# A guide to searching Catalyst

Getting the most from your searching

Catalyst is the London Library Catalogue. It can be used to search both our print and online holdings, as well as allowing you to manage your Library account, reserve print items, save items and searches and build book lists. To access Catalyst outside of the Library, go to londonlibrary.co.uk and click the 'Search the Catalogue' link at the top of the page.

1. Signing In

When you open Catalyst, it is always advisable to log in to your Library account. This will grant you automatic access to our online resources and ease the process of requesting books and saving item records.
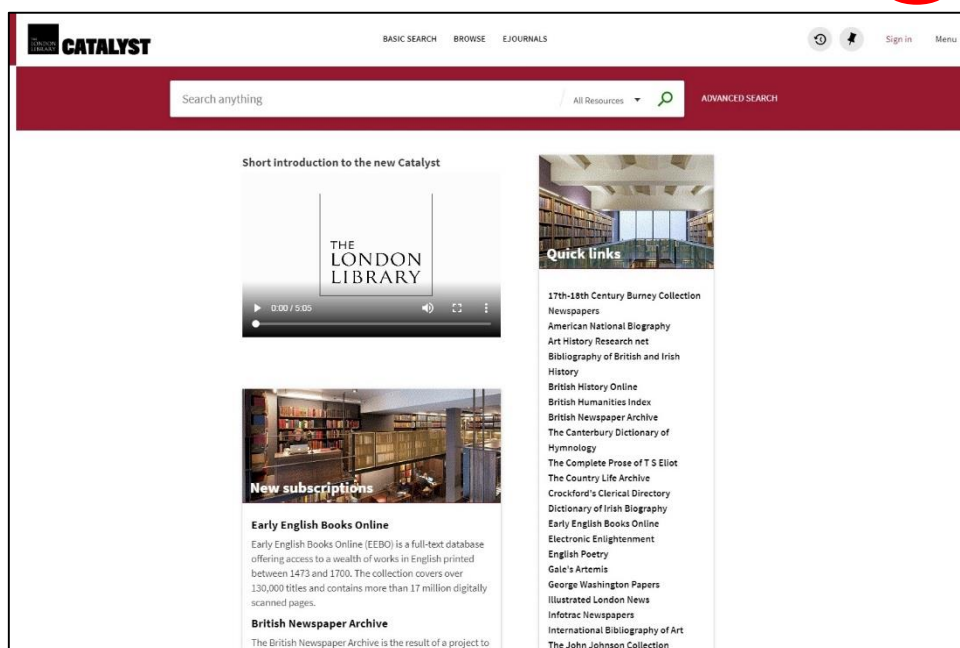

- Click the *Sign In* link in the right top-hand corner of the page.

- If you are using a Library PC or another public computer, make sure you always sign out again by clicking your name in the top-right hand corner of the screen and selecting *Sign Out.*

2. Managing your Library Account

Catalyst allows you to manage and view the history of your library account yourself. Through Catalyst you can check which books you have on loan, renew them, check a list of your previous loans and check the progress of any requests you many have made. If you see something on your account that looks amiss, you should contact the staff at the Circulation Desk.

Once you have signed in to the catalogue you will see the *Sign In* option has been replaced with your name. Clicking on this will produce a drop-down menu with options to help you manage your account.

- *My Library Card* – gives an overview of your library account.
- *My Loans* – allows you to view your current and previous loans.
- *My Requests* – allows you to view the status of your requests.
- *Saved Items* – takes you to your eShelf.
- *Search History* – displays a list of the searches you have run in that session.
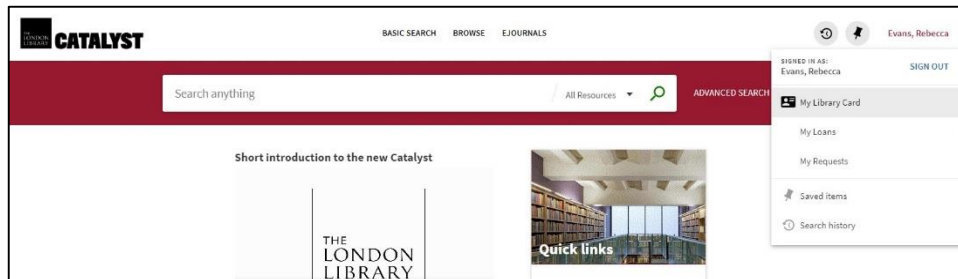

Renewing your Loans: To renew your loans, select the *My Loans* option from the dropdown menu. Once your list of loans appears, you can either renew a single volume by clicking the *Renew* option next to each item or you can click *Renew All* to renew all items issued to your account. Please be aware that items issued on a Guarantee Form need to be renewed by Library staff and so cannot be renewed using this method. If you require a renewal on a G-Form book, please email returns.desk@londonlibrary.co.uk. In addition, books that have been recalled by other members will not be eligible for renewal.
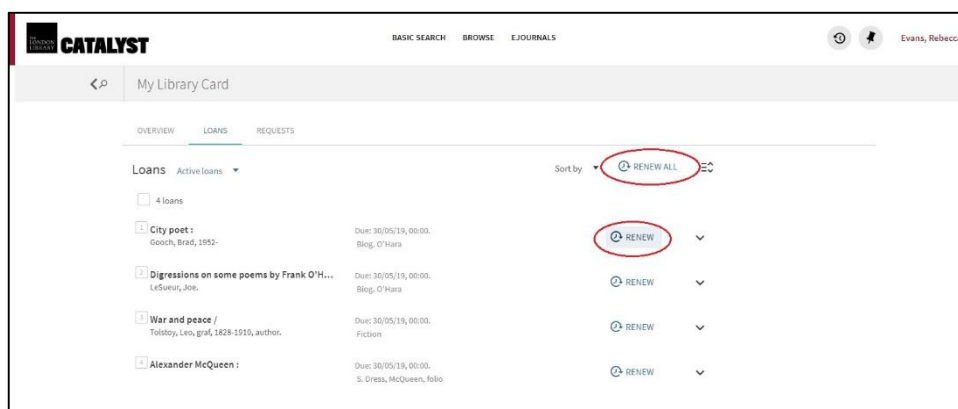
Viewing your previous Loans: If you wish to view a list of items you have borrowed previously, click on *Active Loans*, displayed next to the *Loans* title. This will generate a drop-down menu. Click on *Previous and Historic Loans* and you will see the list displayed now changes to show a list of items you have previously borrowed, starting with the most recent.

