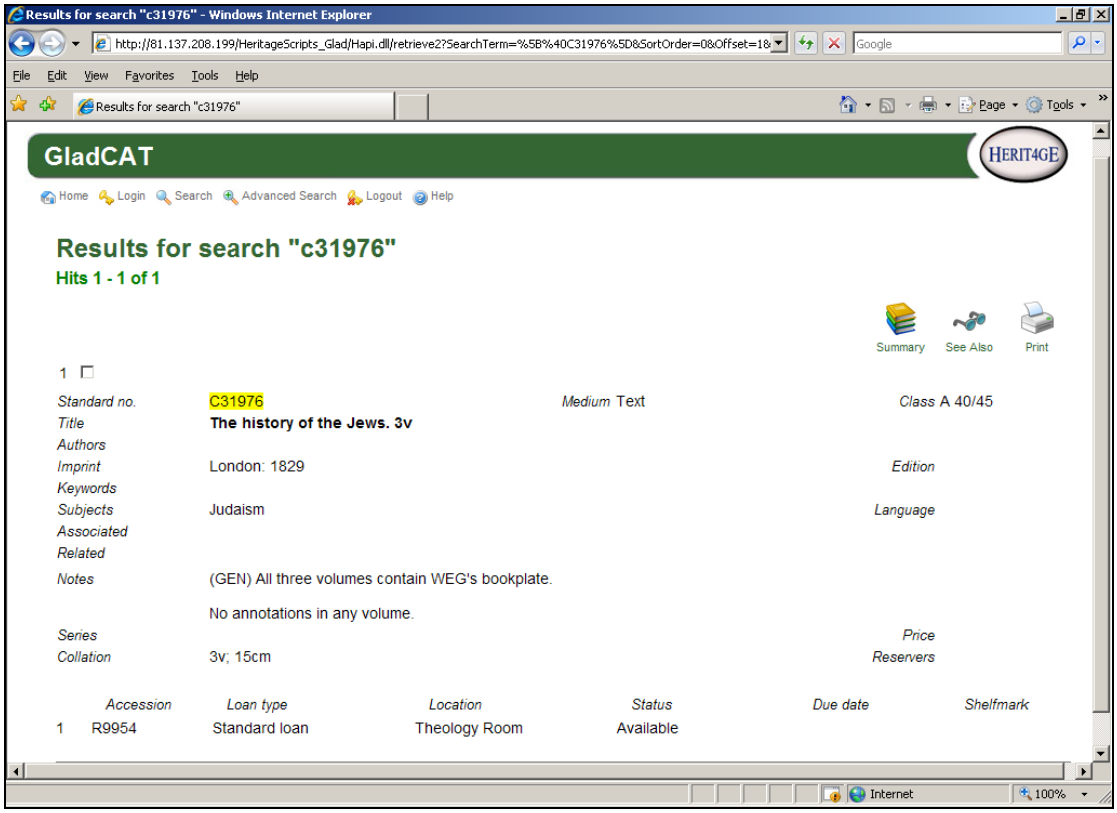
6) WEG's handwritten index
It was generally Gladstone's practice to write an index of his own at the back of any volume that he was reading carefully, sometimes spreading over a number of the back pages.


19. Q. Elizabeth's reputed child
24, 6. Pharm. an Crawford 145
NB 30. Leinster linen-trade
2. The Celtic peasant
55. Davison Orange & Green
NB 58. Dalton's choice & authorities
9. Fermanagh Orangemen in 1800
61. Regium Donum
4. Beviate (O'Connell 1843)
81 The Viceroyalty
91-3. The trial. (Whiteside)
132, 1844. O'C. and Federalism.

II) GladCAT STANDARD FORMATS

Each record in GladCAT gives the same bibliographical information for each book as can be found in the main library catalogue, i.e. standard number, classmark, author, publisher, number of volumes, location in the library, accession number, etc. A full record appears thus:

(i)



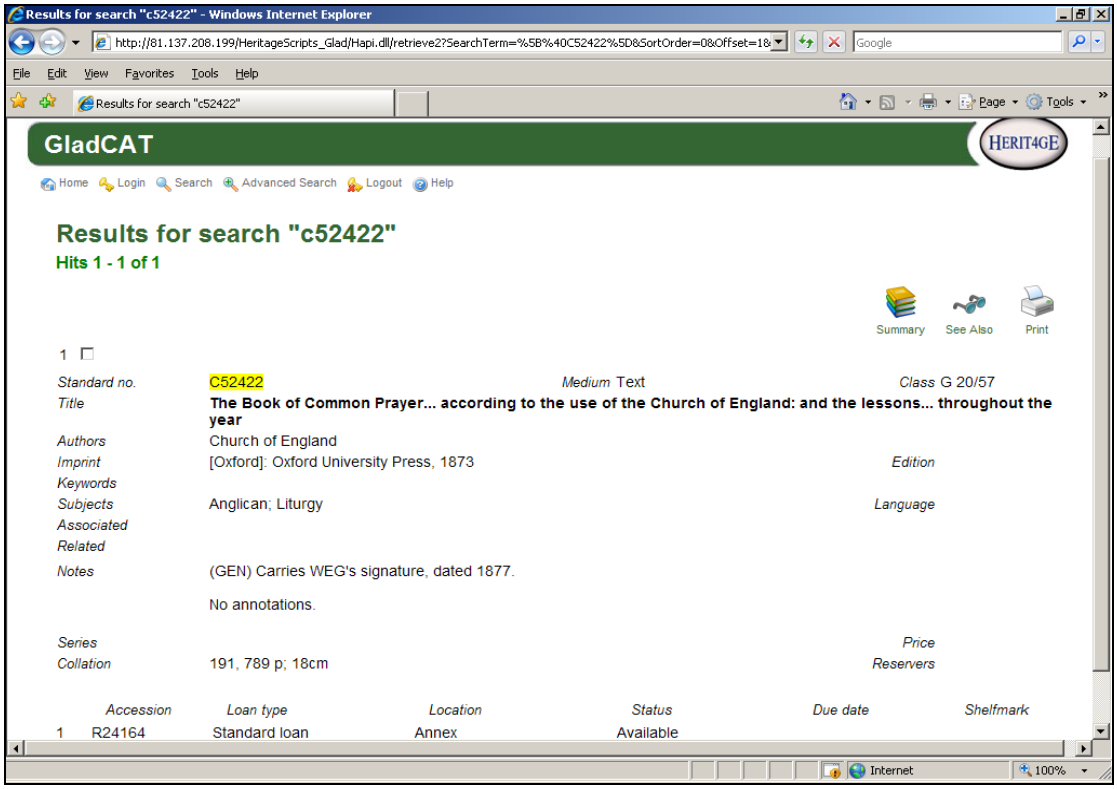
The specific information on identifiers and annotations is provided via a general note in the 'Notes' section of each record (this is what the '(Gen)' marker indicates).

Within the 'Notes' section, the identifiers are always logged as follows:

1) **The presence of WEG's bookplate**
This is logged on GladCAT in one of two standard formats:
Single volumes: 'Contains WEG's bookplate.'
Multi-volume works: 'All *n* volumes/Vols. *n-n* contain WEG's bookplate.' (see screenshot above).

