

complicate bibliographical research on books of that period and after outlining what little work had been done, he focused on a few of the complicating features, such as cancels, binding variants, and inserted advertisements. His comments, as always, are grounded in an understanding of the importance of printing and publishing history for bibliographical analysis and description.

At the time, Fredson Bowers's *Principles of Bibliographical Description* was a relatively new book, having been published at the very end of 1949; but Carter had absorbed it, and he ended his essay with a generally shrewd assessment. He was sympathetic, of course, with Bowers's conception of bibliography as historical scholarship, and he welcomed Bowers's efforts to systematize work on modern books. But he correctly noted that Bowers's lack of experience (at that time) with nineteenth- and twentieth-century books weakened his treatment of them, which showed "signs of the rigidity natural to a cautious man operating in comparatively unfamiliar territory." One result, as Carter recognized, is that Bowers inappropriately extended to the period of publishers' bindings the idea that only the sheets (and not the binding) of a book could be a determinant of *issue*. The one place where Carter slipped up was when he said that Bowers's collation formula might be "unnecessarily elaborate" for nineteenth-century books, seemingly not recognizing that the formula was not elaborate for books with a simple structure and that the formulary had to be prepared to handle complex structures, which many nineteenth-century books certainly do have. But if we make allowance for this misjudgment, we can still read the essay with profit for its many helpful insights and its point of view.

About a year after Carter delivered this lecture, his *ABC for Book-Collectors* (1952) was published—the book that has proved to be his most famous one. It has sold well throughout the English-speaking world for several generations and is now in its ninth edition (having been sensitively revised several times since his death by Nicolas Barker, most recently with Simran Thadani). The book was not the first glossary of book-world terms: a well-established one, *The Bookman's Glossary*, had been published in 1926 by R. R. Bowker, the publisher of the American edition of Carter's *Taste and Technique*, and was in its third edition in 1952. Carter's concern with improving it had been shown in a letter noted in *Publishers' Weekly* on 11 August 1945; but the *Glossary* was geared more toward librarians and publishers than collectors and dealers, and the *ABC* was, as Carter says in his preface, the first "to deal comprehensively with the terminology of this particular subject and no other." He benefited from the advice of an impressive group of consultants, enumerated in the preface as "a sort of Tenth Legion," and the result was a remarkably thorough treatment. It included not only terms one encounters in dealers' catalogues and basic