Clicking the arrows next to each item will display the full details of the loan. You can rearrange the results using the *Sort by* drop-down menu.
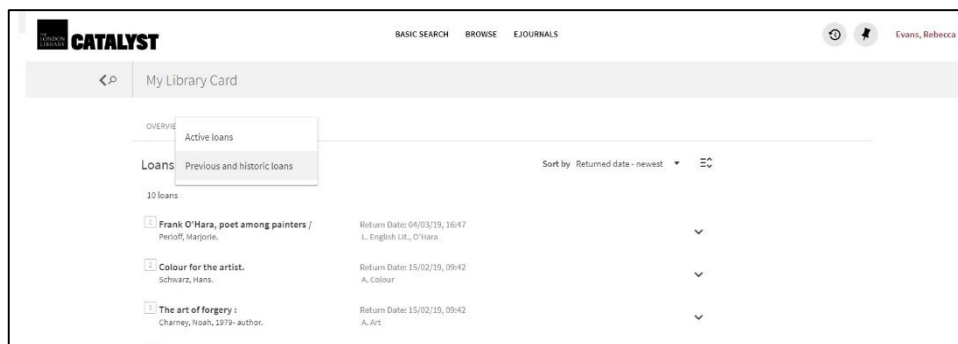

Viewing your Requests: You can view your active requests by clicking *Requests* either in the drop-down menu mention in point or, if you are already in the account pages, using the options above your list of loans. The *Requests* page will list any active requests and whether or not they are ready for collection. If the item is out on loan, the due date should be listed. If the item is ready for you, the date of its last day for collection will be displayed. You will also be given the option to cancel requests you no longer need, although please note that if the item is already awaiting collection, it will need to be removed from the shelf here before they are removed from your list.

3. Searching the Catalogue – Basic Search

Basic Search is the default search option which appears when you first open Catalyst. This operates like a keyword search and will return a list of all items, including online resources and articles, where your keywords appear anywhere in the item's catalogue record.

If your search terms are quite general, this can mean that a lot of results will be generated. To try and narrow your results, you can specify the sort of material you wish to view using the drop-down menu, to the right of the search bar.
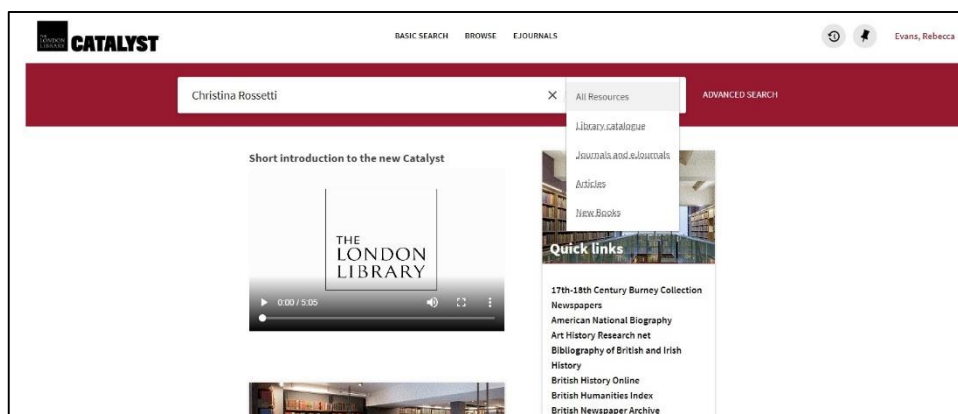
- *Library Catalogue* – displays books and journals held in print within the Library.
- *Journals and eJournals* – displays records of journals, magazines and periodicals, both in print and online, that contain your search terms in their titles or bibliographic information.
- *Articles* – displays any articles found in our online resources matching your search terms.
- *New Books* – displays print items acquired by the Library in the last 4 months.

Following some of the tips below will help you to construct a search that returns a more relevant set of results.

Phrase searching

This is particularly useful tip if you are looking for peoples' names or looking for popular phrases. Enclose your terms in double inverted commas, for example, *"global warming"*, *"Edward Lear"*. Doing this ensures that you will only get results where the two words appear together.

Boolean searching

You probably use Boolean searching every day without realising. This type of search uses three operators AND, OR and NOT (always typed in capitals) to create different types of searches. A regular keyword search on most websites assumes you have put AND between each of the words.

Using OR will expand a search to return results containing any of the terms you have specified. For example, *Shakespeare OR sonnets* will return all results for Shakespeare or sonnets, including sonnets that are not necessarily by Shakespeare.

Using NOT will reduce your list of results by excluding the terms you have specified. For example, *Shakespeare NOT sonnets* will return all results for Shakespeare but exclude those mentioning sonnets.

Truncation searching

If one of your chosen terms could have a number of different word endings, you can use a truncation search to include them all in your search. Simply put an asterisk * at the end of the root of the word. For examples *shoe** would return results that contained *shoe, shoes, shoemaker, shoemakers, shoemaking* etc.