2) The presence of WEG's signature
This can vary, but the standard format always contains: 'Carries WEG's signature'. If relevant, this is then followed by more specific information (i.e. 'dated 1837', 'Hawarden', 'WEG' etc):

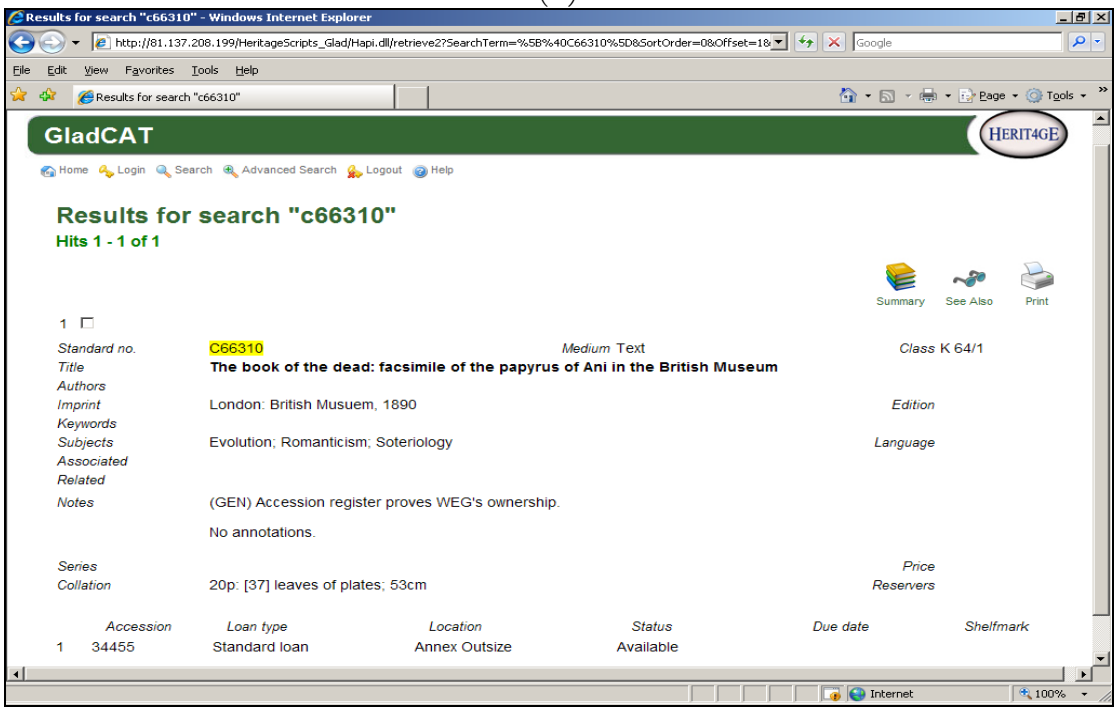
(ii)



3) Accession number

The accession numbers for all books on GladCAT is given as part of the general record information (see (i) and (ii) bottom left). However, they are only mentioned as part of the annotations in the absence of any other positive identifiers. In these cases, the standard format reads: 'Accession register proves WEG's ownership', as per below:

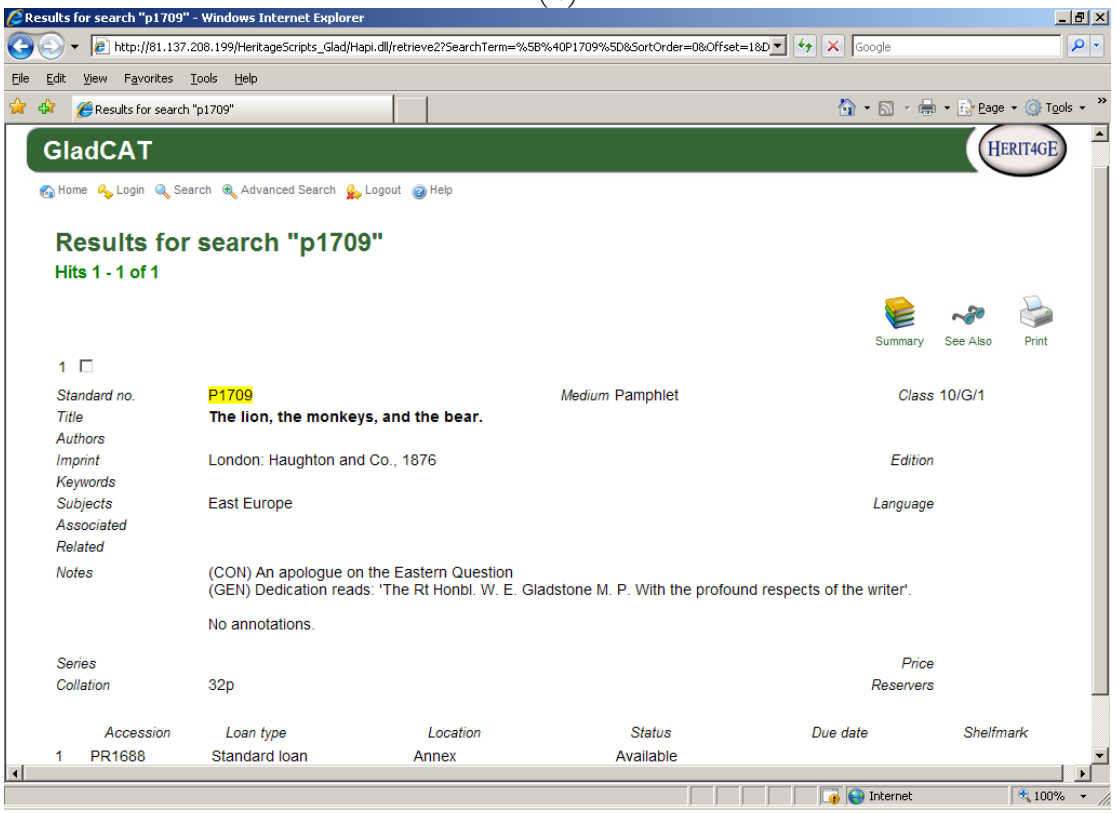
(iii)



4) Dedication

All dedications are reproduced in full on GladCAT, in one of two standard formats: Where the dedication is written into the front pages of the volume: 'Dedication reads:' Where the dedication is found elsewhere, i.e. on the front cover or on a loose slip of paper: 'Dedication, on *x*, reads:'

(iv)



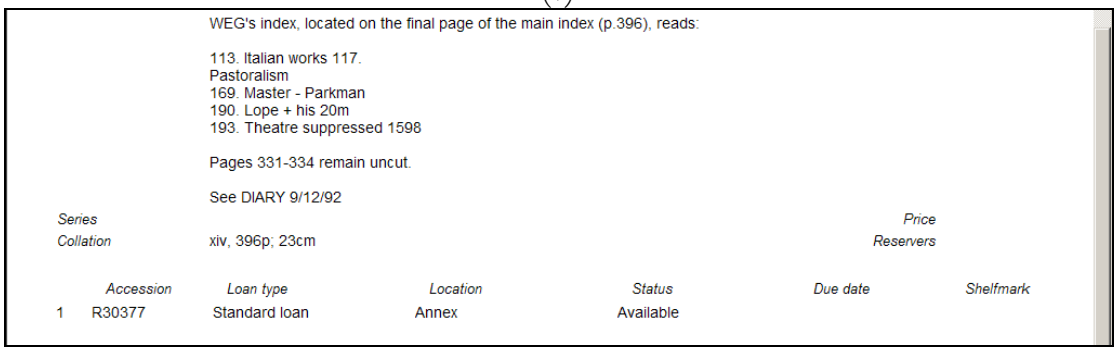
5) Annotations on the text in WEG's handwriting

See Section III.

6) WEG's handwritten index

All of WEG's personal indexes – the handwritten lists he jotted down while reading a book – are reproduced in full on GladCAT. The standard format gives a description of the location of the index followed by a page number, i.e. 'WEG's index, located on *x* (p.*y*), reads:'. The location is generally 'the final page of text', 'the final page of the appendix', 'the final page of the index', 'one of the rear flyleaves' etc. When the index is on the reverse of the final numbered page of a volume, the descriptor is omitted and the previous page number is given with a 'v' (verso), e.g. 'WEG's index, located on p.419v, reads:'. This, for example, is the index from James Fitzmaurice Kelly's *Life of Cervantes:*

(v)



WEG's index, located on the final page of the main index (p.396), reads:

113. Italian works 117.
Pastoralism
169. Master - Parkman
190. Lope + his 20m
193. Theatre suppressed 1598

Pages 331-334 remain uncut.

See DIARY 9/12/92

Series *Price*

Collation xiv, 396p; 23cm *Reservers*

	Accession	*Loan type*	*Location*	*Status*	*Due date*	*Shelfmark*
1	R30377	Standard loan	Annex	Available		

When indexes run over multiple pages or are in multiple columns, this is indicated in square brackets. When an index is in multiple columns only for reasons of space (i.e. remains continuous across all columns), this is not logged on GladCAT although a small space is added to indicate a break.

