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TWO CENTURIES OF CAMBRIDGE PUBLISHING AND  
BOOKSELLING: A BRIEF HISTORY OF DEIGHTON,  
BELL AND CO., 1778–1998, WITH A CHECKLIST OF  
THE ARCHIVE\*

JONATHAN R. TOPHAM

When, on 9 April 1778, the first John Deighton (1748–1828) announced that he had purchased ‘the whole stock in trade of Mr. Richard Matthews, Book and Print-seller, Stationer, and Book-binder, in Great St Mary’s Lane’, and intended carrying on the same business, he could little have anticipated that there would still be a bookshop bearing his name in Cambridge some two hundred and twenty years later.<sup>1</sup> Yet, for all that the premises currently occupied by Cambridge University Press bookshop might have claims to be situated on the oldest site in continuous use by booksellers in the country, Deighton, Bell is undoubtedly the oldest continuous bookselling and commercial publishing business in Cambridge.<sup>2</sup> Deighton’s surprise at such an outcome would perhaps have matched that of the present writer when, on enquiring at the same

\* An earlier version of this paper was presented to the Cambridge Bibliographical Society in 1993. The research on which it is based was conducted during my tenure of the Munby Fellowship in Bibliography, Cambridge University Library (1992–93) and of a Leverhulme Special Research Fellowship, Department of History and Philosophy of Science, Cambridge (1997–98). In addition to the numerous individuals whose particular assistance is acknowledged in footnotes below, I would like more generally to thank my many former colleagues at Cambridge University Library for making my tenure of the Munby fellowship so productive and enjoyable, and to acknowledge my overwhelming debt of gratitude to Elisabeth Leedham-Green for her tireless good humour in dealing with my often ill-informed requests for help, and for her constant supply of invaluable information and much-needed encouragement in equal measure.

<sup>1</sup> *Cambridge Chronicle*, 11 April 1778, 3c. According to manuscript notes in a volume of early Deighton catalogues once in the possession of William Wright Smith (partner in Deighton, Bell and Co., 1854–96), Deighton established himself as a bookbinder in Cambridge on 1 May 1777; however, no corroborative evidence has been found. See Robert Bowes, ‘Biographical notes on the university printers from the commencement of printing in Cambridge to the present time’, *Communications of the Cambridge Antiquarian Society* 5 (1886) 283–362, 322.

<sup>2</sup> See George J. Gray, *Cambridge bookselling and the oldest bookshop in the United Kingdom* (Cambridge: Bowes & Bowes, 1925).

bookshop in 1992, he discovered that a hitherto unexplored archive of the firm’s activities, dating back to 1813, was to be found on the second floor.<sup>3</sup> Through the good offices of the manager of Deighton, Bell (Ian Kidman) and of the directors of the parent company, Heffers, the archive was deposited in Cambridge University Library on long-term loan in 1993 (Add. 9453).

For much of its history, Deighton, Bell and Co. has occupied—literally as well as metaphorically—a central position in the university in which it is situated. Not only as the leading publisher in Cambridge for half a century (the University Press not excepted), but also as an exceptional supplier of all manner of books and a vast repository of bibliographical information, the company has played no small part in the history of the university. This article is not, however, intended to give an extended account of the history of the firm, or to explore the tremendously important role which it has played in university life. My object here is far more restricted. It is to provide an introduction to the archive (the contents of which are listed in the Appendix), and to give sufficient background information on the history of the firm to make that archive broadly intelligible to those who might wish to use it. The ultimately more demanding task of giving a detailed and satisfactory history of the firm is one to which I hope to be able to return on a subsequent occasion, and many of the claims of this article must consequently be considered provisional.

*J. DEIGHTON, 1778–1813*

For some not altogether accountable reason, there was for much of this century a belief among the staff of Deighton, Bell and Co. that the firm had originally been founded in 1700—a claim repeatedly made in its advertisements.<sup>4</sup> When John Deighton arrived in Cambridge in 1778 as a thirty-year-old master bookbinder, he certainly took over a business

<sup>3</sup> Although most of the archives had been in the premises for their entire history, John Beech, the manager of Deighton, Bell and Co. between 1967 and 1987, reports that the tin deed box which was used by the Smith family for important documents in the later nineteenth century, was deposited in the shop only in the 1970s by one Miss Deighton.

<sup>4</sup> See Gray, *op. cit.* (2), 33; [M. Oldfield], ‘Cambridge and its stationers’, *Stationery Trade Review*, April 1944, 888–906, at p. 900; and F. A. Mumby and Ian Norrie, *Publishing and bookselling*, 5th edn. (London: Cape, [1974]), 226.

which had been in existence since at least 1751, but there is no evidence of anything earlier, nor does it contribute much to trace antecedents in this way.<sup>5</sup> Of rather more important antecedents—namely, the parentage, apprenticeship, and early career of John Deighton—nothing has yet been found.<sup>6</sup> What is known is that, on his arrival in Cambridge, Deighton was already a master binder seeking an apprentice, advertising ‘Bookbinding in all its different branches executed with neatness and elegance’, and offering to repair and beautify ‘Noblemen and Gentlemen’s Libraries’.<sup>7</sup> Moreover, Deighton’s services as a binder were soon in demand by the university. Under Richard Farmer, elected Protobibliothecarius in 1778, there was an extensive programme of binding and repair work on the collections of the University Library, with something in the order of 20,000 volumes receiving attention from the binders between 1778 and 1797. Deighton rapidly became one of the leading binders in this programme, which must have come as a welcome introduction to the Cambridge trade.<sup>8</sup>

<sup>5</sup> On the business of Richard Matthews which Deighton took over, see H. P. Stokes, *Cambridge stationers, printers, bookbinders &c.* (Cambridge: Bowes and Bowes, 1919), 18–19, 31; and Henry R. Plomer, G. H. Bushnell, and E. R. McC. Dix, *A dictionary of the printers and booksellers who were at work in England, Scotland and Ireland from 1726 to 1775* (Oxford: Oxford Bibliographical Society, 1952).

<sup>6</sup> Although described as a bookbinder from London, Deighton does not appear in either Ellic Howe, *A list of London bookbinders, 1648–1815* (London: Bibliographical Society, 1950); Charles Ramsden, *London bookbinders 1780–1840* (London: B. T. Batsford, 1956); or idem., *Bookbinders of the United Kingdom (outside London) 1780–1840* (London: B. T. Batsford, 1954). Moreover, his apprenticeship does not appear in the Stationers’ Company records, or, apparently, in the records of the other companies. See D. F. McKenzie, *Stationers’ Company apprentices 1701–1800* (Oxford: Oxford Bibliographical Society, 1978); Ian Maxted, *The British book trades 1710–1777: an index of masters and apprentices recorded in the Inland Revenue registers at the PRO, Kew* (Exeter: Priv. Printed, 1983); and ‘The apprentices of Great Britain, 1710–1762 [and 1763–1774] extracted from the Inland Revenue books at the Public Records Office, London, for the Society of Genealogists’, unpublished typescript, 1921–28, Guildhall Library, London.

<sup>7</sup> *Cambridge Chronicle*, 11 April 1778, 3c. One of Deighton’s early Cambridge apprentices, and later his assistant, was William Henry Lunn, later himself a notable bookseller in Cambridge and afterwards in London before his ruin and early death in 1813. See McKitterick, op. cit. (9), 206, 246, 415 n.14; and [Samuel Parr et al.], *An address to the well-wishers and customers of the late Mr. William Henry Lunn*, ([London: n.p., 1815]).

<sup>8</sup> David McKitterick, *Cambridge University Library: a history*, Vol. 2, *The eighteenth and nineteenth centuries* (Cambridge University Press, 1986), 309–10.

However, it was not only as a binder that Deighton began to benefit from trade with the university, and he soon became a regular supplier of books to the library. The bookseller from whom Deighton purchased his stock, Richard Matthews, was not one of the leaders of the local trade. He had been ‘less famous in Publick’ than the ‘well known’ and ‘eminent’ booksellers Thomas Merrill and William Thurlb: urne and their successors, although he was renowned ‘within the walls of *Granta*, for a very pretty wife’, whose charms were expected to ‘add no small Increase to his Trade’.<sup>9</sup> However, Deighton quickly expanded his stock, purchasing the important library of John Barnardiston, the recently deceased Protobibliothecarius, of which he issued a catalogue in November 1778.<sup>10</sup> Possibly with new capital from his marriage the following February, Deighton was also by November 1779 purchasing the stock of the bankrupt John Woodyer.<sup>11</sup> Woodyer had for many years been in partnership with William Thurlbourne, the most successful Cambridge bookseller of his day, and he had taken over the business after Thurlbourne’s death. Moreover, his shop, into which John Deighton now removed, was located on what many have considered the prime site for bookselling in Cambridge, opposite the Senate House.<sup>12</sup> Thus, in eighteen months, Deighton had taken over the stock of two of the existing Cambridge booksellers, and had established himself in an ideal location as one of the leading booksellers of the town. The value of that location was not lost on the engraver Joshua Baldrey, who in May 1781 advertised his services in drawing likenesses and as a drawing tutor from Deighton’s shop.<sup>13</sup>

Deighton’s expansion did not end there. Matthews had not been involved to any significant extent in publishing, but Woodyer had, and

<sup>9</sup> [William Dodd], *A day in vacation at college: a burlesque poem* (London: W. Owen and Cambridge: T. Merrill, 1751), 8–9n. On the businesses of Merrill and Thurlbourne, see David McKitterick, *ibid.*, *Scholarship and commerce, 1698–1872*, 151–2.