You can also use a *?* to replace a letter within a word. For example *wom?n* would return results containing *woman* or *women*.

Putting it all together

It is possible to combine a number of these techniques to create a very focused search. For example, you may be interested in the writings of people who have travelled to India and produced diaries or memoirs.

Creating a search string which uses truncation, Boolean and brackets to combine Boolean terms, you can retrieve a very focused set of results.
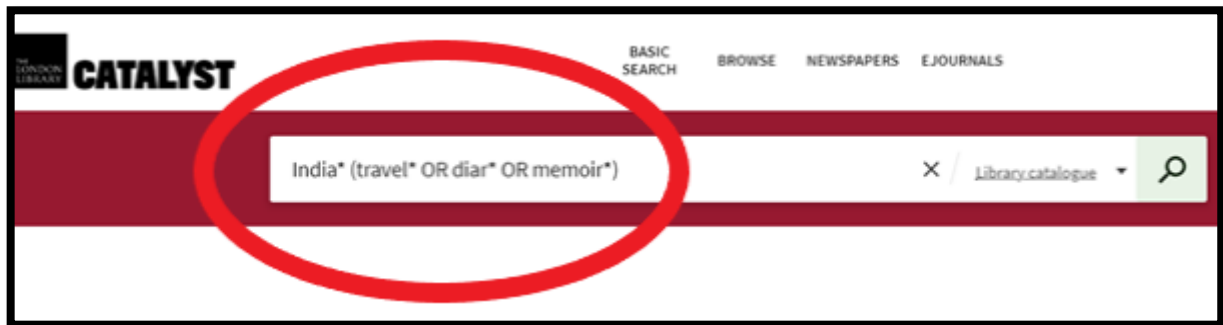

4. Searching the Catalogue – Advanced Search

If you wish to generate a more specific set of results you may wish to use the Advanced Search. This most useful if you wish to see what sort of books and resources we might have relation to a particular subject or by a specific author. It is also useful in pinpointing whether or not we hold certain editions of a text.

You can switch to the Advanced Search by clicking the option next to the Basic Search bar.

You will see that you are now presented with several options to help you search. By clicking the *All fields* menu, you will be presented with options as to where you want the catalogue to look for your search terms. Some of the most useful options to take note of are:

- *Author* – This will return items where your search term is listed as an author or editor of a work.
- *Title* – This will return items where your search term appears within the title field.
- *Subject* – This will return items where you search term appears in in the subject fields of their records. Most items will have multiple subject fields so it may be beneficial to use additional lines of search (see below). For example, a subject search for 'History' will return every book classed as being about history, but adding another line that says '20th Century' as a subject will return books where both of these terms appear to give you a list of items related to 20th Century history. This search is best used for searching for items on specific topics.
- *Name as Subject* – This search function is useful for seeing what items we may hold about a specific person, whilst excluding any items which may list them as an author or editor.
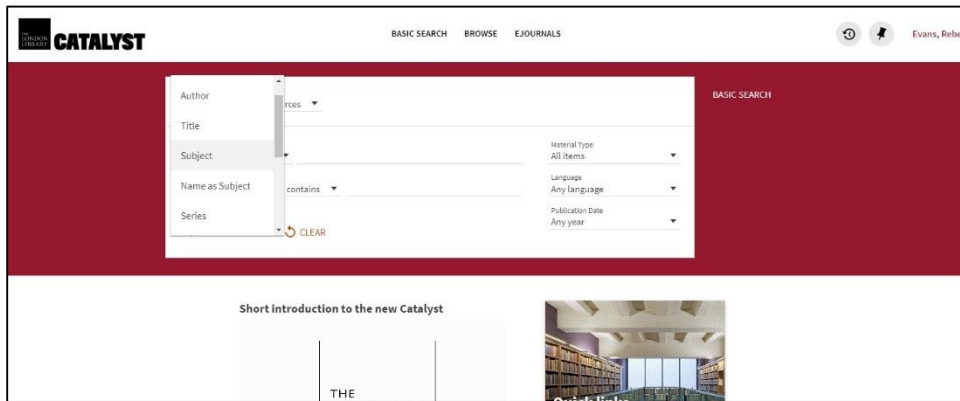
By default, you will be given the option to search for two search terms at a time. This is useful for running searches for a specific item, using *Title* and *Author* options or for running subject searches as detailed above. If you wish you can add further lines of search options by clicking *Add a new line*. The more lines of search you use, the more specific your results will be.

To the right of the Advanced Search, you are also given options to narrow your results by *Material Type*, *Language* and *Publication Year*.

Once you are happy with your specifications, click *Search*. A list of your results will appear below the Search Tool.
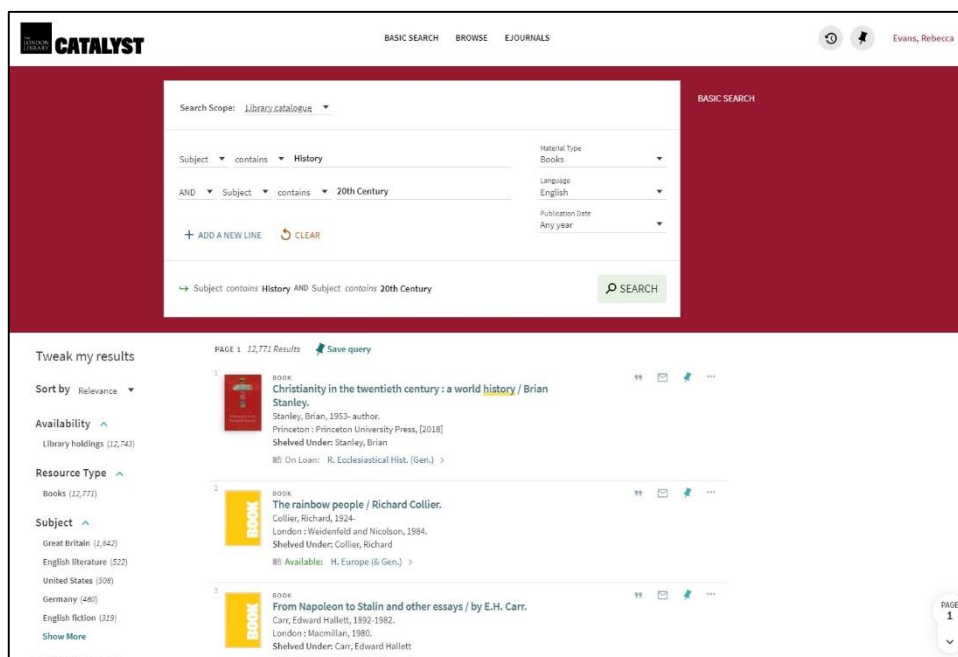
5. Understanding your Search Results & Finding Books