As can also be seen in (v), uncut pages are also logged as such on GladCAT – except when the number of pages cut is very small (as above), the format usually reads 'The majority of pages in this volume remain uncut', 'A number of pages in this volume remain uncut', or 'From p.*x* onward, a number of pages in this volume remain uncut'.

Diary entries

All GladCAT records also provide information on if and when Gladstone recorded his reading of a particular volume in his diary. There is a case to say that the diary entry itself could constitute an identifier in any doubtful cases – i.e. if a book with no other identifiers was found both in the Library and the Diary it might be entered as a Gladstone book. However, GladCAT aims to provide a *verifiable* record of Gladstone's reading, so this type of speculation has been avoided. If there is a diary entry for an identified book, the record shows 'See DIARY dd/mm/yy' (see (v) above). In some cases, i.e. when an edition postdates Gladstone's noted reading of the volume, or when a work owned in many different editions is not given in a specific edition (e.g. Dante's *Divine Comedy, Inferno*), the diary entry is omitted. It is important to note that the index to Gladstone's diaries used for compiling these is not itself 100% reliable, as it was created without reference to the physical collection.

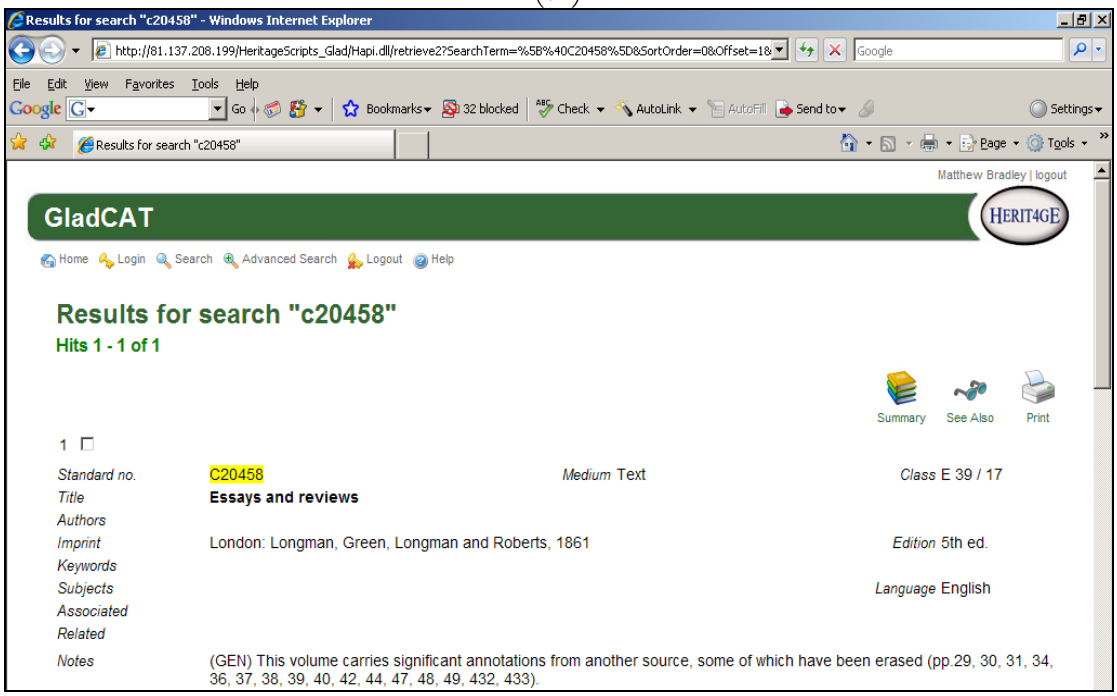
Other material

Where other material has been found in the volume(s) (i.e. letters, calling cards, etc) this is logged in GladCAT under 'An *x* was found in this volume, which reads:'

(vi)

When annotations in another hand or from another source are present in the volume, this is indicated by the identifier 'This volume contains [significant] annotations from another source', with page numbers where this has been practicable.

(vii)



III) ANNOTATIONS

Gladstone's annotations were generally composed to a reasonably fixed scheme. Gladstone himself noted down a key to his annotations in the back of the second volume of his copy of John Locke, which reads:

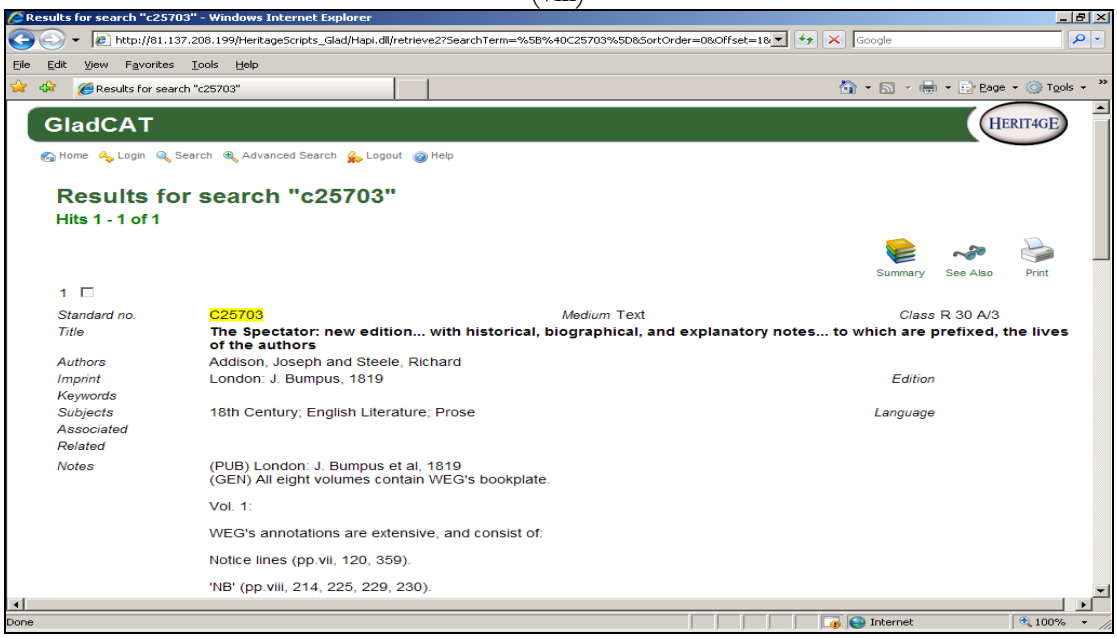
- notice |
- special notice.... *NB*
- n. [note] with approbation...+.
- disapprobation..X, =.
- special do. [ditto] XX, XXX.
- a doubt....?
- a reservation or qualification ....*ma.*
- disbelief or surprise ...! (at statement, or, manner of statement)

This is not 100% comprehensive as a key, and of course the annotations do change over time – however, there is a surprising level of consistency and uniformity for the personal notes of an individual reader. Notable omissions from the above are a 'v' mark (for a tick) which is another major annotation of WEG's, as is a backward '?', the meaning of which continues to remain unclear.

The decision on the level of detail to include on GladCAT records was a long process, which ultimately had to be made based on the time available to input the entries after identification was completed. A number of formats were tried, but eventually the following was decided for books in English.

Descriptor(s)
The beginning of the annotations information always begins with the following formula – 'WEG's annotations are *x*, and consist of:' Within this formula, there are five main descriptors: 'extremely light', 'relatively light', 'moderate', 'extensive' and 'very extensive'. This is intended as an at-a-glance way for users to ascertain the level of annotations present.

