

ography can be a contribution to the history of publishing); and two years later *The Evolution of Publishers' Bindings Styles, 1770-1900* came out as the first volume in his Bibliographia series. Carter's admiration for Sadleir is suggested by a letter he wrote to *The Times* on 20 December 1957 to supplement *The Times's* obituary of Sadleir: "None of those who moved in his orbit . . . was ever made to feel a satellite. But in our corner of the sky a star has fallen." An "avowed disciple" of Sadleir (as he called himself in a 1970 article), Carter had been following Sadleir's lead in investigating edition binding; and he had published articles on the subject in 1931 and 1932 that he was able to incorporate into his 1932 book. In the first chapter of that book, he modestly called it "a rather swollen appendix" to Sadleir's book, but it is much more than that in several ways.

First, the chapter called "Historical," though it is a condensed account of the beginnings and early use of cloth for bindings, draws on his own original research in publishers' catalogues and trade journals. Second, the bulk of the first half is a detailed account of how to go about investigating the bindings of nineteenth-century books and determining the order of variant bindings. He touches on the use of publishers' records and catalogues, review copies, inscriptions, inserted advertisements, endpapers, and edge treatments, among much else, and he deals with such topics as special bindings, series variants, and bindings-up of parts, along with the description of cloth grains. The first half of the book ("General"), which also includes a "specimen investigation," provides a "method of attack" that is then applied in the second half ("Particular") to numerous books by some five dozen authors. This extensive survey of examples, based on the examination of an impressive number of copies, is yet another contribution of the book, making it useful for reference—and in the process displaying Carter's cautious and undogmatic way of reaching conclusions.

The book is addressed to "students and amateurs of book-structure" (p. xi), and Carter is concerned throughout to advance bibliographical study. He hopes to show "what an immensely important part of bibliography they [binding variants] become when they are taken seriously," and he wants to help "develop a scientific method on general lines for dealing with so frequent a phenomenon" (p. 6). He makes clear that "the attitude of mind most desirable in a bibliographer is suspicion" (p. 39), and he stresses the necessity for examining multiple copies. His more specific observations on analyzing bindings form a perfect set of instructions for the beginner on how best to approach a nineteenth-century book: they have not been superseded, nor have they been stated in more attractive prose. Of the several pioneer studies of publishers' bindings by Carter and Sadleir, this one is the most continuingly useful, still valuable as a guide.

A few months after *Binding Variants*, another of Carter's major publications came out: his edition of Sir Thomas Browne's *Urne Buriall and*