Once you have your results, it is important that you pay close attention to the information displayed on each item record before you try to access or find it.
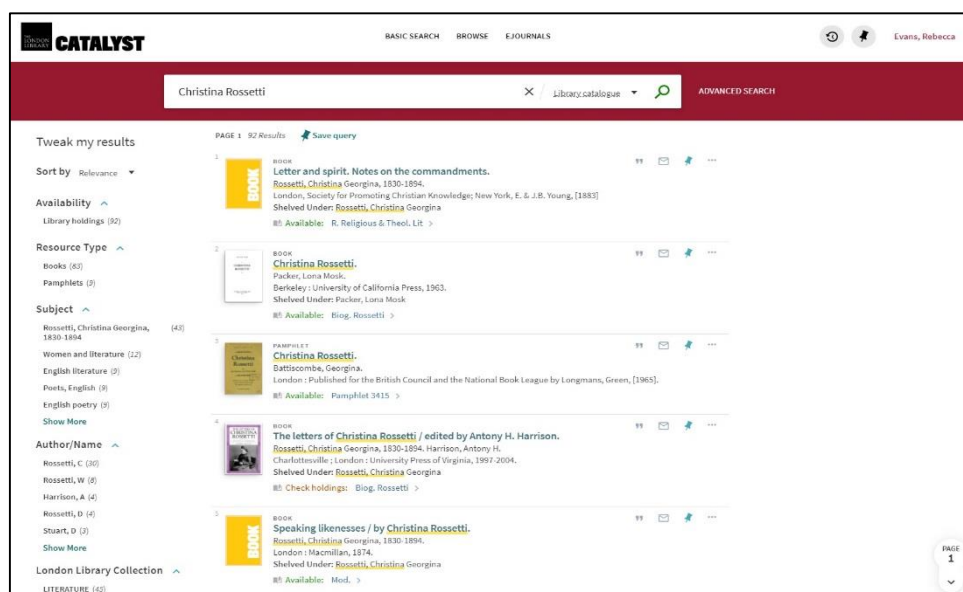
If you are planning to come to the Library and find the item yourself, make sure that it is listed as being *Available*. If the book is *On Loan* it can be recalled from the member who has it using the catalogue (see 6. Requesting Books).

Some items may say *Check holdings*. This often means that this is a multi-volume work and that one or more volumes may be out on loan whilst others are on the shelf. Clicking *Check Holdings* will show you which volumes are available and which are on loan.

Next to the availability indicator, you will see the item's shelfmark. You can use the Library Floorplan to locate where your item will be or ask a member of staff during your visit. Pay close attention to any shelfmarks ending in *4to., folio,* or *Sm. Folio.* These abbreviations indicate that these are larger items and so will be shelved away from the standard size books in this sequence, although usually they remain nearby. Staff will be able to advise you on where to find the 4to. or folio sequence for each shelfmark.

If you see a shelfmark that doesn't appear on the floorplan, it is likely that this item is stored in one of the Library's Special Collections. Some items in Special Collections can be reserved through Catalyst but particularly rare items will not give you this option. Instead the Catalogue will advise you to contact Library staff to arrange for them to retrieve the material for you.

You should also make a note of what the item is shelved under within the shelfmark. The majority of books will be shelved alphabetically by the author's surname, but edited works are shelved alphabetically by title.

