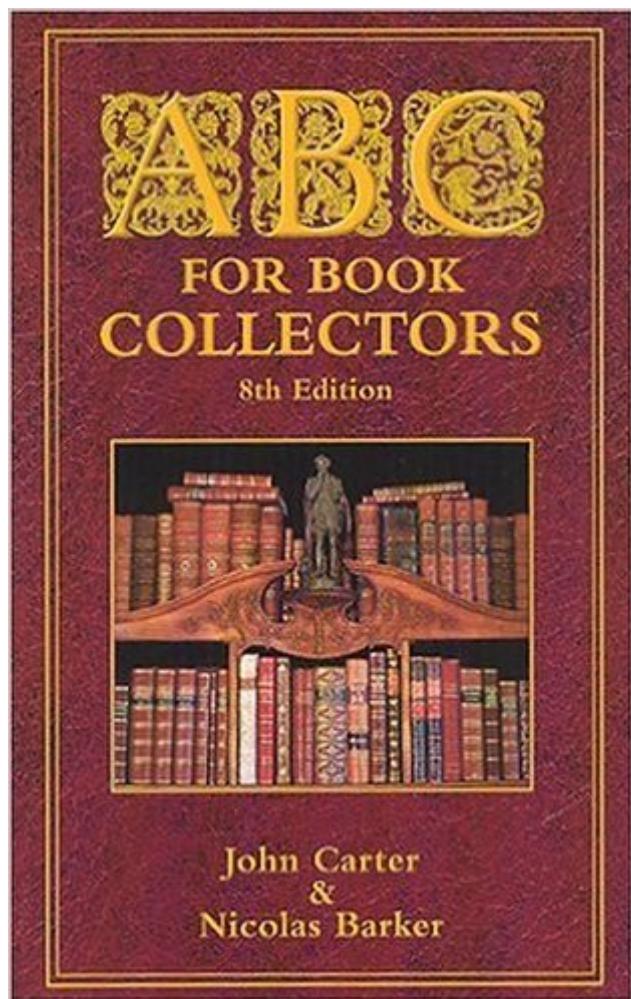


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# ABC For Book Collectors



## **Synopsis**

Eighth edition, completely revised and re-set, with additional information and an Introduction by Nicolas Barker. Shaken, Unsophisticated, Harleian Style, Fingerprint, E-book, Dentelle. Can you define these terms? If not, this is the book for you! John Carter's ABC For Book Collectors has long been established as the most enjoyable as well as the most informative reference book on the subject. Here, in over 490 alphabetical entries, ranging in length from a single line to several pages, may be found definition and analysis of the technical terms used in book collecting and bibliography, interspersed with salutary comments on such subjects as auctions, condition, facsimiles and fakes, 'points', rarity, etc. This eighth edition has been revised by Nicolas Barker, editor of The Book Collector and incorporates additional words created by the introduction of web-based collecting. The ABC For Book Collectors retains its humorous character as the one indispensable guide to book collecting while also keeping us up-to-date with modern terminology.

## **Book Information**

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## **Customer Reviews**

One of the earlier reviewers -- a history grad student -- noted that this book is "outdated and unorganized." Both of those claims are inaccurate. I'm a manuscripts curator by profession, and this text is certainly not outdated. Book knowledge, and the subtleties of collecting and discriminating among important texts, are the highest priorities of John Carter's book, and he imparts those things with great skill. Several reviewers also criticize the lack of an index or table of contents. Folks, it's an encyclopedia; each term has its own heading, in alphabetical order! The book IS the table of contents and the index. This book was required reading for the "Introduction to Descriptive Bibliography" class when I first attended Rare Book School in Charlottesville, Virginia in 1998; I'm

sure it still is. It's important for historians (grad student or no) to familiarize themselves with this terminology. "All the terms and abbreviation in the book can be found on the Internet," notes the aforementioned grad student. Whoa! The great hulking trash barge that is the Internet does indeed pull up search terms for all of Carter's entries, but I don't trust them to be accurate. Many book-collecting terms are highly subjective ("first edition," for instance) and I'd never rely on an unvetted digital source for an accurate description if I knew nothing of the subject. You can trust John Carter's book. It should be handy on the bookshelf of every bibliophile. You'll find yourself reaching for it a lot. -Dan Lewis, Ph.D., Curator of the History of Science, the Huntington Library.

...is explained in this handy reference for anybody who can't tell a quire from an aquatint or who wouldn't recognize foxing if their life depended on it. I'm not a book collector - somehow I acquired this book - but I do enjoy reading memoirs written by folk who have spent their lives in pursuit of rare books and spotless first editions (Helen Hanff's books for instance and Lawrence and Nancy Goldstone's book "Used and Rare") and this ABC was a useful reference to some of the terminology used in those. Over four hundred alphabetical entries explain the jargon and conventions of book manufacture and define terms used by dealers world-wide. As a lover of books I found it quite interesting to know some of these technical terms (blank verso, library bindings, plate-numbers, fly-sheet) and would imagine that for a would-be collector, this would be a most useful book. In the meanwhile, I would love to come across a book with fore-edge painting ... a technique whereby the fore-edge of a book is slightly fanned out and then held fast and decorated with a scene. The edges are then squared back up and gilded in the ordinary way. Unless you know the painting is there and fan the pages, you will never see the painting... Books! You've got to love them!

Carter's book is not dated for me, but timeless. He has a droll and elliptical way of deflating the fatuous inclinations of book dealers. Yes, there is no index, and it is tough to find exact terminology sometimes. But this book is not a mere reference book, it is meant to be read and enjoyed and instruct you in the "what", but also the "why" and "how". Carter, in his manner and wit, shows a \*way\* of approaching rare books which I think is very healthy. His skewering of the term "mint condition" and his hilarious description of "issue mongers" have me revisiting this book for momentary pleasure again and again. I started in used books in a store about 8 years ago and when I was hired, my boss put this book in my hands. I have always appreciated that gesture. Any collector should find both pleasure and knowledge in this tome.

Written by bibliographer John Carter (1905-1975), and originally published in 1952, this 232-page compendium of information and insights has long been considered the "how-to bible" for dedicated antiquarians, bibliophiles, and specialty librarians with respect to locating, evaluating, and acquiring rare and out-of-print titles. Now in a completely revised, expanded, and re-set eighth edition, the ABC For Book Collectors is additionally enhanced with an informative introduction by Nicolas Barker (a personal friend of the late John Carter and the man who is responsible for the updates and revisions of this eighth edition). Among the subject authoritatively covered (and arranged in more than 490 alphabetically presented entries) are technical terms used in book collecting and bibliography; auctions, book conditions, facsimiles and fakes, "points", rarity, and more. This new addition provides up-to-date information on web-based book collecting (including eBay sales). The ABC For Book Collectors is a seminal and essential reference shelf component for dealers and collectors, and will prove of immense interest to authors, publishers, librarians, bibliophiles, bibliographers, and reviewers as well!

In the short span that I have owned this book it has already proved its self to be indispensable. No ordinary dictionary of terms, it goes into detail when needed with some fascinating and sometimes funny anecdotes.

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