(viii)

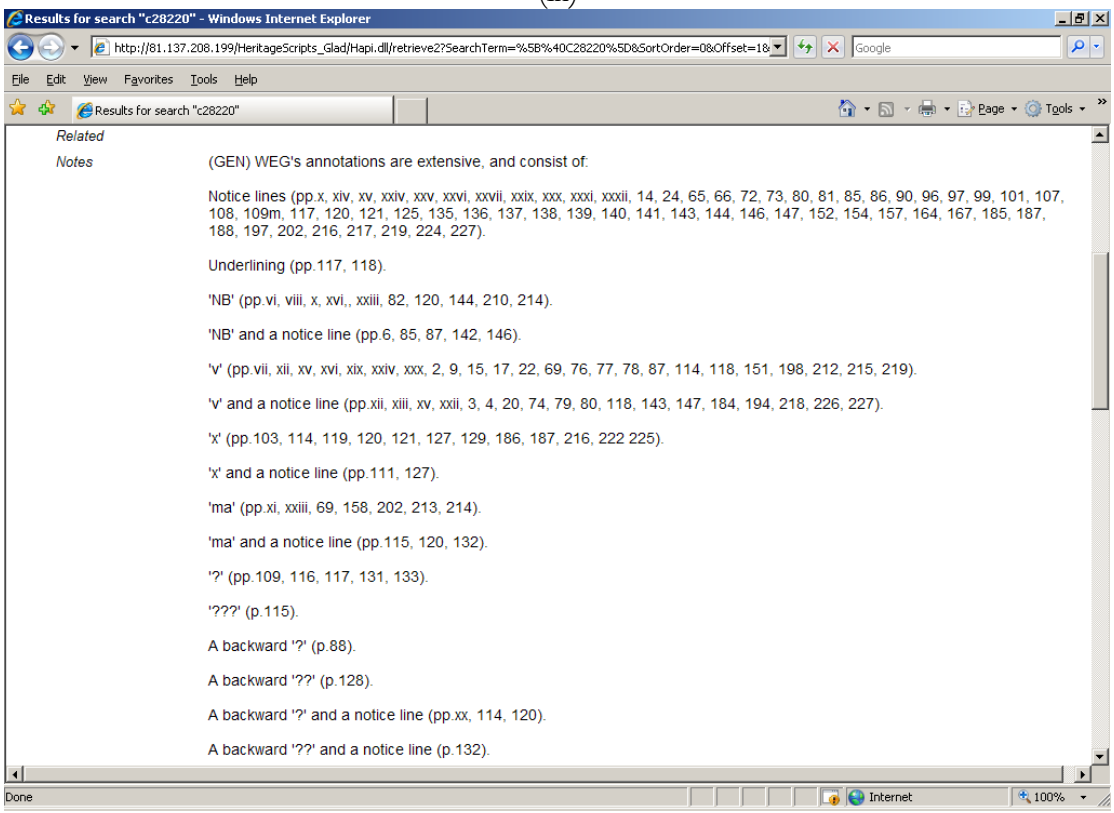


If there are no annotations present, the entry simply reads 'No annotations' or 'no annotations in any volume' for multi-volume works.

Annotation Symbols

The page numbers on which individual symbols occur are logged individually – i.e. 'Notice lines (pp.*x*, *y,* etc).' This is a labour intensive process, but was found to be the only way to realistically represent the balance of annotations over any volume. The page references do not, however, note the re-occurrence of any symbol on a single page. As it was not possible to direct readers to specific line references in the time available, the individual page was here taken as the smallest unit of reference. One of the principles of GladCAT is that it is a *guide* to the annotations, but cannot be a substitute for consultation of the physical volume. This is the information for WEG's copy of Matthew Arnold's *Last Essays on Church and Religion*:

(ix)

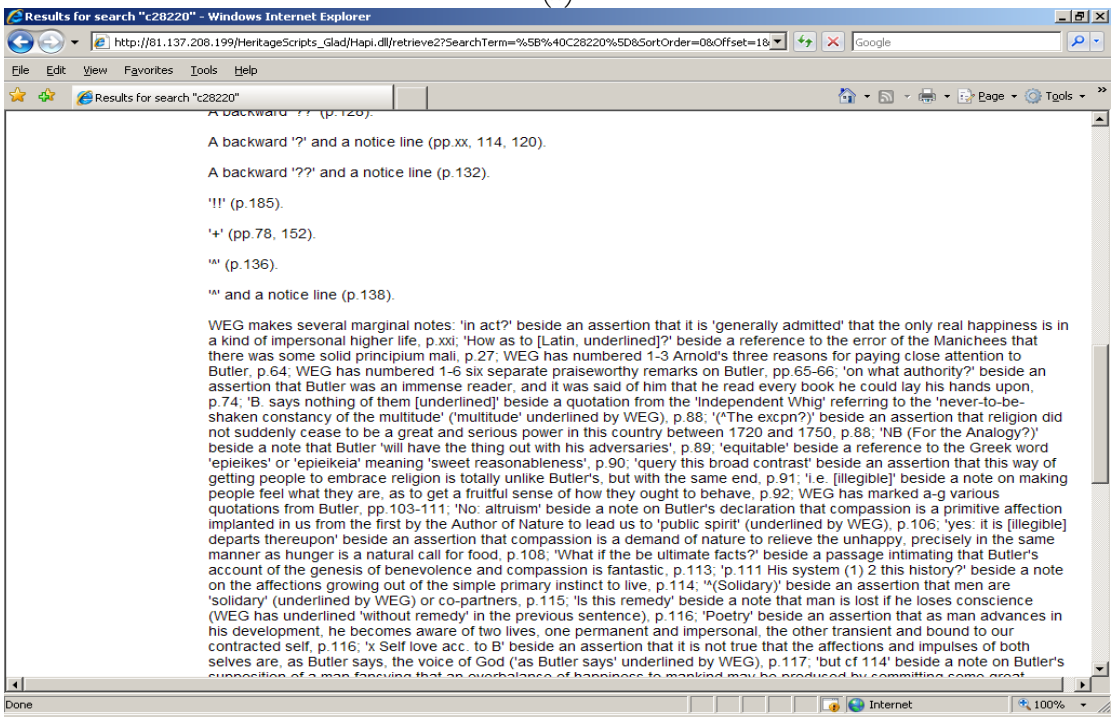


Commentary and marginal notes

When WEG has written comments or words in the margins, these are quoted in full on GladCAT, and logged not only by page number but by a small 'index-style' entry. This allows the user a sense of what is being referred to. It may possibly allow them to locate the relevant passage in another copy of the same book elsewhere, but it is included mainly to aid keyword searching. This section also includes technical corrections to the text by WEG. The standard format for this is: 'WEG makes *x* marginal notes:' except in cases where the commentary is on flyleaves, endpapers, where it is separately noted at the beginning or end of the record.

When Gladstone's writing is insufficiently clear, '[illegible]' is used in place of the text. When a 'best-guess' has been made, the word is followed by '[??]'. Below, the notes information on Arnold's *Last Essays*:

(x)

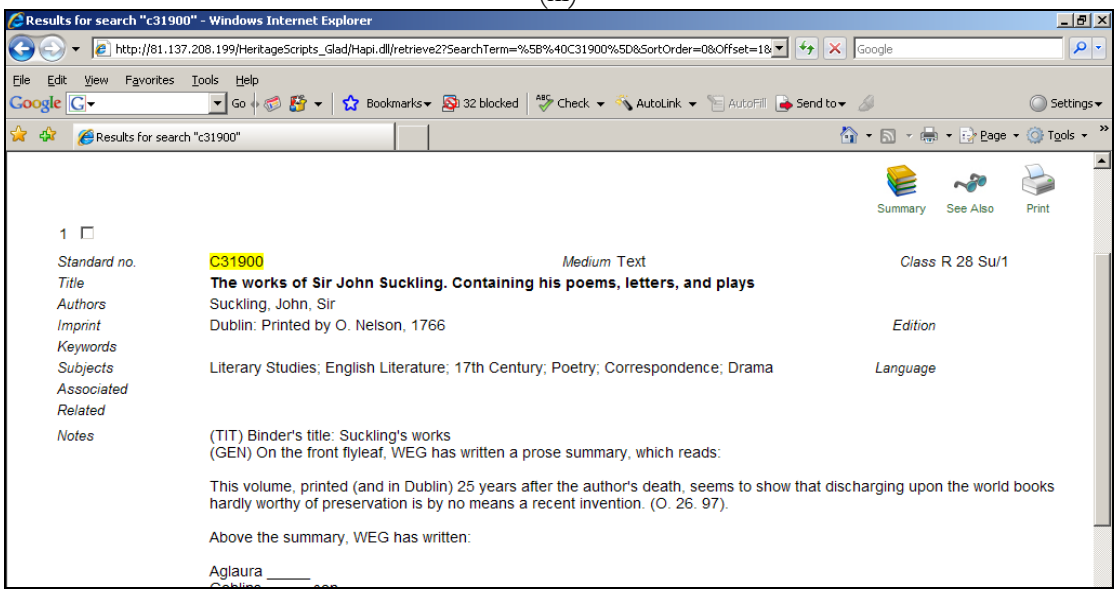


Because of technical issues surrounding the transfer of information into the Heritage system, accents on words have usually had to be omitted from the annotations information. For similar reasons, underlining is indicated by '[underlined]' beside the relevant word, '[underlined from…]', or ['x' underlined] after the relevant words.
When a book is marked 'very extensive', it does not carry the full information on the marginal notes, as this would be impossible to fit into a single record – it does however provide page numbers for these (note there are only 3 such books in the library).

