

great essays as “the perfected products of his maturity,” Carter displayed the maturity of his own prose:

in *Urne Buriall*, the curious lore, the strange fantasies, the whimsical speculations, the extraordinary conceits, the relish for picturesque legend and equally picturesque reality, the fascination exerted on the author by bizarre historical and mythical figures—all these jewelled elements, like the thousand small pieces of stained glass in a great rose window, are harmonised by Browne’s deeply reflective imagination, and patterned, with the most polished and elaborate artistry, into paragraph after paragraph of baroque magnificence.

Carter was able to emend Browne’s text with a few further authorial corrections, drawn from six additional author-corrected copies that had become known since 1932 (bringing the total to twelve), as well as several other justifiable emendations.

Otherwise, however, this edition is less desirable in three ways. First, Browne’s marginal references are omitted. Second, Carter reports that “a quarter of a century’s reflection has convinced me of the over-severity of my earlier reaction” against the modernizing of previous editors, and he therefore modernizes spelling and punctuation in a few places—in only a very few, fortunately, or so it seems (though one cannot be sure without a full collation, since these changes are not listed). Third, the short list of “Emendations in the Present Text” records only the emendations to his 1932 text (except, that is, for the occasional modernizing of accidentals), and thus one does not have a complete list of emendations to the first edition, such as the one in his 1932 edition—“which,” he says, “was too elaborate to repeat in a reading edition and to which readers concerned with such things are referred.” But that earlier edition can be consulted only in rare-book rooms. And in any case, the idea of a “reading edition”—“for the general reader, not for the antiquarian or for the specialist”—is suspect. Ordinary readers are often interested in textual alterations; and when they are not, the presence of the information does not deter them from reading. That Carter continued to be concerned with Browne’s text is shown by his “working copies” of the two impressions of this edition, in which he marked eleven possible revisions in the first and eight corrections in the second.

Carter’s other publications of the 1950s were mostly useful continuations of his long-standing enthusiasms: handlists of A. E. Housman, Stanley Morison, and William Johnson Cory (plus an edition of Cory), showing how valuable the handlist genre can be; and essays on book collecting, Wise, and publishers’ bindings, some of them in the new journal *The Book Collector*. He also continued to produce reviews steadily and to write occasional biographical accounts and obituaries, primarily (but not exclusively) of book-world figures. Two obituaries from *The Times* in this