In the case of online articles or resources, instead of the availability indicator you will see the words *Full text available*. As long as you are already signed into the catalogue (see 1. Signing in), clicking here will open a new window showing the details of the article. Click the *Go* option to carry on through to the article.
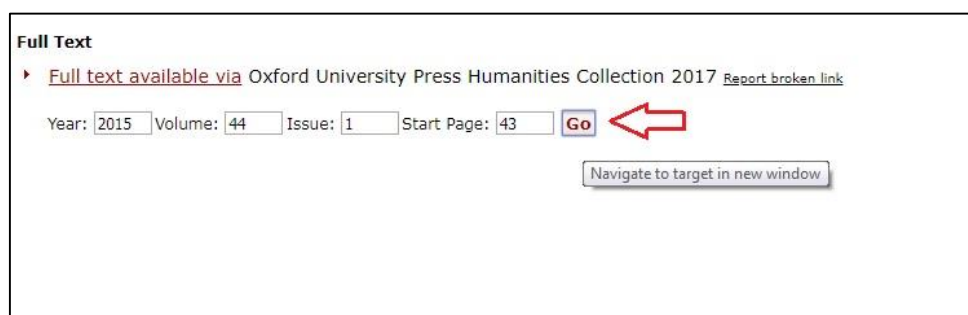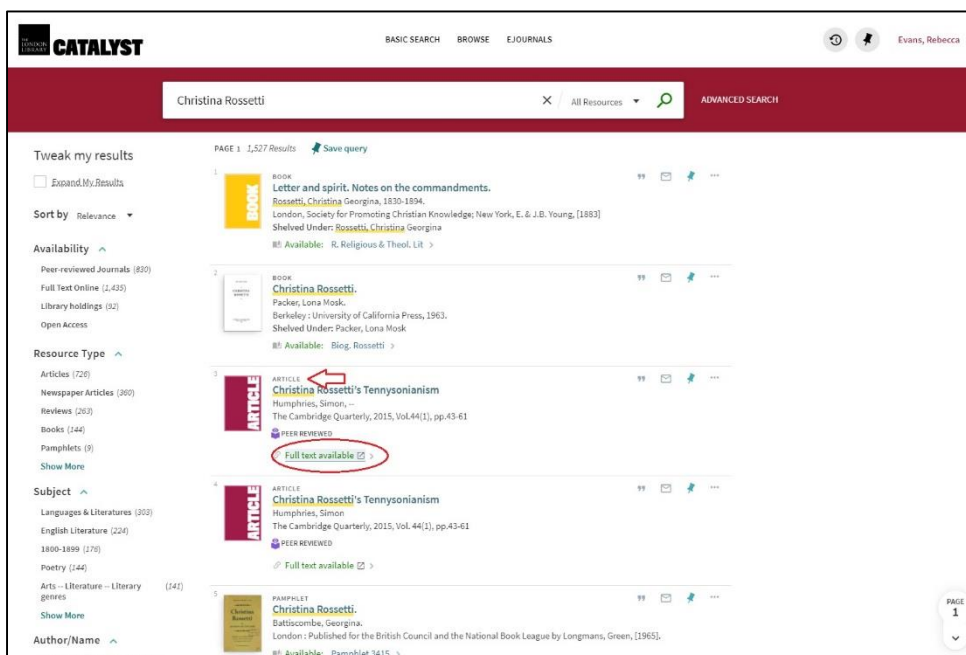

6. Requesting Books

Books can be reserved or recalled from loan through Catalyst. We aim to retrieve books that are available on the shelves within one working day of receiving your request so it's advisable to make sure you allow enough time when submitting your request. If you do find you need a faster turn-around, Catalyst provides an option to speed up the process.

• Click on the item's title or shelfmark. A new window will open showing the item's full record.

• Click the *Request* button, which can be found under the *Get it* section of the record.
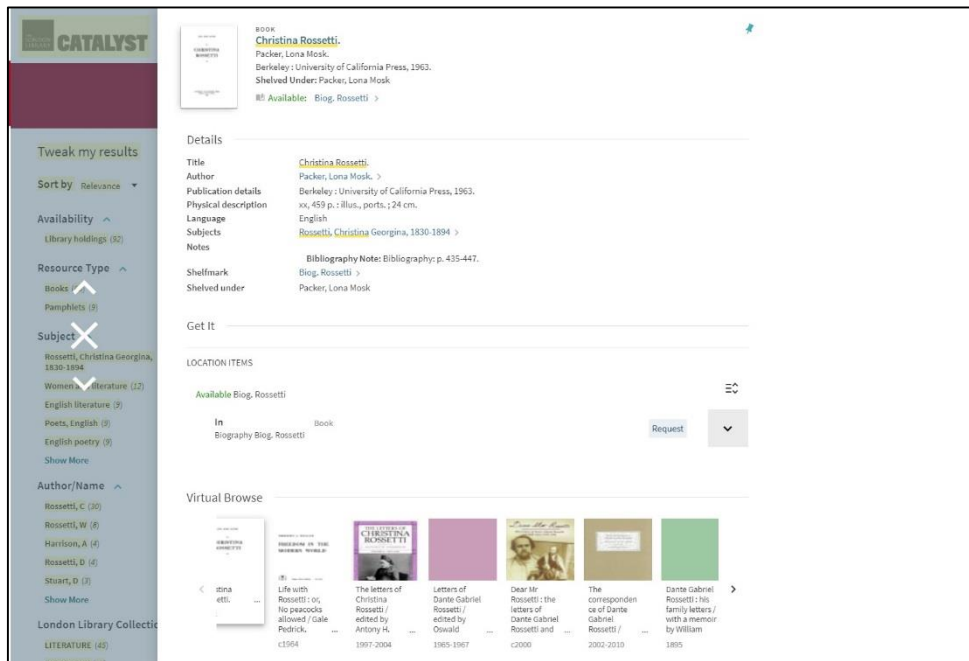
- You will then be asked how you would like to be notified when the item is available. You can also choose to have the book sent to you through the post with additional charges for postage.

- We aim to fetch items on the shelf within one working day of receiving your request. If you require the item sooner, tick the option to *Rush request* and use the *Comment* field to tell us roughly what
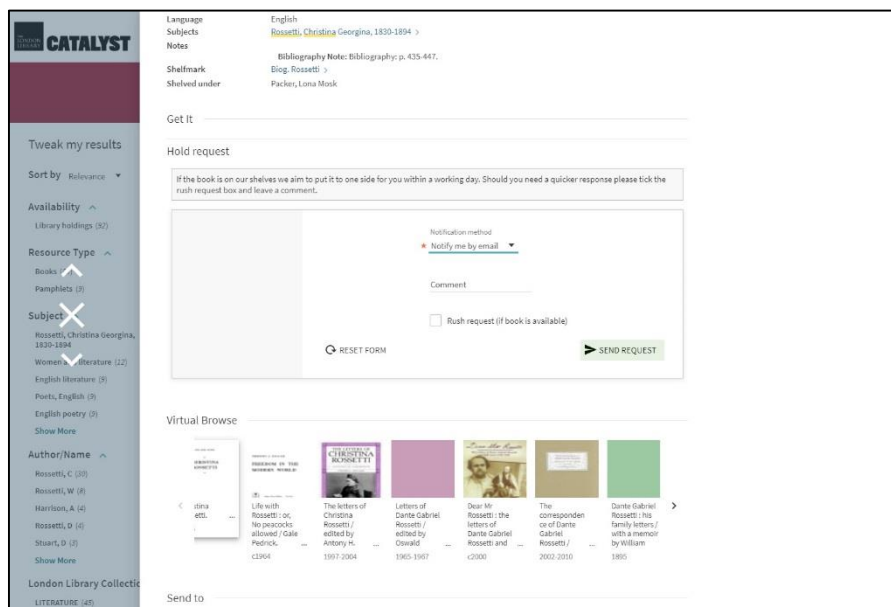