Prose Summaries

On some volumes, WEG has written short prose summaries at the front of his books. When this occurs, it is reproduced in full, with the format 'On *x*, WEG has written a prose summary, which reads:'

(xi)



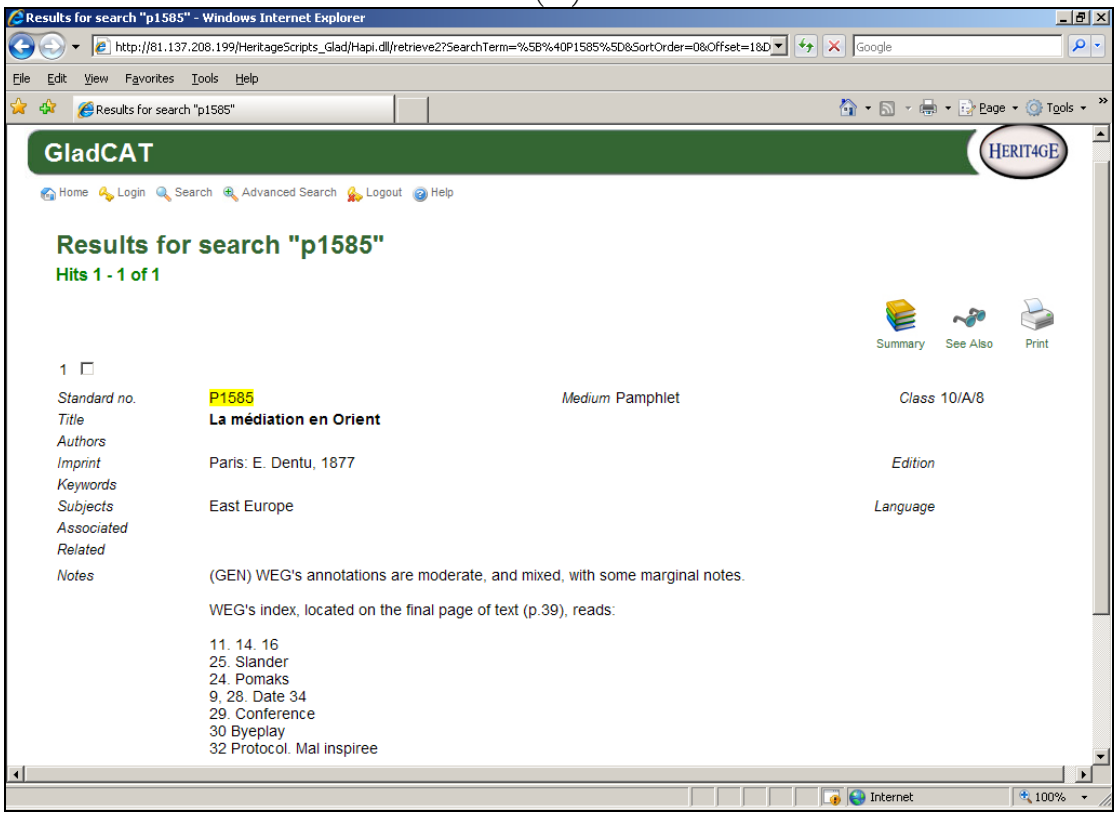
Variations and Combinations

Relying on a fixed system of annotation logging is obviously problematic The disadvantage of logging a system of annotations that is relatively fixed obviously comes with variation and combination. The extent to which GladCAT should take account of these is a delicate balancing act between clarity and fidelity. GladCAT makes a distinction between whether symbols appear with a notice line or without (see vi), but more minor variations (such as whether a notice line is straight or jagged for example) have not been noted. Likewise, when WEG has underlined sections of the text in clear reference to an accompanying symbol, this has not been noted (although such underlining is noted when it accompanies comments or marginal notes, see vii above). When there are large amounts of underlining unaccompanied by symbols (relatively unusual for WEG), this is included as a separate line of annotations (as in vii above).

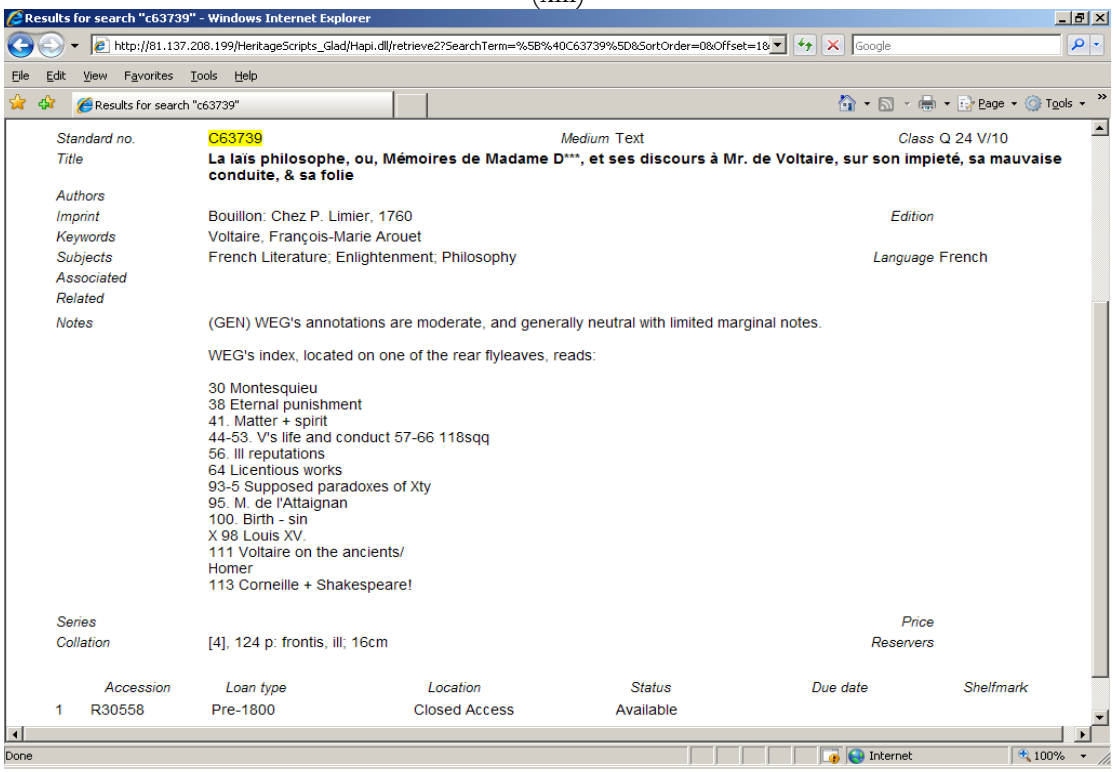
Exceptions - Foreign Language Material, Pamphlets, and works by WEG

Annotations on books in a foreign language, pamphlets, and works by WEG owned by himself are in general treated slightly differently to full-length volumes written in English. In these cases, there is no log of annotation page numbers or any individual record of marginal notes. Instead, a more extensive descriptor is used which preserves the 'extremely light/relatively light/moderate/extensive/very extensive', distinction but adds the categories 'neutral', 'approving', 'disapproving' and 'mixed' (which can be used in combination). Where there are marginal notes, these too are added with an appropriate descriptor ('limited', 'some', or 'significant'). WEG's indexes in such material, however, are always reproduced. Two examples:

(xii)

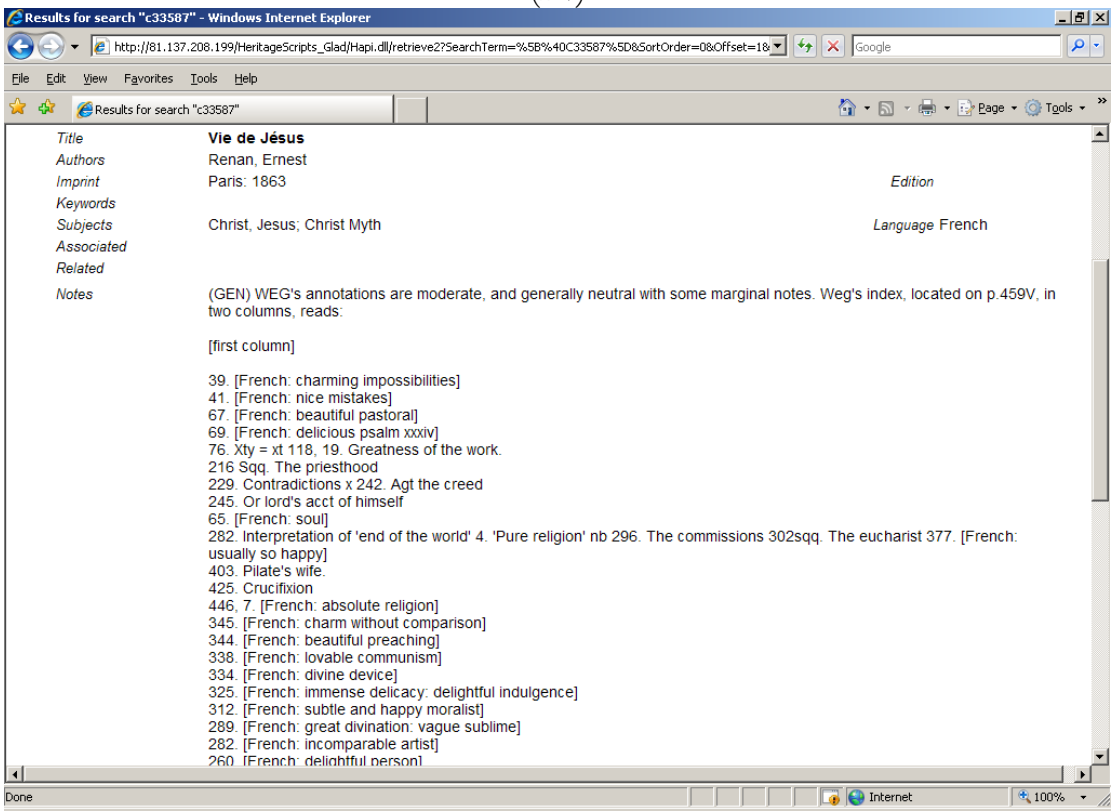


(xiii)



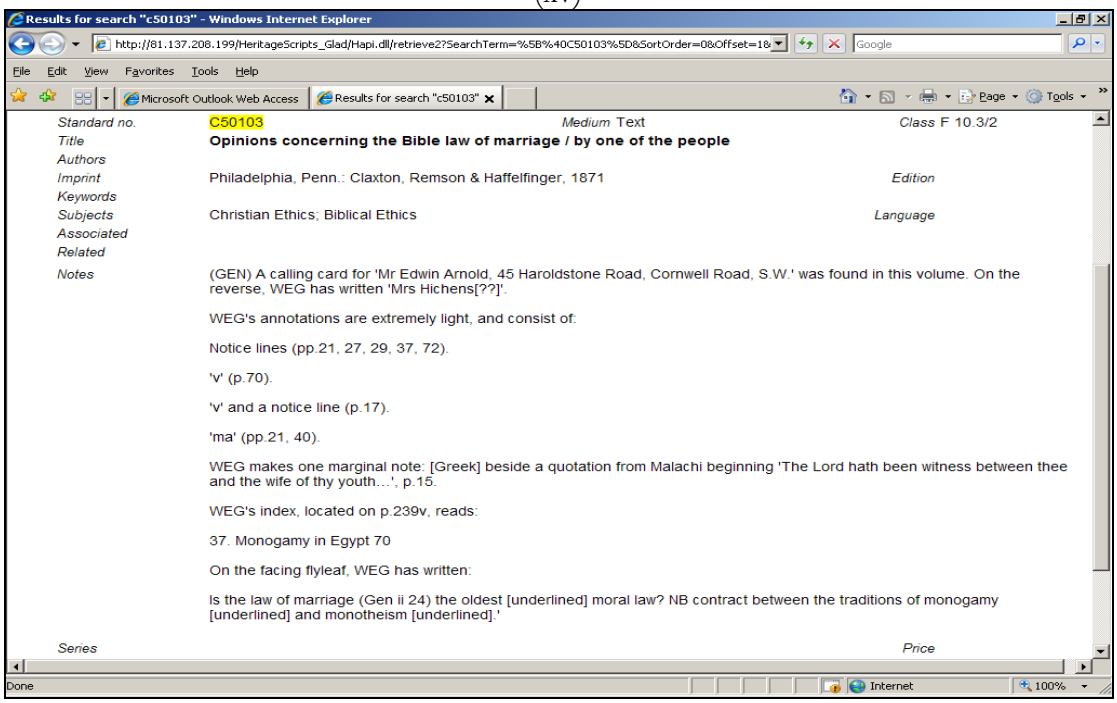
A large percentage of WEG's annotations made in a foreign language have been translated for GladCAT. Where these have been translated, translations appear in square brackets after the language, as seen below in WEG's index to Renan's *Vie de Jesus*:

(xiv)



When the annotation has not been translated, this is indicated by a simple square bracket stating the language (i.e. '[Greek]').

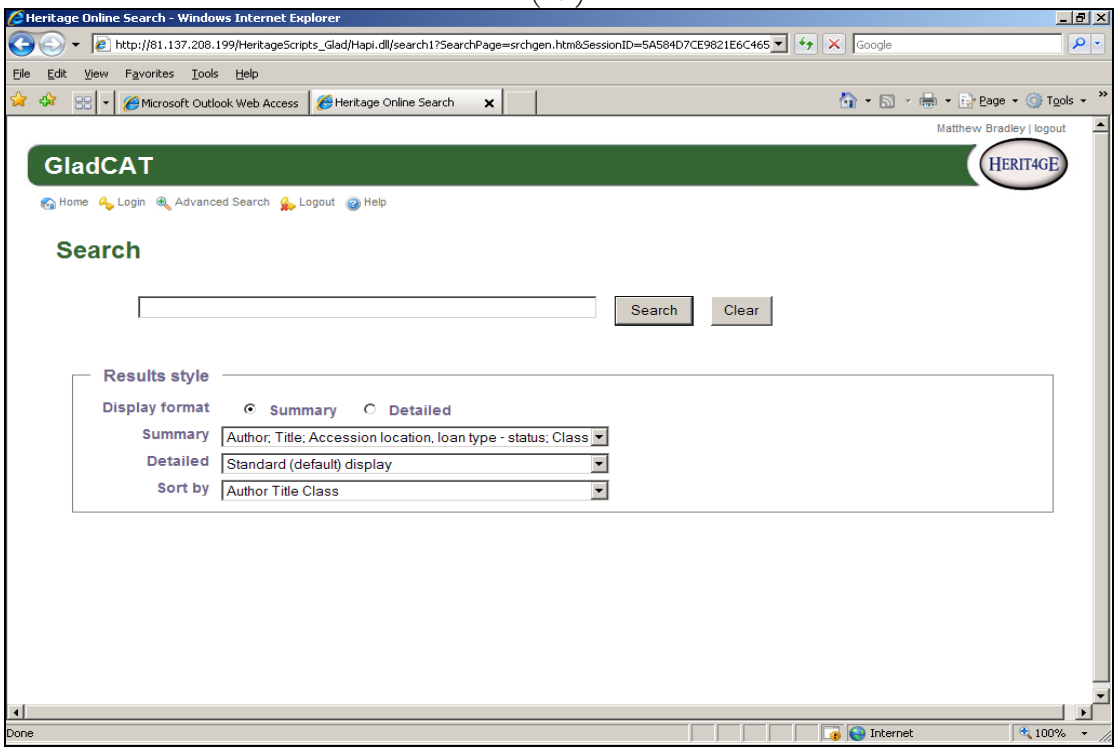
(xv)



