Regenerating the Local Catalog: An Approach for Augmenting Bibliographic Information for Early Printed Texts
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Databases like the English Short Title Catalogue (ESTC) and Incunabula Short Title Catalogue (ISTC) document the location and institutional holdings of early printed texts. While tracking the location of these printed texts helps develop an understanding of book transmission, the missing provenance and copy specific features limit researchers. By adding binding information and other textual features to the local catalog, scholars may expand their bibliographic study to questions of readership, ownership, production practice, and economic trade. Cristina Dondi and other dedicated scholars have already begun to make copy specific features of incunabula public through the Material Evidence in Incunabula (MEI) database. A similar database does not exist for ESTC, but the ESTC does allow institutions to include notes on their volumes. Using MEI as a guide, this project focuses on enhancing records for sixteenth-century English printed works as the University of Iowa Special Collections reports their holdings to ESTC.

The first challenge when recataloging *Fruiteful treatise of Predestination* was the conflicting printing dates. The book in hand contradicts itself three times giving: 1551, 1557, and 1560 as possible years. The ESTC lists the accepted date as 1561.

This copy has passed through multiple hands, as evidenced by the bookplates and marginalia. Recording provenance preserves both the book’s history and how it was read. In this instance former owner William Bayntun guessed the book was printed in 1551.

Recataloging this book revealed a unique signature statement and misfoliation. Other copies are also misnumbered, but differently from this copy.

Signatures: [par.]8 *4 A–O8 P3 G6; 2A–E8 F6. Folios 49–56: 48(F8), 50 (G1), 49 (G2), 53 (G3), 51 (G4), 55 (G5), 53 (G6), 57 (G7), 55 (G8), 57 (H1), 58 (H2)

The augmented records provide a better resource for material studies scholars and faculty who incorporate special collections materials into their courses. Furthermore, reporting institutional holdings to ESTC contributes to the larger effort to document early print texts.