time you plan to collect the collect the book (maximum 50 characters).

- Click *Send Request* to complete your request.

- Once the book is available we will let you know by your chosen method.

The eShelf is a very useful tool for saving records of items or searches you may wish to revisit or cite at a later date. It can be used to organise your resources into sections, build a bibliography, print and send booklists and let you know whenever new resources that might be of interest are added. If you are planning to use this feature, always make sure you have signed into your Library account first otherwise any items or searches you save will be lost when you close your browser.

- Click the pin icon next to the record you wish to save to pin it to your eShelf.
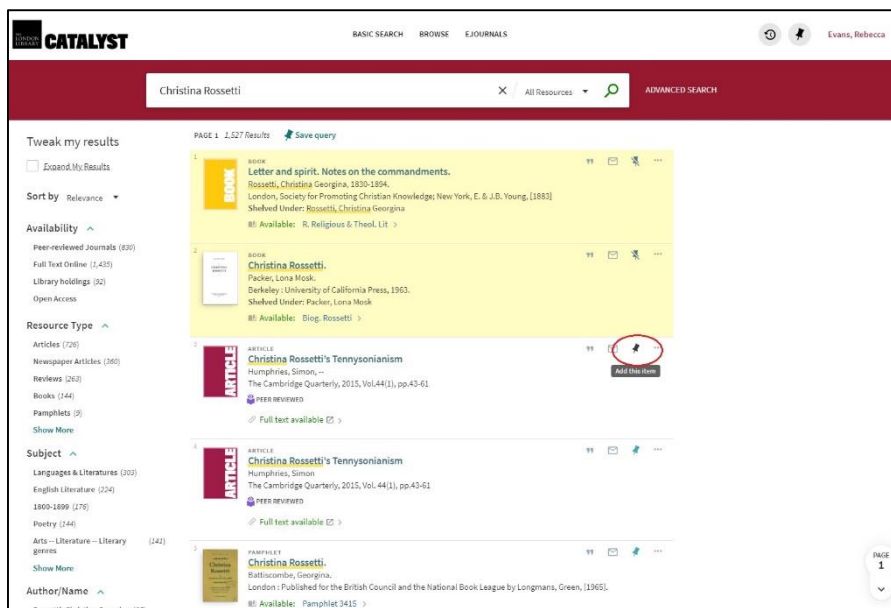
- If you wish to save the search to your e-shelf, click the option to *Save query* at the top of your results list.
- A banner will appear at the top of the page that gives you the option to *Turn on notification for this query*. This means that the catalogue will send an email to any address you specify whenever anything new that matches your search term is added. If you don't want to do this, click *Dismiss* to close the banner.
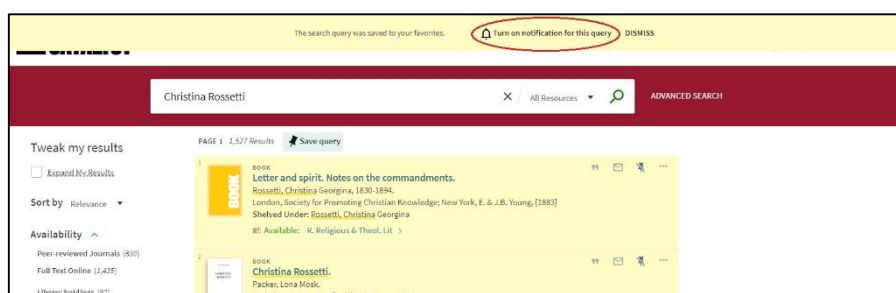
- To view items saved to your eShelf, click the drawing pin icon at the top right hand corner of the page. This will take you to a list of all the items you have saved.
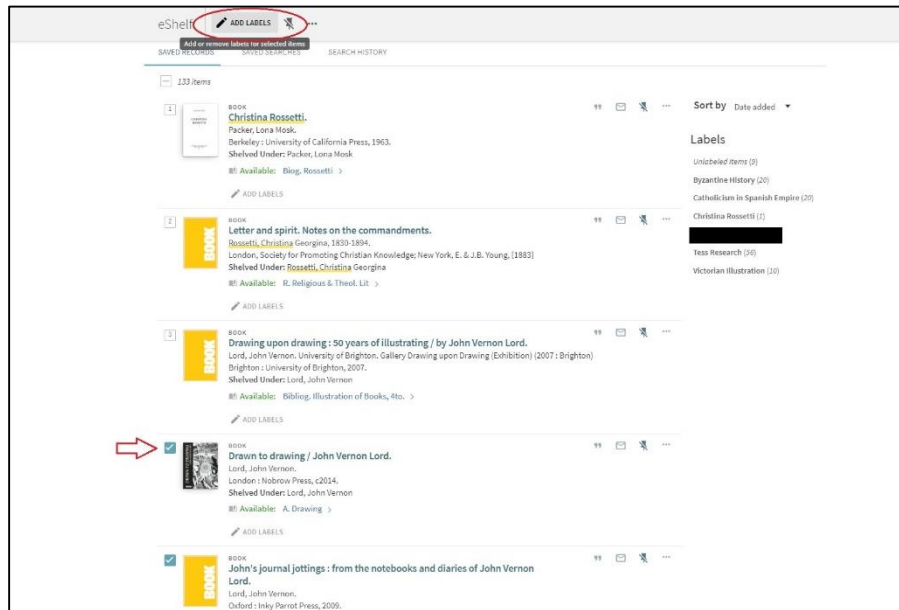