<sup>10</sup> John Nichols and John Bowyer Nichols, *Illustrations of the literary history of the eighteenth century*, 8 vols. (London: J. B. Nichols and Son, 1817–57), vi, 287; and Bowes, op. cit. (1), 322.

<sup>11</sup> *Cambridge Chronicle*, 20 November 1779, 1c, and 4 December 1779, 3c. On Woodyer see John Feather, *The provincial book-trade in eighteenth-century England* (Cambridge University Press, 1985), 80; and William Noblett, ‘Dru Drury’s letters (1770–1775) to the Cambridge bookseller, John Woodyer’, *TCBS* 10:4 (1994) 539–47.

<sup>12</sup> See McKitterick, op. cit. (9), 206.

<sup>13</sup> *Cambridge Chronicle*, 12 May 1781; quoted in McKitterick, op. cit. (9), 211.

Deighton soon followed him in taking advantage of the presence in Cambridge of a large printing establishment (the University Press) and a large body of aspiring authors. As David McKitterick has shown, much of the scholarly publishing of mid-eighteenth-century Cambridge was carried out by booksellers on a commission basis.<sup>14</sup> However, Deighton's arrival in the town coincided with a period when changes in both the university and the book trade made it increasingly possible to consider developing a property in the copyrights of Cambridge books. Within the university, the increasing seriousness with which the studies of the place were carried on in the last quarter of the century, and the beginnings of an upturn in the numbers of students matriculating, was reflected in the appearance of new mathematical textbooks and other pedagogic works with a reasonably assured market.<sup>15</sup> At the same time, the more general expansion of the book trade and the growth of reading audiences in the wake of the 1774 House of Lords ruling against perpetual copyright promised a wider readership, if not for the more arcane scholarly publications, at least for some of the educational and general works produced in the university. Entering the trade at this crucial juncture, apparently with no shortage of capital, Deighton was able to take advantage of the expansion to secure for himself a commanding position in the new publishing market.

By 1785, thirty books had appeared with Deighton's imprint, although, as David McKitterick points out, imprints at this date frequently provide a far from adequate guide to how books were financed and distributed.<sup>16</sup> At the end of that year, however, Deighton left Cambridge to return to London, taking over the bookselling business of William Cater in High Holborn.<sup>17</sup> Six years later, in January 1792, he announced that he had moved again, 'to a more eligible and spacious

<sup>14</sup> McKitterick, *op. cit.* (9), ch. 7.

<sup>15</sup> See, for example, John Gascoigne, *Cambridge in the age of the enlightenment: science, religion and politics from the Restoration to the French revolution* (Cambridge University Press, 1988), especially p. 275.

<sup>16</sup> McKitterick, *op. cit.* (9), 152.

<sup>17</sup> *Cambridge Chronicle*, 17 December 1785, 3c. On Cater see John Nichols, *Literary anecdotes of the eighteenth century*, 9 vols. (London: privately printed, 1912–16), iii, 634–5; and Ian Maxted, *The London Book Trades 1775–1800: A Preliminary Checklist of Members* (Folkestone: William Dawson & Sons Ltd., 1977).

Shop and Premises' further along Holborn.<sup>18</sup> This time, he had bought the stock of Lockyer Davis (1719–91), one of the most highly regarded booksellers and auctioneers of his day, whose knowledge of books made him a frequent recourse of literary men.<sup>19</sup> Deighton immediately issued a 214-page catalogue of 'a large and valuable collection of books, in various languages', and two years later his catalogue contained 'near forty thousand volumes of books' valued at almost £4000.<sup>20</sup>

The reasons for the move to London are not immediately apparent. Deighton's business in Cambridge had undoubtedly been successful, and the returns 'very considerable'.<sup>21</sup> However, as a publisher Deighton was undoubtedly hampered by the difficulties of transport and communication which beset this, as so many provincial towns in the late eighteenth century.<sup>22</sup> While much of the market for the new educational works produced in Cambridge might be expected to subsist within the university itself, Deighton perhaps hoped that by moving to London he might be able to exploit a larger reading public. Moreover, it was only in London that he could realistically hope to obtain shares in the major London copyrights, since country booksellers were effectually excluded from the London trade sales at this period.<sup>23</sup> Certainly, his move to London coincided with a marked increase in his publishing activity, and in the nine years that he stayed there, over 200 works appeared with his imprint. Moreover, Deighton used the contacts he had made in Cambridge to good effect, publishing in London for a number of Cambridge authors. Nevertheless, in October 1794 he decided to return to Cambridge.

Once again, the reasons for the move can only be a matter for conjecture. Yet, if the problem for a Cambridge publisher of this period was to reach a national market, the problem for a London publisher

<sup>18</sup> *Books published by J. Deighton, removed from No. 274, to the late Mr. Davis's shop, No. 325, opposite Gray's-Inn, Holborn, London* ([London: J. Deighton, 1792]), 4.

<sup>19</sup> On Davis see the *DNB*.

<sup>20</sup> *A catalogue of a large and valuable collection of books, in various languages ... offered for sale by J. Deighton* ([London: J. Deighton, 1792]); and *A catalogue of near forty thousand volumes of books ... now selling, 1794, by John Deighton* ([London: J. Deighton, 1794]).

<sup>21</sup> *Cambridge Chronicle*, 12 November 1785, 3d.

<sup>22</sup> On the provincial book-trade in eighteenth-century England, and the limitations of provincial publishing in this period, see Feather, *op. cit.* (11).

<sup>23</sup> Feather, *op. cit.* (11), 5.



seeking to exploit Cambridge authors was that at least some such authors wrote primarily for a local educational market, and most were inclined to deal with local printers and publishers rather than those at a distance, if only for practical reasons.<sup>24</sup> Either way, some inconvenience was inevitable, and it is for this reason that so many of the late eighteenth and early nineteenth-century publications emanating from Cambridge were either jointly published with, or at least distributed by, booksellers in London and Oxford. Yet, Deighton's return to Cambridge might be seen as an attempt to do what had not previously been done: namely to create in that small provincial town, a national publishing house.<sup>25</sup> Such an aspiration would certainly have been daring, but the gradual improvement of the transport infrastructure, and the expanding market for the educational and other books produced by Cambridge authors, meant that it was not utterly foolhardy.

On his return to Cambridge, Deighton took over the stock of John and Joseph Merrill, who had long been among the leading university booksellers.<sup>26</sup> However, since their premises were no longer to be used as a shop, Deighton paid £1000 for the recently completed house at the corner of Trinity and Green Street which has been occupied by the business ever since.<sup>27</sup> While not opposite the Senate House as before, this location was arguably even closer to the centre of power in the university, being situated between the Senate House and the two largest college, Trinity and St. John's.<sup>28</sup> Very rapidly, moreover, Deighton made his shop a central focus of university life: in the words of the *Cam-*

<sup>24</sup> Interestingly, in the light of this, Deighton sometimes advertised in the *Cambridge Chronicle* while in London. See McKitterick, op. cit. (9), 246.

<sup>25</sup> On this point see McKitterick, op. cit. (9), 249.

<sup>26</sup> *Cambridge Chronicle*, 11 October 1794, 3c. On the Merrills' business see Feather, op. cit. (11), 5, 8, and 70, and McKitterick, op. cit. (9), 151, 206, and 246–7. If the stock was worth anything like the £4000-worth of stock which Deighton had advertised for sale in London, it is clear that his capital was of quite a different order to that of most provincial booksellers of the period. See Feather, op. cit. (11), 90.

<sup>27</sup> Much of the history of the site and buildings is given in various mid-nineteenth-century schedules of indentures and abstracts of title in the Cambridgeshire County Record Office, P/32/28/12–16. See also Royal Commission on Historic Monuments, *An inventory of the historic monuments in the city of Cambridge*, 3 vols. (London: HMSO, 1959, hereafter RCHM), ii, 319–20.

<sup>28</sup> On the dominance of these two colleges in University affairs see, for example, McKitterick, op. cit. (9), 14.

