Abbreviating First Names

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MlBibTeX 1.4

Announced one year ago.
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Ready very soon!
New syntax for person names

AUTHOR = {Clive Eric Cussler, abbr => Cl.}
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Such a specification of a non-standard abbreviation is needed, unless you like dirty tricks!
A question

Do you know how to produce this effect with \texttt{BIBTEX}?
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\texttt{AUTHOR = \{\relax Cl\}_{\text{ive Eric}} Cussler}
Abbreviating first names

Most frequently: retain only the first letter, followed by a period.
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unless these components are separated by hyphens ⇐ French
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J.-M. Hufflen
OK?

Even for these simple cases, many people mistakenly abbreviate first (and middle) names.
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Non-standard cases $\rightarrow$ some rules, yes, but. . .
Even for these simple cases, many people mistakenly abbreviate first (and middle) names.

Non-standard cases $\implies$ some rules, yes, but. . .

*Imagination takes power!*
Agreement

Digraphs should not be cut:

Charles Gounod → Ch. Gounod
Agreement

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Charles Gounod $\rightarrow$ Ch. Gounod

but what about ‘Thomas’ as a German first name? Is there a digraph?
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Jawohl! ‘Th’ etymologically for [θ].
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Jawohl! ‘Th’ etymologically for [θ].

Nein! The initial is 'T', 'h' is silent.
Particular cases

In French, German (and English) $\Rightarrow$ ‘l’ and ‘r’ after ‘C’:
Particular cases

In French, German (and English) \( \Rightarrow \) ‘l’ and ‘r’ after ‘C’:

Clive Barker \( \rightarrow \) Cl. Barker
Particular cases

In French, German (and English) ⇒ ‘l’ and ‘r’ after ‘C’:

Clive Barker → Cl. Barker

But:

Clive Staples Lewis → C. S. Lewis
More particular cases

The same rule after ‘Ch’ in German:

Christian → Chr.
More particular cases

The same rule after ‘Ch’ in German:

Christian → Chr.
Christina → Ch.
More particular cases

The same rule after ‘Ch’ in German:

Christian → Chr.
Christina → Ch.
Jesus Christ → J. C.
Abbreviations with one letter... 

Or two... or three... Why not four?
Abbreviations with one letter... 

Or two... or three... Why not four?

A French typography manual recommends:

Stanislas → Stan.
American names

First name, middle name, last name.

Also: *particle* and *lineage* (*von* and *Junior* w.r.t. \texttt{BIBTeX}'s terminology), but out of scope here.
What to do with middle names?

Abbreviate them like first names:

Edgar Rice Burroughs → E. R. Burroughs
What to do with middle names?

Abbreviate them like first names:

Edgar Rice Burroughs → E. R. Burroughs

Retain them: Henry Rider Haggard → H. Rider Haggard
What to do with middle names?

Abbreviate them like first names:

Edgar Rice Burroughs → E. R. Burroughs

Retain them: Henry Rider Haggard → H. Rider Haggard

Drop them out: Clive Eric Cussler → Cl. Cussler
What a program can do?

Recognise initial digraphs or trigraphs:
What a program can do?

Recognise initial digraphs or trigraphs:

  e.g., ’sz’ in Polish
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or some particular cases that are language-dependent.
What a program can do?

Recognise initial digraphs or trigraphs:

e.g., ’sz’ in Polish

or some particular cases that are language-dependent.

But we face a *linguistic* problem. *Exceptions exist!*
Solutions?

L[yon Sprague] de Camp
de Camp,, Lyon Sprague, L. Sprague
Lyon Sprague de Camp, abbr => L. Sprague
Solutions?

L[yon Sprague] de Camp
de Camp,, Lyon Sprague, L. Sprague
Lyon Sprague de Camp, abbr => L. Sprague

\texttt{BIB\TeX}'s solution is neither nor worse than many others.