- If you are working on multiple projects, you may wish to separate out your list using *Labels*. To do this, check the number box of the items you wish to label and click *Add Labels*. You can choose to add the item to an existing label or create a new one. Once you have done this, hit the *Enter* key on your keyboard to save your new label.
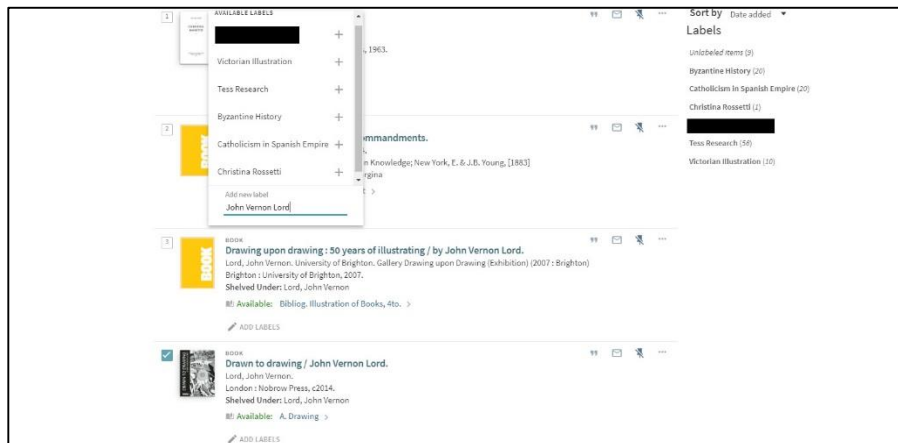

- If you want to view the items you have saved to a particular label, simply select the label you want to view from the list on the right-hand side of the screen.

- The eShelf can also be used to formulate citations or build a bibliography. To cite one item from your list, simply click the speech mark icon displayed by the record. From there you will be given a choice of what citation format you would like to use. You can then copy and paste your citation into a document.
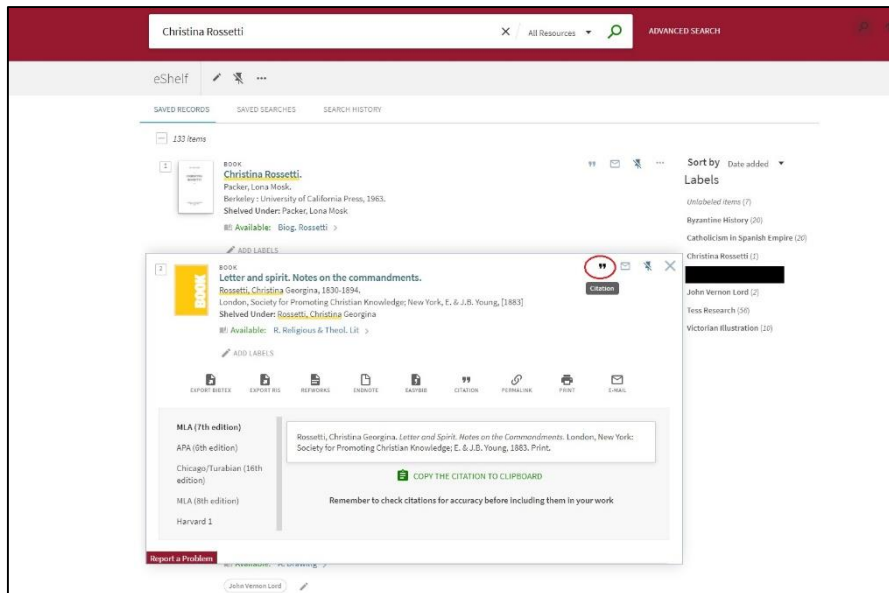
- Alternatively, if you would like to build a list or bibliography, you can check the number boxes of the items you wish to list, and then click the elipsis icon (three dots) underneath the search bar. You can then choose to export your list to your prefered reference software or online citation builder. You can also use this method to either print or email your list.
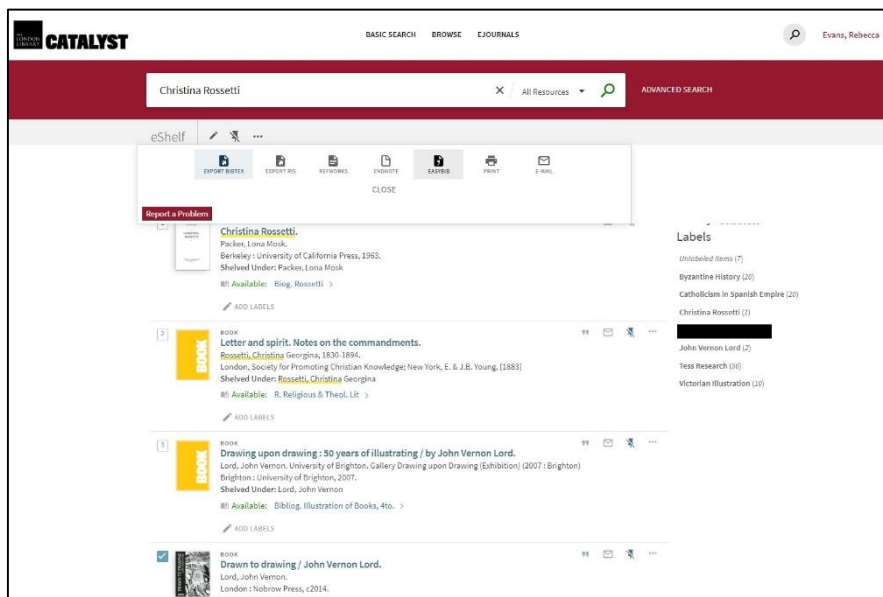
- To view your saved searches, click *Saved Searches* in the eShelf. A list of your searches will then appear. Clicking on a search will run it again.
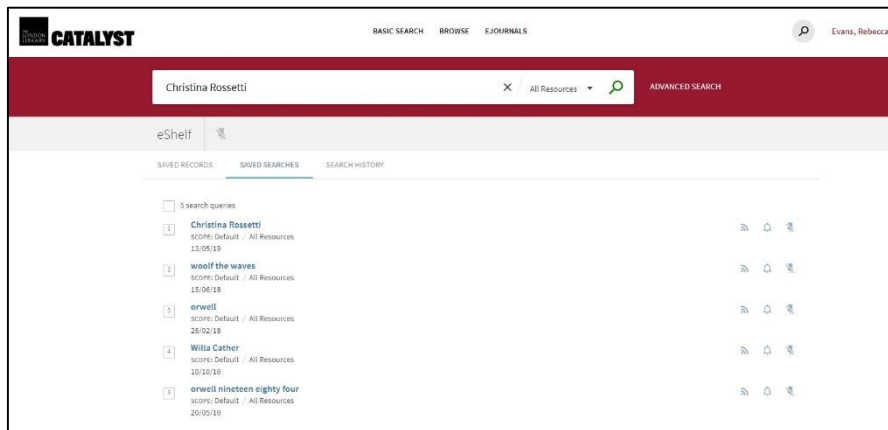
8. Accessing Online Resources