*bridge University Calendar* for 1802, a 'public part of the university'.<sup>29</sup> It had, for instance, been at the Merrills', but now it was at Deighton's shop that students were directed to enrol for professorial lectures.<sup>30</sup> This, too, was the place where for half a century students learned of their preliminary ranking into classes after the 'disputations in the schools', and before sitting the Senate House Examination.<sup>31</sup>

Deighton's position in the university was secured in a range of other ways. On buying the business of J. and J. Merrill, he had purchased their popular guide to the university and town of Cambridge, which had already been through half a dozen editions, and went through many more in Deighton's hands. To this he added, in 1803, another semi-official publication, the annual *Cambridge University Calendar*, which had been started as a commercial venture in 1796. After issuing his first volume, Deighton apparently edited the *Calendar* in-house, a practice continued until the publication was purchased by the University Press in 1913. Quite apart from giving Deighton the aura of a semi-official publisher to the university, the *University Calendar* provided him with a valuable advertising forum, and over succeeding years he attached increasingly long lists of his publications to it, which, by the time of his death, ran to eighteen pages. Such a reputation had, however, to be carefully maintained. Deighton was a Tory in politics, and although he was by no means exclusive in his publishing, he was careful to avoid any radical taint.<sup>32</sup> When he had been in London, he had published numerous of the controversial works of the former fellow of Jesus College, and notorious Unitarian, Gilbert Wakefield. Yet with the burgeoning anti-Jacobinism of the 1790s, he ceased to publish Wakefield's works on his return to Cambridge in 1794. More seriously still, in March 1800, when the reforming Unitarian mathematician William Frend published his *Animadversions on the Elements of Christian theology by Rev. George Pretyman, Lord Bishop of Lincoln* with the assertion on its title-page

<sup>29</sup> *Cambridge University Calendar*, 1802, xvii.

<sup>30</sup> See, for example, Cambridge University Archives, UP1, ff. 167, 184, 204–5, 235, 141, 250.

<sup>31</sup> *C. U. Calendar*, 1802, xvii. The practice continued until as late as 1843, after which date printed copies of the lists were circulated. See *C. U. Calendar*, 1843, p. 14.

<sup>32</sup> *The poll for the election of a representative for the county of Cambridge, on Wednesday the 5th, Thursday the 6th, Friday the 7th, Saturday the 8th, and Monday the 10th of May, 1802* (Cambridge: B. Flower, 1802).

'Printed for the Author; and sold by ... Deighton, Cambridge', the publisher considered it necessary to take out an advertisement in the *Cambridge Chronicle* announcing that his name had been inserted without his knowledge or consent, and that he would not sell the offending pamphlet.<sup>33</sup>

Deighton also became the leading supplier of books to the University Library, and his bill for the academic year 1812–13 alone amounted to £302 11s. 0d.<sup>34</sup> His importance as a book retailer, especially as far as the University Library was concerned, depended in part on his remarkable ability to supply foreign books, even in time of war. On the cover of the 1803 edition of the *Guide through the University of Cambridge*, Deighton announced that he had 'lately established a Continental Connexion', by which he was 'enabled to sell *Foreign Classical Books* on as low Terms as any Person in the Kingdom, and to procure any Foreign Work with all possible expedition'. As David McKitterick has shown, the continental trade in classical editions was of very particular importance at this juncture.<sup>35</sup> However, Deighton reported in January 1813 that the continental trade thus established was to be 'extended' further, and it continued to be one of the firm's abiding attractions well into the present century.<sup>36</sup>

Less easy to reconstruct, perhaps, is an impression of the particular attractions of his shop premises. Deighton apparently lived over the shop, which was almost certainly at this point confined to the ground floor.<sup>37</sup> The familiar shop-front with its four large windows had been installed as early as 1814, but the appearance of the interior remains rather more obscure.<sup>38</sup> It is tempting to speculate, however, that it was here that the undergraduate William Whewell 'lounged at [the] Book-

sellers' one day in April 1814, or that he glanced through a book which 'lay upon the bookseller's counter'.<sup>39</sup> Deighton's student customers of course included many of the most celebrated figures of the period, but such custom had its disadvantages, as many a Cambridge tradesman knew to his cost. When Lord Byron wrote to Deighton in 1811, it was only to instigate yet another delay in the settlement of a bill which almost certainly dated from his years as an undergraduate at the university (1805–6, 1807–8), when he had become deeply indebted.<sup>40</sup> Byron may have been somewhat exceptional, but the long-term credit expected by customers in the university was a constant hazard for Cambridge booksellers.<sup>41</sup>

It was not only as a retailer that Deighton made himself indispensable to the university. In 1801, he succeeded the Merrills as an agent for the Bibles and Books of Common Prayer published by the University Press, selling them not only locally, but also nationally.<sup>42</sup> As early as 1803 he executed a bond with Francis Hodson and Richard Newcome for the purchase of Royal octavo Bibles to the astonishing value of £2323 10s.<sup>43</sup> In addition, Deighton's links with the University Press were well established on the basis of his very considerable demand for printing work. Itself little concerned with publishing beyond the privileged books (Bibles and prayer books), the Press Syndicate must have been very grateful to have so much of the excess capacity of the University Press taken up with private work for Deighton. It is little wonder, then, that Deighton was extended courtesies with respect to credit not allowed to such later customers as John William Parker.<sup>44</sup> Indeed, when the University Printer, John Burges, died unexpectedly in 1802, it was

<sup>33</sup> *Cambridge Chronicle*, 15 March 1800, 3d.

<sup>34</sup> McKitterick, op. cit. (8), 452.

<sup>35</sup> McKitterick, op. cit. (9), 293–4.

<sup>36</sup> *Cambridge Chronicle*, 1 January 1813, 3e.

<sup>37</sup> Curiously, one of the windows on the second floor of the building bears the engraving: 'Sarah Deighton April 21st 1824'. The family legend, reported by Miss Deighton to Ian Kidman (manager since 1987), was that this engraving was made using a diamond ring, to record the occasion of an engagement. However, this is not borne out by genealogical information.

<sup>38</sup> RCHM, op. cit. (27), ii, 319; and [W. Gibson], *A narrative of the celebration of the peace at Cambridge: comprising the illuminations, Marshal Blucher's visit, and the peace festival on Parker's Piece, Tuesday, July 12, 1814* ([Cambridge: W. Gibson, 1814]), 11.

<sup>39</sup> Isaac Todhunter, *William Whewell, D.D., Master of Trinity College Cambridge: an account of his writings with selections from his literary and scientific correspondence*, 2 vols. (London: Macmillan and co., 1876), ii, 2, 7. One contemporary bookshop of which we have some interior description was W. H. Lunn's, which had 'a large and elegant mahogany library case'. *Cambridge Chronicle*, 1 November 1794; quoted in McKitterick, op. cit. (9), 247.

<sup>40</sup> See Byron to Deighton, 7 November 1811, in Leslie A. Marchand, ed., *Byron's letters and journals*, 12 vols. (London: John Murray, 1973–82), ii, 127–8, and the *DNB*.

<sup>41</sup> See, for example, J. C. Hare to Alexander Macmillan, 1 June 1844; quoted in Thomas Hughes, *Memoir of Daniel Macmillan* (London: Macmillan & Co., 1882), 161.

<sup>42</sup> Cambridge University Archives, Pr. V.2, f. 31. Deighton was appointed on 15 May 1801, and was bound to give security of £1000.

<sup>43</sup> Cambridge University Archives, CUR 33.1(44).

<sup>44</sup> McKitterick, op. cit. (9), 349.

Deighton who was appointed as stand-in until a suitable replacement could be found.<sup>45</sup>

By the first decade of the nineteenth century Deighton was thus firmly entrenched as the university's bookseller, and none of his competitors seriously threatened his dominance. His closest rival was John Nicholson, who was succeeded on his death in 1796 by a less flamboyant son of the same name. Generally known by the sobriquet 'Maps', Nicholson the elder is familiar to many by virtue of the portrait by Reinagle which hangs in the entrance to Cambridge University Library.

He was well-known in the university of his own day partly by virtue of his circulating library, which combined the 'most choice selection of Lounging Books that the genius of indolence could desire', with 'most of the lecture books read in the University, and also many of the best and scarcest authors in various other branches of literature'.<sup>46</sup> More notoriously, he offered a very popular service in supplying exercises in manuscript for wealthy and indolent students.<sup>47</sup> However, as the demands of the university changed in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, it was Deighton more than the Nicholsons who rose to prominence in supplying the new textbooks and other works which were required. It was thus in measured tones that the literary anecdotist, John Nichols, reported in 1812 that Deighton was 'carrying on an extensive business at Cambridge with very great reputation'.<sup>48</sup>

### J. DEIGHTON AND SONS, 1813–27

'I'm desperately hard up for money, and so I've been collecting my poems—weeding them well, you know—going over them quite critically, in fact; and I want to know if you think Deighton would publish them. You've a name in Cambridge, you know; and I dare say he would look at them if you offered them to him'

<sup>45</sup> C. U. Archives, CUR 33.1(42, 43) and Grace Book L (413); and McKitterick, op. cit. (9), 349.

<sup>46</sup> *Gradus ad Cantabrigiam: or, A dictionary of terms, academical & colloquial, or cant, which are used at the University of Cambridge, with a variety of curious & entertaining illustrations* (London: Richardson, 1803), 59; and *Gentleman's Magazine* 66 (1796): 708.

<sup>47</sup> McKitterick, op. cit. (9), 206–7, 247–8.

<sup>48</sup> Nichols, op. cit. (17), iii, 640.

