

It started on 26 September 1952 in the *TLS* with a letter from White, using information from Haber, who had studied the Housman manuscripts, beginning in 1950, much more thoroughly than Carter had. White's letter, referring to Carter's "slipshod editing," alludes to the two concerns that were the basis of their criticism: the outright errors in the text and the questionable judgment underlying the handling of uncanceled manuscript alternatives, where Carter followed the choices made by Laurence Housman in the poems included in his posthumous editions. Carter's response (24 October 1952) was weak on both counts. Regarding the first, he said he had only claimed "a *more* correct text." As for the second, he asserted that "the person authorized to perform this [choice among variants] . . . was the author's brother, whose judgment they [White and Haber] are not entitled to challenge." Haber's long letter on 7 November mainly described the history of the manuscripts and his work with them; and it was not until a year later (2 October 1953) that Haber, in a good letter summarizing the situation, made a proper reply to Carter's second point. Carter, he said, "is speaking wildly when he says (of the poet's brother) that consanguinity endows an editor with omniscience when choosing between alternative readings in a manuscript." Haber ends by regretting that the text "should be toyed with once again," since the fourteenth impression, about to appear, was not to be a thorough revision.

That fourteenth impression, "freshly corrected" according to Carter (23 October 1953), still contained errors that were noted by White (12 February 1954), who also questioned Carter's assertion that Housman's will gave his brother the right to choose between variants. Despite Carter's assurance (5 March 1954), White's quotation from the will (14 May 1954) suggests that Carter was incorrect. But this point, of course, is a legal one and is irrelevant to a scholarly editor's obligation to think through textual decisions independently. The debate was quiescent for the next five years; but during that time Haber's *The Manuscript Poems of A. E. Housman* (1955) appeared, and it produced discussion in the *TLS* (1 July 1955; 15 June, 20, 27 July 1956) and *The Book Collector* (4:110-14) that intensified the lack of civility between Carter and Haber—though the anonymous front-page *TLS* review of Haber's book on 29 April 1955, one of the most severe attacks the *TLS* has ever published, was not by Carter but by his friend and occasional collaborator John Sparrow.

The controversy over *The Collected Poems* revived again when Haber brought out a volume in 1959 called *Complete Poems: Centennial Edition* (from the same American publisher as *The Collected Poems*), which contained the same poems as Carter's edition but with different texts. Carter asked (29 May 1959) whether Haber had received authorization from the Housman estate, questioned a number of readings, and said that Haber's textual es-