Catalyst allows members to access London Library online resources both within the Library and remotely using your log-in. Before attempting to access our online resources, always make sure you have signed into Catalyst, otherwise, your access may be blocked. You can also instruct Catalyst to only show you results that can be viewed online; this is particularly useful for Remote Access members and members who may be unable to visit the Library in person.

The Library's most popular online databases and resources can be accessed directly via the links displayed on the right of the Catalyst Homepage.
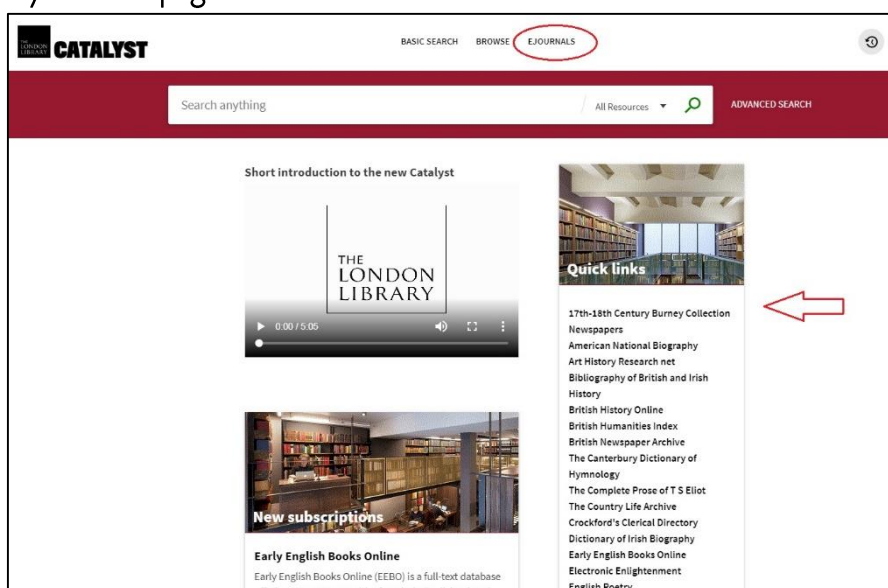

Meanwhile, if you wished to view our online journals, you can click the *Ejournals* link at the top of the page. This will take you through to our e-Journals A-Z search. You can search by starting to type the

name of the journal you are looking for. Any titles that appear to match will begin to list under the search bar. Alternatively, you can use the A-Z list options under the search bar to see alphabetical lists of our titles.

You can also run an ordinary Catalyst search to find online resources that you can access remotely. If you are in Basic Search, you can change your Search Scope to *Articles* or *Journals & eJournals* to make sure that you are being shown remote access materials.
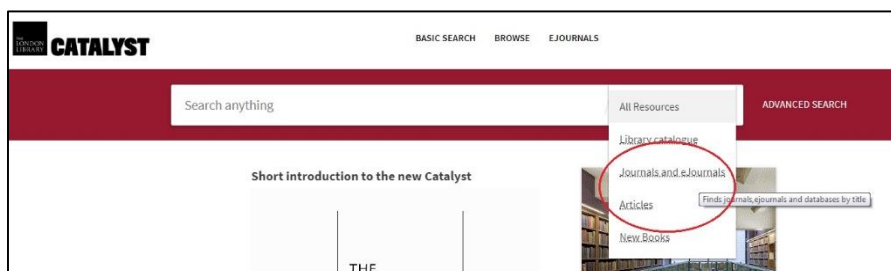
If you already have your results and would like to only see results which can be accessed online, select the *Full Text Online* option from the *Tweak My Results* menu on the left of the results screen.