'I can but try,' said Roger; 'but I'm afraid you won't get much by them.'<sup>49</sup>

Elizabeth Gaskell set her novel *Wives and daughters* in the late 1820s, by which time the dominance of John Deighton's publishing firm was at its peak. Some time before, Deighton had bound his two sons, John (1791–1854) and Joseph Jonathan (1792–1848), to Edward and James Hodson, printers of Cross Street in Hatton Garden, London, and relatives of the Cambridge printer, Francis Hodson.<sup>50</sup> After serving their time, the two sons entered the firm, and in January 1813 they were taken into partnership, trading as John Deighton and Sons.<sup>51</sup> As the leading publishers in the university, the firm held a commanding position, with no local competitor of comparable size. Moreover, the continuing difficulties of transportation and communication between Cambridge and London made it difficult for any metropolitan publisher seriously to threaten the Deightons' position in serving both the readers and authors of the university. Thus, as the local and national markets continued to expand in regard to the mathematical, classical, and religious works which the firm produced, the Deightons were ideally placed to take full advantage.<sup>52</sup>

The retail business also continued to flourish, as the Deightons made themselves ever more indispensable conduits for the supply of books both within Cambridge and beyond. On the one hand, they were increasingly relied upon as the primary suppliers of specialist books from the continent and elsewhere, both to individuals, and to the University Library. In 1820, for instance, the recently appointed professor of mineralogy Edward Daniel Clarke wrote to the natural history artist James Sowerby using a significant definite article: 'I ordered Deighton, *the* bookseller here, to procure from you, for our public library, entire

<sup>49</sup> 'Osborne Hamley reviews his position' (ch. 23), Mrs. Gaskell, *Wives and daughters* (1864–6). Elizabeth Gaskell, *Wives and daughters* (Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press, 1987), 273. I am grateful to Audrey Rivet for this reference.

<sup>50</sup> See entries for 5 February 1805 and 6 May 1806 in *Apprentice Memorandum Book*, 4 February 1794–1 December 1807, Worshipful Company of Stationers, London. On the Hodsons see McKenzie, op. cit. (6), 127, 175; Maxted, op. cit. (5); and Plomer, Bushnell, and Dix, op. cit. (17).

<sup>51</sup> *Cambridge Chronicle*, 1 January 1813, 3c.

<sup>52</sup> See McKitterick, 320–2.



sets of all those works of yours [on mineralogical subjects].<sup>53</sup> This position of dominance in the local trade, moreover, meant that the firm was also able to supply books from Cambridge to a wide circle of readers elsewhere. In part, this resulted from members of the university corresponding with far-flung friends and family. A fifteen-year-old Charles Darwin, for instance, was still at school in Shrewsbury when his brother wrote from Cambridge in 1825 to report: 'If any body at home wants a copy of Bewick's Quadrupeds, there is a very decent copy at Deightons 2<sup>nd</sup> Hand for 17<sup>s</sup>. Demy 8vo.'<sup>54</sup> In addition, former members of the university also often sought to keep in touch with developments there. The Lincolnshire landowner and mathematician Edward Bromhead eagerly used trips to Cambridge to browse in the bookshops, telling Charles Babbage, after one such visit in 1819:

No French mathematics lying about at Deighton's. French books sell well, Garnier especially. A new edition of Woodhouse's Trigonometry with small changes ... Works on Divinity have increased four to one in all the shops<sup>55</sup>

Others, of course, had no such opportunities to scan the Deightons' stock in person. However, the issuing of catalogues both of their publishing and, increasingly, of their retail stock meant that the firm was able to maintain lucrative contact with many of those who had gone down from the university, and with some who had no connection with the university or town at all. Catalogues of Deighton publications were frequently bound up with books sold from the shop, whether they were themselves published by the Deightons or not.<sup>56</sup> In addition, catalogues of stock often running into hundreds of pages were available for a small consideration, and the firm regularly advertised their publications and

<sup>53</sup> Clarke to Sowerby, 22 April 1820, Natural History Museum, Sowerby Correspondence, Vol. 13 (emphasis mine). I am grateful to Brian Dolan for this reference. See also McKitterick, op. cit. (8), 459.

<sup>54</sup> E. A. Darwin to Charles Darwin, [24 January 1825], in Frederick Burkhardt et al., eds., *Correspondence of Charles Darwin*, 10 vols. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1985–97), i, 13–14, p. 14.

<sup>55</sup> Bromhead to Babbage, 1 October 1819, British Library, Add. Mss. 37,182 f. 99. Quoted in Doris Mary Cannell, *George Green: mathematician and physicist, 1793–1841: the background to his life and work* (London and Atlantic Highlands, NJ: Athlone Press, 1993), 212.

<sup>56</sup> See McKitterick, op. cit. (9), 468–9 n. 89.

catalogues in the *Cambridge Chronicle*, which served a wide geographical hinterland beyond the city itself.<sup>57</sup>

The earliest extant archives, which date from the following year, are purely financial in nature—namely, a series of bank books for the account of J. Deighton & Sons with the Cambridge bankers, J. Mortlock & Sons, from 1814 to 1845 (D1/1–4). There is also a fragmentary trade debt book, recording a number of bills due for 1821 (B1). More significant are a handful of very early agreements with authors (E1), the earliest being that for William Whewell's *Elementary treatise of mechanics* (1819). Fortunately, these fragmentary sources for the early period can be supplemented by the much more detailed archives of the University Press. The great bulk of the Deightons' publications were printed at the University Press, and the printing journals (1809–26, 1829–62), authors' ledgers (1809–29), and authors' delivery book (1810–27) from this period provide valuable production data for many of them.<sup>58</sup> The Deightons' activities as University Press agents are also documented in such sources as the Bible stock book (1791–1854) and the warehouse journals (1805–6 and 1810–17).<sup>59</sup> In addition, of course, the University archives give indications of the involvement of the firm in the retailing and binding of books for the University Library at this period.<sup>60</sup>

The elder John Deighton retired in 1827, the business being continued by his sons, and died early the following year.<sup>61</sup> The obituary notices were universally brief. The *Cambridge Chronicle* announced his death in one sentence: 'Died, on Wednesday last, in the 80th year of his age, after a very long illness, Mr. John Deighton, bookseller, of this place'.<sup>62</sup> The *Gentleman's Magazine* was scarcely more forthcoming,

<sup>57</sup> In 1819 a supplement to the annual catalogue, describing recently imported works, sold for just 1s. *Cambridge Chronicle*, 29 October 1819, 3a. See also *Cambridge Chronicle*, 25 October 1816, 3b, 3e; 17 October 1817, 3b; 18 January 1828, 3c. On the *Chronicle* see McKitterick, op. cit. (9), 6; and Michael J. Murphy, *Cambridge newspapers and Cambridge opinion, 1780–1850* (Cambridge: Oleander Press, 1977).

<sup>58</sup> C. U. Archives, CUP 20/1–6, CUP 14/1–3, and CUP 29/5. See Elisabeth Leedham-Green, 'University Press records in the University Archives: an account and a checklist', *TCBS*, 8:4 (1984) 398–418.

<sup>59</sup> C. U. Archives, CUP 35/1–5 and CUP 29/1–2.

<sup>60</sup> C. U. Archives, Vice-Chancellors' Vouchers and University Audit Book.

<sup>61</sup> Bowes, op. cit. (1), 323.

<sup>62</sup> *Cambridge Chronicle*, 18 January 1828, 2c.



merely recording the death in Cambridge of 'Mr. Deighton, a most respectable bookseller of that university'.<sup>63</sup> By contrast, John Nicholson ('Maps') had attracted much more spirited obituary notices. For, while the scale of his business was by no means grander than Deighton's, Nicholson was a personality on a grand scale, who was 'lamented by an unparalleled circle of friends'.<sup>64</sup> John Deighton apparently had none of Nicholson's flamboyance—he was not, like 'Maps', one concerning whom the humorous Tripos Verses might be written.<sup>65</sup> Deighton belonged to a later, more serious generation of booksellers, and was well suited to the more serious spirit of the university as it began cautiously to reform its pedagogic practices. Perhaps in consequence, he had, by the time of his death, established the first publishing and bookselling house in Cambridge which could boast a national reputation.

*J. & J. DEIGHTON, 1827–48; J. DEIGHTON, 1848–54*

John Deighton's will, like the other documents which survive, gives few insights into his personal life. His bequests of small sums to his nephews and nieces, to his housekeeper, and to several local charities, betray little. A small indication of the pride he took in his service to the university over half a century was perhaps visible in his bequest to the recently established United University Club in London (f. 1821) of a set of the *Cambridge University Calendar* half bound in Russia, and his provision 'that all future Publications of it may be forwarded to the aforesaid Club House so long as the name of Deighton shall appear on the title page'.<sup>66</sup> The great bulk of his property, however, was shared equally between his two sons, who immediately entered into partnership as J. & J. J. Deighton.<sup>67</sup> The business premises and house in Trinity Street had

<sup>63</sup> *Gentleman's Magazine* 98 (1828) 188.

<sup>64</sup> *Gentleman's Magazine* 66 (1796) 708.

