

a *Bookman* (2004). The biographical details selected for mention here and in the handlist (many of which do not appear in the Dickinson book) are those that seem to me most relevant for understanding the background and context of his writings and his wide influence. I knew John Carter for only the last ten years of his life: some of my recollections were written up in section 36 of my memoir, "The Living Room" (published in volume 59 of *Studies in Bibliography* and then in *Books in My Life*, 2021), and I dedicated my book about book-jackets to his memory. I shall not forget the many kindnesses he showed me and the important favors he did for me, and the present offering is a reflection of my gratitude.

## ASSESSMENT

### THE 1930S

John Carter's first post-collegiate publication on a bookish subject, an article on "Original Condition" in the 15 November 1930 issue of *Publishers' Weekly*, came only three years after college and inaugurated an amazing four-year period of brilliant productivity. Born John Waynflete Carter at Eton on 10 May 1905, he was educated at Eton and King's College Cambridge, where he achieved a double first in the classical tripos and an honors degree in 1927. By that time he was already collecting Catullus and had become interested in textual criticism through the influence of A. E. Housman's lectures. Almost immediately after leaving Cambridge he was hired (in September 1927) by the London office of Charles Scribner's Sons to locate rare books to be sold in their New York shop. In the three years between then and that 1930 article, he was becoming acquainted with the book dealers and collectors both in Britain and in America (his first visit to New York being January to April 1929). But he was clearly doing more, for his first three letters to the *Times Literary Supplement* (in 1931-33) show that by then he was already immersed in research on Sir Thomas Browne, publishers' bindings, and the pamphlets that became known as the Wise-Forman forgeries—the subjects of his first major publications (and of his early articles for the main book-collecting journals of the time, *The Book Collector's Quarterly* in England and *The Colophon* in America).

In May 1932 he published *Binding Variants in English Publishing, 1820-1900* as the sixth volume in Michael Sadleir's important *Bibliographia* series, which had the significant subtitle "Studies in Book History and Book Structure" (where "structure" makes clear the interest in bibliographical analysis). Sadleir, a publisher (Constable was his firm), novelist, and collector, had already established himself (he was sixteen and a half years older than Carter) as a bibliographical scholar and a pioneer historian of publishers' bindings. He had published a bibliography of Trollope in 1928 (a landmark through its explicit demonstration that an author bibli-