IV) SEARCHING GladCAT

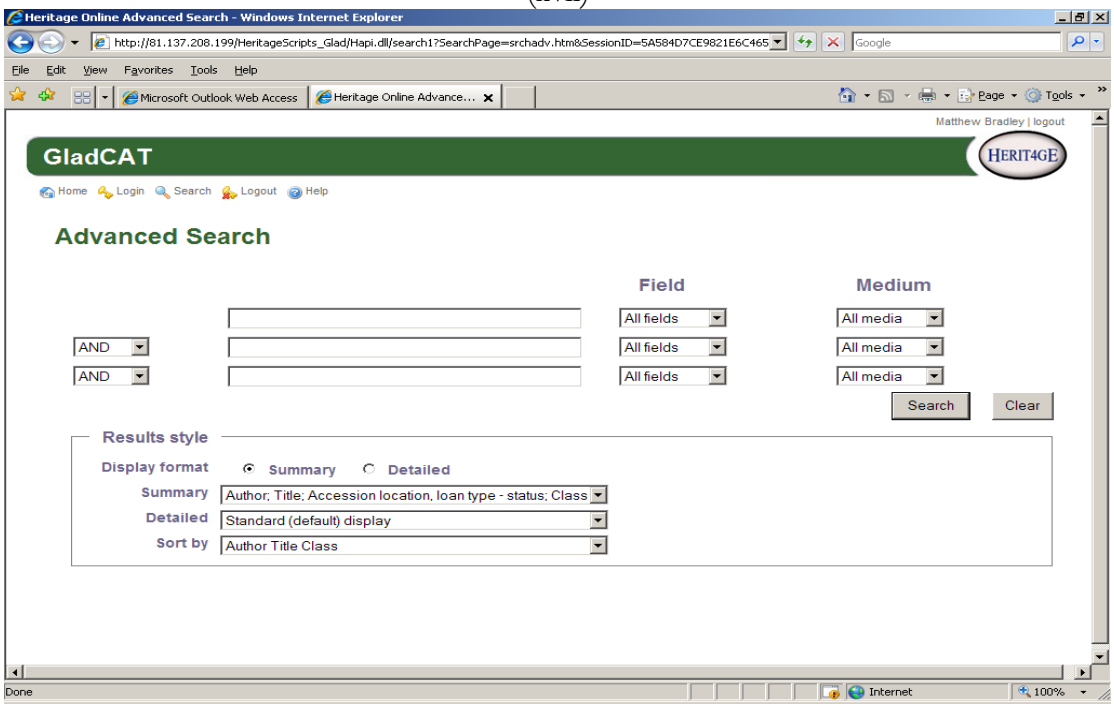
The general search screen appears as follows:

(xvi)



As is clear, the catalogue offers basic keyword searching, plus the facility to vary the information displayed in the search, the level of detail shown for each record, and the sorting method used. Also, if the user clicks on the icon 'Advanced Search', this screen is displayed:

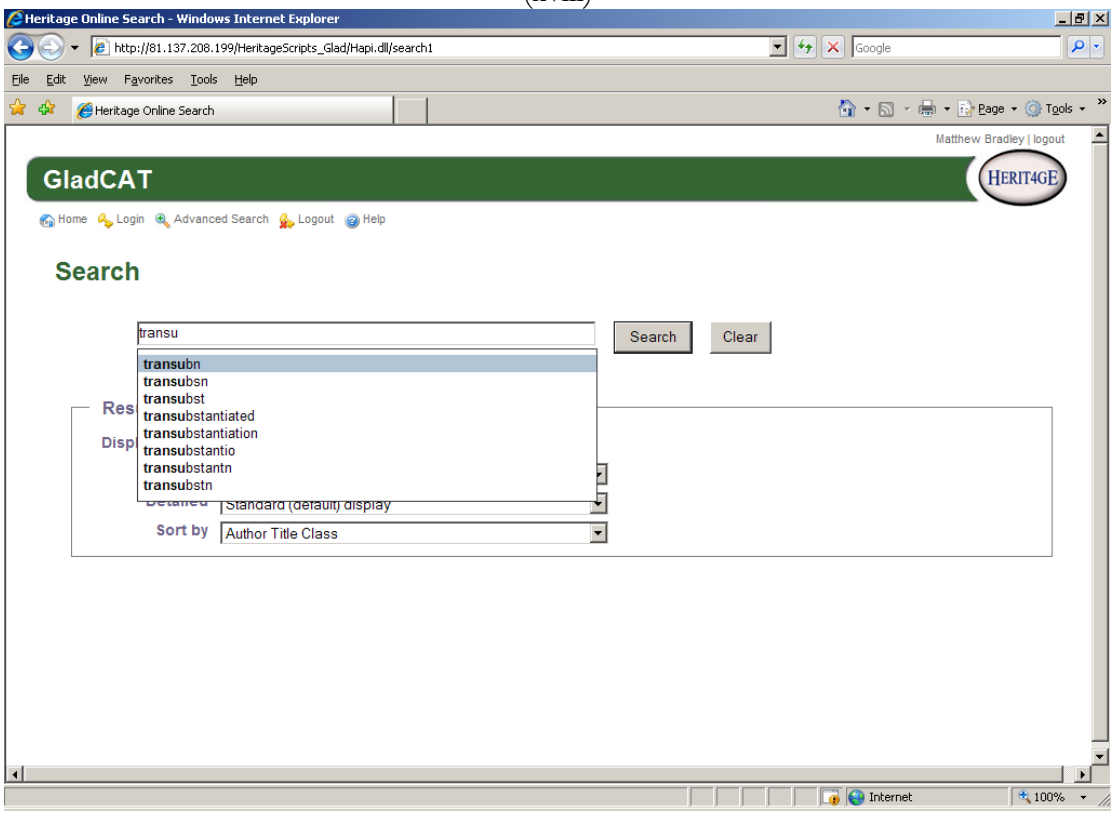
(xvii)



The 'Advanced Search' option allows the user to search by individual fields: authors, titles, ISBNs, etc. Crucially for GladCAT, the 'Notes' field can be searched in isolation, allowing users to create search results with terms only relevant to Gladstone's actual annotations, held in this section. So, for example, while a search for 'Newman' in the author field may bring up many works that Gladstone owned but did not necessarily read, a search in the 'Notes' section should produce results mostly pertaining to either annotations either specifically mentioning Newman, or those relevant to him.

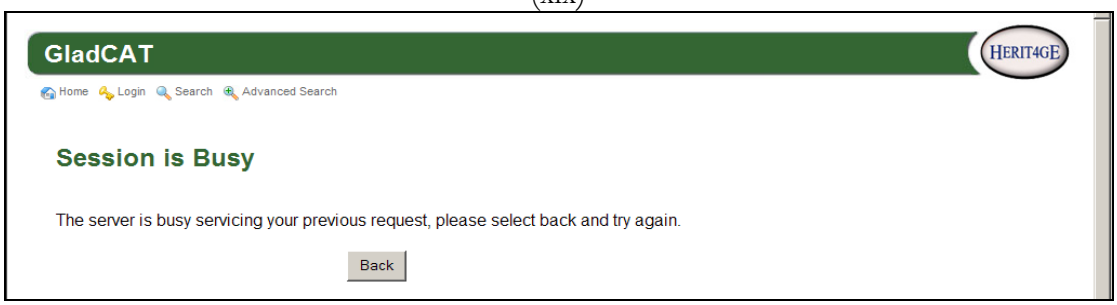
There is also a word list which drops down from a search as it is typed (provided it is typed relatively slowly). This is a very useful tool in finding variant spellings in the annotations. See, for example, a partially typed search for 'transubstantiation':

(xviii)



The generation of the word list sometimes takes longer than natural typing speed, which means that sometimes an error message is returned when you enter your search telling you the system is too busy – just click on the 'back' button and try again.