<sup>65</sup> The Tripos verses of 1781, featuring 'Maps', were reprinted in the *Cambridge University Calendar*, 1802, l–lii. See also the *DNB*.

<sup>66</sup> On the United Universities Club see John Thole, *The Oxford and Cambridge clubs in London* (London: United Oxford and Cambridge University Club, 1992), 1–3. I am grateful to John Owston, librarian of the United Oxford and Cambridge University Club for this reference.

<sup>67</sup> Will of John Deighton, proved 18 March 1828 (PROB 11/1737), PRO, London. On the deed of co-partnership signed by the two brothers on 15 November 1828 see the will of J. J. Deighton, proved 19 April 1849 (PROB 11/2213), PRO, London.

already been made over to the younger John Deighton in 1819, and he continued to live there with his large and growing family, while Joseph lived successively in Green Street, Regent Street, and finally at The Grove on Huntingdon Road.<sup>68</sup>

Like their father, the two sons were prominent in university life, warranting a number of references in the famous diary of the great Victorian Registrary, Joseph Romilly.<sup>69</sup> In addition, they were both active in local political and church affairs. The younger John Deighton was a churchwarden at the family church of St. Michael's, which still possesses a silver alms dish which he presented in 1822,<sup>70</sup> and became embroiled on more than one occasion in parochial disputes. When the church suffered a serious fire in November 1849, for instance, he was involved in levying a rate for the restoration work, a decision which was challenged in court by William Haddon Smith, a bookseller around the corner in Rose Crescent with a somewhat scurrilous reputation as a pornographer and harbourer of infidels.<sup>71</sup> In politics, both brothers were conservatives apparently of the Peelite variety, deviating from their usual voting habits only once, to vote for reform in 1832.<sup>72</sup> Joseph Deighton was for many years a Town Councillor and Alderman, holding the office of Mayor in 1845–6, and was described at his death as having

<sup>68</sup> 'Abstract of title of the mortgagees of the late John Deighton to a freehold messuage and premises, in Trinity Street', Cambridgeshire County Record Office, P/32/28/16. Parish records indicate that the elder John Deighton had moved to Market Street, where both he and his wife died; in his will he bequeathed real estate in the parishes of Holy Trinity and St. Andrew's to his two sons.

<sup>69</sup> CUL, Add. Mss. 6804–42. The diary covers the years 1818 to 1864, although the entries before 1829 are neither detailed nor continuous. See M. E. Bury and J. D. Pickles, eds., *Romilly's Cambridge diary 1842–1847: selected passages from the diary of the Rev. Joseph Romilly fellow of Trinity College and registrary of the University of Cambridge* (Cambridge: Cambridgeshire Records Society, 1994). The diary records, for instance, that Romilly's sister Margaret went to Mrs Joseph Deighton's for a shower-bath in July 1839. I am grateful to John Pickles for this and other references.

<sup>70</sup> RCHM, op. cit. (27), ii, 286.

<sup>71</sup> *William Haddon Smith, appellant, against John Deighton, and Richard Billington, respondents. Appeal from the Archdeaconry Court of Canterbury. Case, with appendix, on behalf of the appellant* (London: J. Farrow, [1852]). See, for instance, Jonathan R. Topham, 'The atheist and the bookseller: a tale of Cambridge life', *Darwin College Magazine* 8 (1993) 74–80.

<sup>72</sup> *Copy of the poll on the election of two burgesses to serve in Parliament for the borough of Cambridge, taken on Tuesday and Wednesday the 11th and 12th days of Dec. 1832* (Cambridge: Hodson and Brown, 1833).

'usually taken a prominent part in all political movements' in the borough 'espousing the Conservative cause with great zeal'.<sup>73</sup>

Within the university, the brothers maintained a considerable reputation both as booksellers and publishers. As booksellers, their continuing success in supplying valuable stock—both new and old—from the continent, was particularly remarkable, and the University Library continued to rely heavily on the firm.<sup>74</sup> The Deightons traded directly with continental booksellers in such strategic locations as Leipzig and Paris, but also made trips to the continent to purchase stock. One such excursion was made in 1838, when one of the brothers travelled across the Channel with the University Library Keeper, John Bowtell, in order to obtain books, both for the shop, and for the University Library.<sup>75</sup> When a similar journey was planned in August 1843, the Registrary's diary entry explained the nature of the partnership: 'the body of Bowtell being supported by [the mind of] Deighton & the mind of D. by [the body of] B.'<sup>76</sup> However, it was not only the University Library which lent on the Deightons' knowledge of the trade. Individual book-buyers, too, relied on the firm's ability to supply obscure and especially foreign scholarly works, and on their bibliographical expertise. Even so knowledgeable a man as William Whewell (whose foible, famously, was omniscience), depended on Deighton to supply him with the correct reference to a paper by Frédéric Cuvier in the *Memoires du Muséum d'Histoire Naturelle*, and the Cambridge astronomer George Biddell Airy continued to rely on the Deighton's catalogue for his supply of continental mathematical works even after removal to Greenwich on his appointment as Astronomer Royal.<sup>77</sup>

The reputation of the Deightons did not stand so high with fellow booksellers, if only that they were so frequently engaged with the abstruse needs of their scholarly customers. In 1830, for instance, a com-

mercial traveller seeking to obtain subscriptions for the new *Encyclopedia Metropolitana*, in which the Deightons owned a part share, found that, although he called at the shop three times, he could not get to see either of the partners, having to settle for 'one of the young men'.<sup>78</sup> More seriously, when in 1843 the Macmillan brothers were considering taking over the bookshop which had once been Nicholson's at the other end of Trinity Street, Daniel reported to their Cambridge friend Julius Charles Hare that there had been 'no bookseller in Cambridge, since Thorpe left it, except Stevenson, who knows anything of books'.<sup>79</sup> Similarly, the Macmillan's nephew and one-time assistant, Robert Bowes, when in old age he recalled the condition of the Cambridge book-trade on his arrival in 1846, remembered fondly the kindness of some of the traders of the period, but thought that he had probably never spoken to John Deighton, whom he remembered only by sight.<sup>80</sup> Yet, given the fact that it was the Deightons who possessed the valuable university publishing and bookselling trade which it was the object of the Macmillans (and also, later, of Bowes) to secure, it is perhaps not surprising that their mutual esteem should not be great.

Another prominent member of the local book-trade with whom the brothers failed to maintain cordial relationships, and arguably for similar reasons, was John William Parker. In 1829, Parker had been appointed, as principal assistant to the London printer William Clowes, to oversee the operations of the University Press. He left Clowes in 1832 to begin as a London publisher and bookseller on his own account, and in 1836 he was appointed University Printer in succession to John Smith. Parker very quickly took advantage of his unprecedented dual position in London and Cambridge to build a considerable list of educational, scholarly and religious publications by Cambridge authors, unquestionably threatening the dominance of the Deightons.<sup>81</sup> Nevertheless, Parker occasionally published jointly with

<sup>73</sup> *Cambridge Chronicle*, 2 September 1848, 2d. See also *Cambridge Independent Press*, 2 September 1848, 2f.

<sup>74</sup> McKitterick, op. cit. (8), 459n., 497, and 583. Details of purchases by the University Library are given in the Trade and Publishing Ledgers, 1842–69 (B2/1–3).

<sup>75</sup> McKitterick, op. cit. (8), 498.

<sup>76</sup> Bury and Pickles, op. cit. (69), 64.

<sup>77</sup> Letter from Deighton to Whewell, 24 December 1851, Trinity College, Cambridge, Add. Mss. a.202<sup>94</sup>; and copies of letters from Airy to the Deightons, 29 December 1837 and 5 January 1838, CUL, RGO 6/715, fols 190 and 191.

<sup>78</sup> James Cannon, ed., "'On the road" one hundred years ago: a trade journey in 1830', *Publishers' Circular* 142 (1935) 201–2, 253–4, 297, 316, 342, 435, 465, and 530, p. 435; and McKitterick, op. cit. (9), 320.

<sup>79</sup> Macmillan to Hare, 24 August 1843, BL, Add. Mss. 55109, ff. 43–52. Sections from this very interesting letter are given in Hughes, op. cit. (41), 148f.

<sup>80</sup> Robert Bowes, *Cambridge bookshops and booksellers, 1846–1858*, ([Cambridge: n.p.], 1912).

<sup>81</sup> McKitterick, op. cit. (9), 321–2, 329–30, and 344.

the Deightons until February 1843, when he told Whewell that he refused 'henceforth to be concerned with [Messrs. Deighton] in any publication whatever'.<sup>82</sup> The cause of the breach is not known, and the argument was evidently patched up to some extent, since the two names subsequently appeared together on the same title pages. However, even after John Deighton's death, Parker could not resist speaking ill of him.<sup>83</sup>

The rise of Parker and more especially, after 1843, of the Macmillans, undoubtedly had an adverse effect on the position of the Deighton brothers in the Cambridge publishing trade. For the first time, there were other publishers active in the town who had national aspirations and distribution networks. Moreover, they were assisted by the improving communications and transport infrastructure, including the inception in 1840 of the penny post, and the opening in 1846 of the railway between London and Cambridge.<sup>84</sup> Parker's London business was perhaps something of a distraction from the concerns of the university, but the Macmillans were always on hand, and their shop rapidly became an important centre of university social life. These earnest and active young men soon built up a wide acquaintance in the university, and their vigour must certainly have made the Deightons seem dull by comparison. On this basis they developed a list of educational, scholarly, and religious works very similar to that of the Deightons, and, by the mid-1850s, they had supplanted the Deightons as the leading private customer for the printing business of the University Press.<sup>85</sup>

It is from this period that more detailed publishing records begin to survive for the Deightons. The earliest are found in a series of trade and publishing ('Booksellers and Authors') ledgers running from 1842 to 1869 (B2/1-3), part of a longer sequence which began several decades before and which was probably originally continuous with those which have survived for the years 1928 to 1959 (B3/1-3, B4, B5/1-2, and B9). The first of the extant ledgers is confusingly marked both 'Booksellers and Authors 3' and 'No. 4', and it also contains backward

references to both 'Ledger No. 2' and 'Ledger No. 3'. However, whether this is the third or fourth of the sequence, it seems fairly certain that it was part of a sequence dating back at least until the 1820s. The ledgers are an important survival, containing accounts with the Pitt Press and other printers, with the University Library, and with other publishers and booksellers (both for purchases and sales of stock and with respect to joint publishing ventures). In addition, the later portion of each ledger was used to record authors' accounts, and these suggest that a relatively large proportion of the publications bearing the J. & J. Deighton imprint were published on commission. However, it is possible that, as for the period after 1854 (B7), some authors' accounts were entered into a printing and publishing journal which has not survived. In addition, further information respecting the production of many of the firm's publications continue to be available in the University Press printing journals (1809-26, 1829-62).<sup>86</sup>

The early death of Joseph Deighton from a stomach ulcer in September 1848 marked the beginning of the end of the Deighton bookselling dynasty.<sup>87</sup> With six children surviving of the nine he fathered, Joseph had hopes that his share of the business would continue in family hands. In his will he made provision for half of his share in the business to be offered in turn to each of his two eldest sons, Joseph (b. 1817) and John (1819-83), but in the event Joseph emigrated to Australia and John became a surgeon in Cambridge.<sup>88</sup> As the surviving partner, John was thus obliged to raise the capital to purchase most of the remainder of the business from his late brother's executors.<sup>89</sup> Already between 1830 and

<sup>86</sup> C. U. Archives, CUP 20/1-6.

<sup>87</sup> *Cambridge Chronicle*, 2 September 1848, 2d.

<sup>88</sup> Will of J. J. Deighton, proved 19 April 1849 (PROB 11/2213), PRO, London. Details of the family tree are given in a typescript in L1; the details have been checked against the parish registers and the indexes of births, deaths and marriages at Cambridgeshire County Record Office. One of Joseph Deighton's younger sons, Horace (1831-1913), was 21st Wrangler in 1854, becoming a headmaster in the West Indies. Two of the sons of the third John Deighton, namely Frederick (1854-1924) and William George (1855/6-1940), were also educated at Cambridge University, becoming, respectively, the surgeon-in-charge at Addenbrooke's Hospital and a Vicar. See John and J. A. Venn, *Alumni Cantabrigienses: a biographical list of all known students, graduates, and holders of office at the University of Cambridge from the earliest times to 1900*, 10 vols., (Cambridge University Press, 1922-1954).

<sup>89</sup> When Deighton, Bell and Co. was established after John Deighton's death in 1854,

<sup>82</sup> Parker to Whewell, 6 February 1843, Trinity College, Cambridge, Add. Ms. a.210.91 (2).

<sup>83</sup> McKitterick, *op. cit.* (9), 349-50.

<sup>84</sup> See McKitterick, *op. cit.* (9), 10-13, 346-7, and 387.

<sup>85</sup> McKitterick, *op. cit.* (9), 354, 366, 386-9.



1841, Deighton had mortgaged 13 Trinity Street to the value of over £4300, while the property was worth only £3000.<sup>90</sup> By the spring following his brother's death, he was relying on the goodwill of fellow traders in allowing him to defer the payment of bills in order to remain solvent.<sup>91</sup> Moreover, the Deightons had always been allowed long-term credit in paying for work at the University Press, and the business became increasingly dependent on such practices.<sup>92</sup>

The death of John Deighton in 1854, six years later, brought matters to a head. When the books were examined by his executors, it was found that the business was insolvent to such an extent that the debts were approximately three times the value of the assets (see the executors papers in G1/1–4).<sup>93</sup> It was also reported that he had appropriated for his own use, 'to a considerable amount', monies belonging to his children.<sup>94</sup> Moreover, although Deighton had fathered a vast family of some fourteen surviving children by two wives, none seems to have been willing or able to take on the business in such a parlous state. Of the sons by his first marriage, the two eldest had emigrated to New Zealand.<sup>95</sup> His will, which in the circumstances was a mere formality, made provision for the two eldest sons by his second mar-

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Sarah Deighton owned £600 of the capital in the new company; however, this was probably due to George Bell's generosity toward the Deighton family, rather than to a long-standing stake in the business. See the balance sheets in the firm's 'Private ledger' (D2); and the letter from Orlando Hyde to James Cartmell, 27 November 1854, C. U. Archives, Pr.B.3.VII (4).

<sup>90</sup> 'Abstract of title of the mortgagees of the late John Deighton to a freehold messuage and premises, in Trinity Street', Cambridgeshire County Record Office, P/32/28/16.

<sup>91</sup> See the letter from Deighton to Charles Whittingham, 3 March 1849, and the copies of letters from Whittingham to Deighton, 2 March 1849, 15 March 1849, and 24 November 1851, BL, Add. 41956, ff. 42, 137v, 138–9, and 140.

<sup>92</sup> See C. U. Archives, Pr.B.3.VII (2,4,5) and Pr.B.3.II (19); and McKitterick, op. cit. (9), 349–50.

<sup>93</sup> See also C. U. Archives, Pr.B.3.VII (6).

<sup>94</sup> Letter from Orlando Hyde to James Cartmell, 27 November 1854, C. U. Archives, Pr.B.3.VII (4).

<sup>95</sup> Both Richard John (b. 1819) and Samuel Deighton (1821–1900) earned a place in G. H. Scholefield, *A dictionary of New Zealand biography*, 2 vols. (Wellington: Department of Internal Affairs, 1940). Details of the family tree are given in a typescript in L1; supplementary information has been obtained from the parish registers and the indexes of births, deaths and marriages at the Cambridgeshire County Record Office, and from Deighton's will.

riage to complete their education at Cambridge University, and they both proceeded to literary careers.<sup>96</sup> Only to the third son by his second marriage, Francis Morris (1836–1914), did Deighton make the vacuous testamentary offer of taking a share in the business. Francis understandably preferred to take up his father's alternative suggestion of becoming a 'colonist' in New Zealand, a capacity in which he achieved some considerable success.<sup>97</sup> The youngest son, Robert was as yet only fourteen, and the business was thus allowed to pass out of family hands.

### DEIGHTON, BELL AND CO.

*George Bell and William Wright Smith, 1854–72*

The hands into which the Deighton business passed were among the most capable in the country, at least so far as publishing for educational and scholarly markets was concerned. The son of a Yorkshire bookseller and small-time publisher, George Bell (1814–90) had risen rapidly to become one of the leading educational publishers of the period. Moreover, Bell had, from the start, built his business by developing close links with the publishing and retail trade in the universities. When he first left the London educational publishers Whittaker & Co. in 1839 in order to begin his own retail business in London, he had persuaded the Deightons, along with most of the prominent publishing booksellers in Cambridge and Oxford, to use him as their London agent.<sup>98</sup> Soon afterwards he was advertising his business as a depot for Cambridge and Oxford books in 'frequent communication' with

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<sup>96</sup> Will of John Deighton, proved 4 June 1855 (PROB 11/2091), PRO; and Venn and Venn, op. cit. (88). Arthur Edward Deighton (1834–66) emigrated to Australia, before removing to India, where he was nominated Professor of English Literature. Kenneth Stephen Deighton (b. 1835) never graduated, but apparently emigrated to India, where he wrote and edited several publications relating to celebrated dramatists. See J. F. Kirk, *A supplement to Allibone's critical dictionary of English literature and British and American authors*, 2 vols. (Philadelphia: J. B. Lippincott, 1891).

<sup>97</sup> See the biographical notes in L1.

<sup>98</sup> Edward Bell, *George Bell, publisher: a brief memoir* (London: privately published, 1924), 11–12. On Bell see also Marjory Long, 'George Bell and Sons', in *Dictionary of Literary Biography*, Vol. 106: *British literary publishing houses, 1820–1880*, ed. Patricia J. Anderson and Jonathan Rose (Detroit and London: Gale, 1991), 22–31.



the two universities.<sup>99</sup> Bell quickly moved into publishing, and by the mid-1850s he had acquired a considerable reputation as an educational publisher. It is perhaps not surprising, therefore, that when Deighton's business came onto the market, he seized the opportunity that such a well-established and reputable firm presented for extending his activities both in Cambridge, and in the textbook market more generally. Like his friends the Macmillans, whom he had assisted in establishing themselves in Cambridge in 1843,<sup>100</sup> Bell clearly perceived the advantage of having a Cambridge outlet through which not only to sell his textbooks, but, ultimately more importantly, through which to recruit authors. Moreover, he was quick to realize the value of the Cambridge name in the educational publishing market.