(xix)



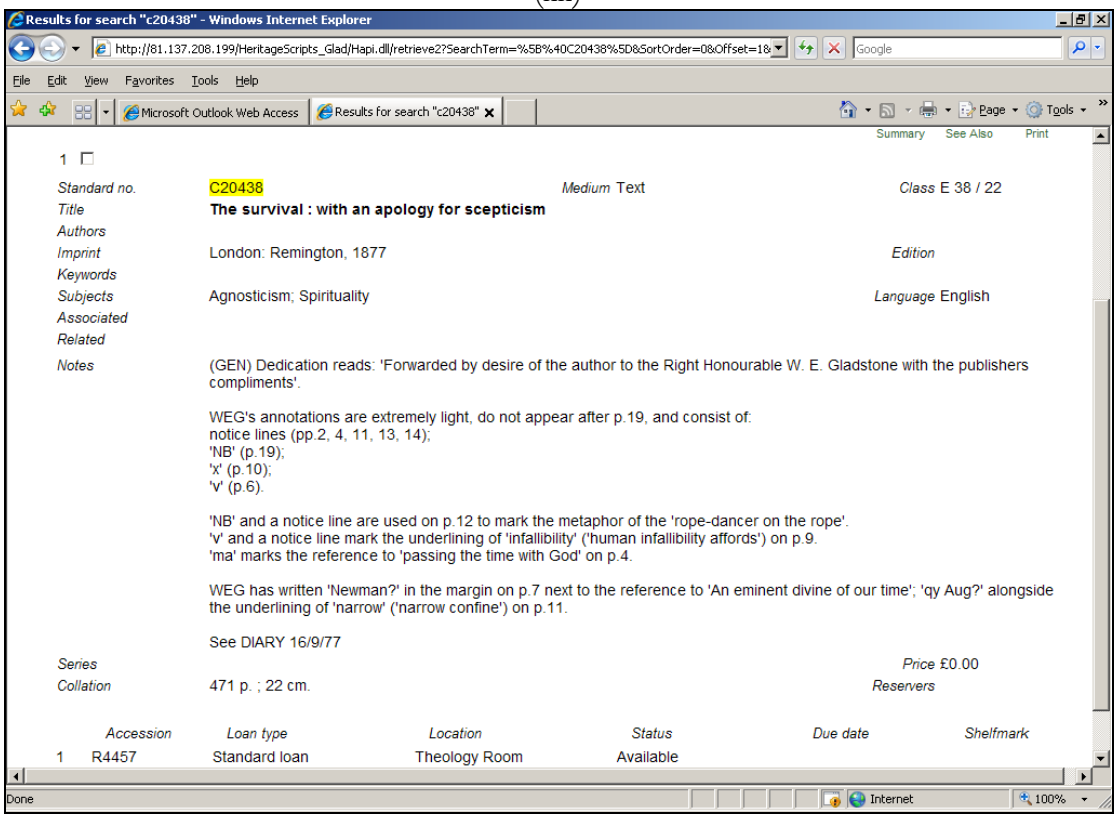
V) COVERAGE

GladCAT contains records for every annotated book belonging to Gladstone held by Gladstone's Library. This, of course, can never be a comprehensive list of all Gladstone's reading or even of his book collecting – a substantial number of books are still held by the family at Hawarden Castle, Gladstone sold many of his books in his own lifetime, others are still held in private collections, etc.

There are still some books in the library which may well have belonged to Gladstone, but which carry no annotations or ownership marks. Many of these will never be positively identifiable. Work is currently being done with the library accession registers - although GladCAT records exist for a large amount of these, time constraints meant that we could not complete this. Thus new records (albeit items carrying no direct evidence of WEG's reading) are continually being added to the database.

Some books (c.250 items) in Section E use a slightly different descriptor method, which is much more focussed on the exact location of any particular annotation on the page, as below:

(xx)

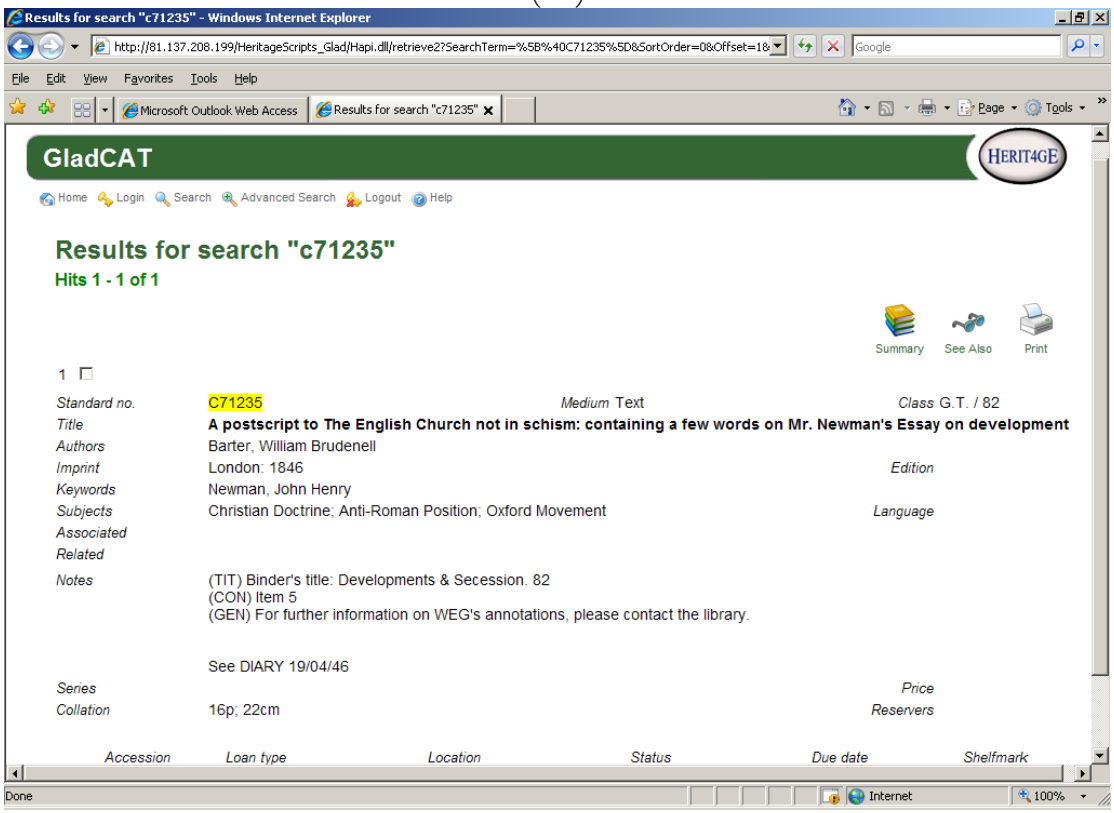


These were undertaken before the decision was made to try and make the database as wide ranging and inclusive as possible, and proceeded from the assumption that interested parties would have a copy of the book in front of them. They also use a more editorialised method of logging annotations than is the case with normal records.

As regards pamphlets, although the project was only conceived as including Gladstone's books, all pamphlets with Gladstone's ownership marks (whether held in loose form or in bound volumes) have nevertheless been given full GladCAT records, with one

significant exception. The records for a large collection of c.2,000 pamphlets known as the Gladstone Tracts, a collection made by Gladstone of his pamphlets in his own lifetime, do not have ownership or annotation descriptors on GladCAT. Again, this was due to time constraints on the project – in this case, the record appears as follows:

(xxi)



However, as can be seen above these records do give the relevant diary dates.

If you have any further queries about GladCAT, please contact
Matthew.Bradley@liverpool.ac.uk.
or patsy.williams@gladlib.org

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