Bell took as his resident partner William Wright Smith (1822/3–96), who had become a key member of staff under the Deightons, and who was to bear primary responsibility for the retail business in the new firm. The son of a bookseller of the same name, Smith had arrived in Cambridge about 1846, and had rapidly risen to a position of responsibility in the business.<sup>101</sup> He had also married the daughter of a deceased but wealthy Sheffield mercer and draper, and family papers in the archive give details of various bequests and trusts of which he became the beneficiary (K1–8). It was Bell who purchased the freehold of the house and its contents, 'some of which reflected great taste on the part of the late owner', together with Deighton's stock, for a sum in excess of £8000. In addition, he generously made financial provision for Deighton's family in return for the goodwill of the business, over which it was considered they might have claims.<sup>102</sup> However, it was Smith who actually lived at 13 Trinity Street, and he apparently took a financial stake in the business subsequent to the purchase, as did J. J. Deighton's widow, Sarah.<sup>103</sup>

<sup>99</sup> *Publishers' Circular*, 3 (1840) 79.

<sup>100</sup> Bell, *op. cit.* (62), 18–20.

<sup>101</sup> Bell, *op. cit.* (98), 47; *Cambridge Chronicle*, 17 January 1896, 8; and Marriage Certificate, W. W. Smith and Emily Earnshaw, 14 February 1852 (Rotherham District, Jan.–Mar. 1852, vol. 9c, p. 394), Family Records Centre, London.

<sup>102</sup> The details of Bell's purchase are given in C. U. Archives, Pr.B.VII (4–6); see also Bell, *op. cit.* (98), 47.

<sup>103</sup> See the annual accounts among the miscellaneous financial records in the firm's new 'Private ledger' (D2).

Bell travelled to Cambridge frequently, benefitting as Parker had done from the recently opened rail link with London.<sup>104</sup> This allowed him to deal personally with much of the publishing side of the business, but it meant that by 1856 he found it necessary to take Frederick R. Daldy as a partner in his London business. Nevertheless, Bell relied heavily on Smith for the daily management of the Cambridge firm, and his junior partner certainly rose to the task. Smith was highly regarded within the University, and on his death in 1896 his funeral was attended by no less than five heads of houses, together with many senior members of the University, the mayor, and a large contingent from the University Press, led by the University Printer, C. J. Clay.<sup>105</sup> A staunch churchman, who was actively involved in parochial affairs, Smith was also involved in various civic bodies, and became one of the most prominent and respected townsmen of his generation.

Under the new regime, the business continued to be prominent in the local retail trade, although there was certainly increasing competition in this regard, notably from Macmillan and Bowes.<sup>106</sup> The earliest surviving retail ledgers date from this period, although the numbering sequence suggests that these belong to series which must have been started by the mid-1840s at the latest, and probably earlier. One sequence was kept for general sales—predominantly to gownsmen and colleges, but also including some townsmen (A1–2). There were also two sequences of ledgers for sales to students, one for Trinity and St. John's Colleges (A2/1a), and one for the smaller colleges (A3/1–1a). As with all the traders of Cambridge, the students' accounts were made up at the three quarter-days on which the students were in residence (Christmas, Lady Day and Michaelmas), and were charged to the appropriate tutors in a series of tutors' accounts which are now missing, although sums owing in 1854 are recorded in G1/4. Sales to the University Library, especially of foreign books, continued to be important.<sup>107</sup> Initially, these were recorded in the continuing series of trade ledgers (B2/2), but the full details of items purchased were sub-

<sup>104</sup> Bell, *op. cit.* (98), 48.

<sup>105</sup> *Cambridge Chronicle*, 17 January 1896, 8. See also *Cambridge Review*, 17 (1895–6) 144.

<sup>106</sup> Mumby and Norrie, *op. cit.* (4), 292–3.

<sup>107</sup> McKitterick, *op. cit.* (8), 583, 649–50, 679, and 714.

sequently separated in a series of University Library sales journals which does not survive for this period.<sup>108</sup>

It was in the publishing arena that the new regime brought innovation. Although Bell's interests encompassed the existing University textbooks and scholarly works on Deightons' lists, one of his long-standing interests had been in educational books for the middle-class secondary school market. By the mid-1850s, these markets were becoming increasingly lucrative, especially with the introduction of public examinations from 1857.<sup>109</sup> Bell used his Cambridge firm both to procure authors for new ventures into this market, and to give those new ventures the imprimatur of one of the country's leading universities. Thus appeared such series as (from 1858) the 'Cambridge Greek and Latin Texts', (from 1861) the 'Cambridge School and College Text Books', and later still the 'Cambridge Mathematical Texts'.<sup>110</sup> These works of course appealed to a national readership, and Bell issued them jointly between his Cambridge and London firms. Many, however, were printed in Cambridge, and Deighton, Bell and Co. continued to be one of the two most important commercial customers of the University Press, alongside Macmillan & Co.

Both authors' accounts, and accounts with publishers involved in joint ventures, continued to be recorded in the trade ledgers (B2/2–3) as before. However a new printing and publishing journal (B7) was started in 1854, and, initially at least (and sporadically thereafter) authors' accounts were sometimes recorded here. More commonly, the journal records production costs without turning them into an account, and there are consequently frequent cross-references to this journal in the trade ledger. A series of stock books (C1/1–7), beginning in 1861, record the receipt (usually from the University Press warehouse) and deliveries of the firm's publications, cross-referenced both to the printing and publishing journal and to the trade ledgers. There also survive a fair number of publishing agreements from this period (E1). However, a thorough understanding of the publishing practices of Deighton, Bell and Co. will only be possible once detailed comparisons have been made between these records and those in the

<sup>108</sup> One volume survives for the period, 1909–14 (A4).

<sup>109</sup> McKitterick, *op. cit.* (9), 379f.

<sup>110</sup> Bell, *op. cit.* (62), 37, 67.

archives of George Bell and Sons at Reading University Library. Another important source of information concerning the nature of the partnership is the 'Private ledger' kept from 1854 (D2), which provides a multitude of miscellaneous financial records, including annual accounts from 1855–56 to 1891–92, capital and drawing accounts for both partners, George Bell's rent account (detailing the rent paid by the business for the lease of 13 Trinity Street), and details of the value of copyrights owned by the company (1856–64).

#### *William Wright Smith, 1872–96*

Around 1872, what had been a relatively straightforward partnership between George Bell and W. W. Smith was transformed into something rather less transparent. According to his son, Bell transferred his interest in the retail business to Smith, 'the name of the firm remaining unaltered, on the understanding that all publication except 'on commission' should be referred to London.'<sup>111</sup> Such an arrangement was in keeping with the changes taking place in Bell's London business at this time. Bell and Daldy were now reaping handsome rewards from the lucrative Bohn libraries, and had consequently been able to give up their retail business in Fleet Street in 1867, in order to concentrate on publishing. To begin with, they had trusted the retail distribution of their books to the publisher Alexander Strahan, but the arrangement had proved disastrous as a consequence of Strahan's mounting debts. Partly in consequence, and with the arrival in the London business of Bell's two sons, Edward (1844–1926) and Arthur, the partnership with Daldy was dissolved in 1872.<sup>112</sup> The transferral to Smith of Bell's interest in the retail trade of Deighton, Bell and Co. was thus part of a more general consolidation of Bell's publishing business in the hands of himself and his sons.

The company's 'Private ledger' (D2) reveals that at this juncture the retail business was valued at about £4,500, while the value of the

<sup>111</sup> Bell, *op. cit.* (98), 47. The date of the transfer is given as 1870 in Mumby and Norrie, *op. cit.* (4), 293; and Oldfield, *op. cit.* (4), 900. By contrast, Edward Bell remembered the transfer as occurring a little later—about twenty years after his father had taken over the business. The tentative date given here is based on a preliminary interpretation of the financial records in the 'Private ledger' (D2).

<sup>112</sup> Long, *op. cit.* (98), 26–7; and Bell, *op. cit.* (98), 91.

publishing stock stood at approximately twice that. Smith, who had by this period withdrawn his small amount of capital from the firm, was given one-third of the undrawn profits which had accrued over the preceding eighteen years (his share amounting to more than £2700) and, in addition, borrowed from Bell in order to make up the shortfall required to purchase the retail business. Initially, Smith rented 13 Trinity Street from Bell, but he subsequently exercised the option specified in the lease of 1875 (J1) to purchase the property for £3,500. Yet while the 'Private ledger' indicates that Smith cleared off Bell's loan to the business by 1879, the property continued to be mortgaged to his death, and various loans were necessary over succeeding years.

The new arrangement can have made little difference to the retail side of the business, which had long been effectually in Smith's hands. As before, Deighton, Bell and Co. acted as the Cambridge agents for the publications of George Bell and Sons, and for Cambridge University Press books for which a separate stock book survives from this period (C2). Other records indicate that business was continuing as usual. A series of serials charge books survives from 1881 (A5/1–3), and another volume give details of stock stored in the firm's rented warehouse in Green Street (C3). Some records survive from this period concerning the employment conditions of the staff, with salaries being recorded in the 'Private ledger' (D2). There is also a file of correspondence (F1) concerning the dismissal in December 1894 of Frederick James Sebley (d. 1938), a long-serving senior member of staff and noted book-collector, who subsequently worked for Hefers.<sup>113</sup> Records relating to the income tax charged to the business for the years 1894 to 1910 are found in D14.

When the business was divided, Smith was apportioned only one copyright—that of the *Cambridge University Calendar*. An obvious rationale for this was that the *Calendar* was edited by staff at 13 Trinity Street, as it apparently had been since shortly after the Deightons had taken it over in 1803. Otherwise, it seems clear that publishing practice was, in the main, just as described by Edward Bell, with Smith taking on himself only such publications as were to be published at the

author's risk. Thus, publications with the imprint of Deighton, Bell and Co. dating from this period might apparently either have been published on commission by Smith, or on the account of George Bell and Sons, with Smith acting merely as the Cambridge agent. The limited publishing archives which survive from this period do little to flesh out the detail of how the business was handled, although the printing and publishing journal (B7) suggests that the production of a not inconsiderable number of Bell's publications was organized by Smith—probably with the object of obliging Cambridge authors, or of using the facilities of the Cambridge University Press. Information about the costs of the advertisements and postal charges associated with individual publications survive in a separate journal started in 1890 (B10).

#### *Alfred Earnshaw Smith, 1896–1914*

Widowed twice, William Wright Smith had fathered a large family, and a late Victorian photograph in the archive portrays him as a grand paterfamilias, surrounded by his children, their spouses, and one grandchild (K10). On his death in 1896, he left his property, worth in the order of £16,000, equally between his five children, with provisions that allowed his eldest son, Alfred Earnshaw Smith (1855–1914), to purchase the business at its market value (about £6000), and to remain indebted to his father's estate over an unspecified period of time.<sup>114</sup> In fact, Alfred Smith had already been a junior partner in Deighton, Bell and Co. for at least a couple of years, and he had probably already taken over much of the running of the business from his septuagenarian father. Whereas his two younger brothers, Walter (1857–1937) and Harold (1858–1938), were educated for the church at Cambridge,<sup>115</sup> Alfred apparently went straight into the business in 1873 after studying at the Perse School, Cambridge, and (from the age of 11) at St. John's College, Hurstpierpoint, Sussex—a staunchly An-

<sup>113</sup> 'Death of Mr. F. J. Sebley, Cambridge collector of first editions', *Cambridge Independent Press*, 12 August 1938, 6.

<sup>114</sup> Will of W. W. Smith, proved 22 February 1896, Somerset House, London. The archive contains a large collection of correspondence from Edward Bell to A. E. Smith concerning the administration of the estate (K9); the value of the estate as described in these letters is higher than the figure of approximately £14,000 at which the will was sworn.

<sup>115</sup> Venn and Venn, op. cit. (88).



glican public school for the children of the middle classes.<sup>116</sup> On his father's death, he not surprisingly exercised the option of buying the business and premises, although as the extant letters from Edward Bell show, this entailed his taking on to raise capital of £3500 to buy 13 Trinity Street, and a further debt of £3000 owing to his four siblings in respect of their share in the business (K9). As with the Deighton brothers the division of the estate brought problems of capitalization, and even at his death almost twenty years later Alfred had not succeeded in clearing the debt to his siblings.

Since Alfred Smith already owned a residence on Lyndewode Road, he had no need of the three upper stories of 13 Trinity Street where his father had lived, and he quickly arranged to rent them out to a lodging-house keeper, with the exception of the two rooms on the first and second floors that were used by the business. However, this brought with it its own costs, and the archive contains papers relating to taxes and duties payable on the lease of the property (J2). An agreement with a subsequent lodging-house keeper survives in the archive (J3), and the upper stories continued to be used for this purpose until they were reallocated around the end of the First World War to provide (among other things) a caretaker's flat.<sup>117</sup> It was probably either at this point, or a few years later in 1931, that the first floor was transformed into additional shop space. George Ambrose Lloyd—later Lord Lloyd (1879–1941)—who was resident there as an undergraduate in 1898, was reportedly surprised on returning to Cambridge to find his old rooms had become the rare books department.<sup>118</sup>

<sup>116</sup> *Cambridge Independent Press*, 12 June 1914, 5c; H. L. Johnson, ed., *A register of St. John's College, Hurstpierpoint* ([Hurstpierpoint, Sussex: St. John's College, 1914]), 111; and *DNB*, s.v. Nathaniel Woodard.

<sup>117</sup> Letter from Ginn and Matthew, Solicitors to A. E. Smith, 7 July 1896 (K9); *Spalding's Street and General Directory of Cambridge* (1913, 1919–20); and *Kelly's Directory of the Counties of Cambridge, Norfolk and Suffolk* (1900, 1916). The directories reveal that H. J. Porter was caretaker from the end of the War until about 1935, and was succeeded by Louis R. Papworth, who continued in that capacity until the late 1950s. Subsequently David Bickersteth and John Beach have lived in the top-floor flat, although fire regulations now dictate that this storey of the building cannot be used for any purpose whatever without major alterations.

<sup>118</sup> See Oldfield, op. cit. (4), 896; and Colin Forbes Adam, *Life of Lord Lloyd* (London: Macmillan & Co., 1948).

Like his father, Alfred Smith was well-known and respected both by members of the University, and by his peers in the book trade. In particular, he was heavily involved in the Eastern Branch of the Booksellers' Association, and was for a period its chairman.<sup>119</sup> As ever, the shop provided constant opportunities to meet scholars in all fields, and Smith made the close acquaintance of the French poet Stéphane Mallarmé (1842–98) when the latter had his post directed to the shop during a period of residence in Cambridge.<sup>120</sup> The bookseller Sydney Johnson—whose shop over the road on Trinity Street was later purchased by Deighton, Bell and Co.—remembered Smith as a kindly, broad-minded and tolerant man,<sup>121</sup> while an evangelical contemporary of one of his sons, reported that he was 'a very clever man but opposed to Christianity'.<sup>122</sup>

The prominent place which Deighton, Bell and Co. had maintained in the university retail trade for over a century persisted under Alfred Smith, despite the competition of Bowes and Bowes, and the newcomer William Heffer (f. 1876).<sup>123</sup> The firm continued to maintain its reputation as (in its own advertising cant) 'The University Book Centre', a point elaborated in a special supplement to the *Gentleman's Journal and Gentlewoman's Court Review* in 1909:

Whether he aspires to honours or intends to contend himself with a 'poll' degree, the man who is coming up to the University finds an almost indispensable guide, so far as his studies are concerned, in the catalogue issued by Deighton, Bell & Co., of 13 Trinity Street, who have so long acted as agents of the University, and have supplied books to so many generations of undergraduates ... Those who have no further ambition than to pass their examinations with credit, will find that a diligent perusal of the volumes recommended by so experienced a House will be amply sufficient. There are many, however, who have a fancy for roaming from the officially prescribed track, and for them, too, Messrs. Deighton, Bell make copious provision. All current lit-

<sup>119</sup> *Cambridge Independent Press*, 12 June 1914, 5c; and Sydney Johnson, 'The late Mr. Alfred Earnshaw Smith', *Publishers' Circular* 100 (1914) 749–50.

<sup>120</sup> I am grateful to Mrs. Georgina Earnshaw Smith for this information.

<sup>121</sup> Johnson, op. cit. (119).

<sup>122</sup> *H. Earnshaw Smith* [Special edition of the *Monthly Notes* of All Soul's, Langham Place, with St. Peter's, Vere Street, April 1950], 11. There is a copy of this magazine in K11.

<sup>123</sup> Mumby and Norrie, op. cit. (4), 292–3, 381–2.



erature, British and Foreign, they either have in stock or can obtain in a minimum of time, and their catalogues of second hand books, sent free on application, cover the entire domain of letters.<sup>124</sup>

By then Deighton Bell had become a 'time-honoured business' which was 'closely connected with the advances of science and the spread of higher education'.

The firm still acted as agents for the publications of the University Press and George Bell and Sons, and in 1899 Smith obtained the Cambridge agency for the publications of the India Office (F2). The latter was not a large trade, but it was one which Edward Bell recommended to Smith as being 'worth something as an advertisement'.<sup>125</sup> The long-standing arrangements by which the firm obtained foreign books directly from their publishers meant that they were able to offer an unusually cheap and extensive service in this area. One keen customer for such works continued to be the University Library, and a separate journal recording retail sales to the University Library—part of a larger series now missing—survives from this period (A4). Alfred Smith also offered a selection of books in various leather bindings suitable for school and college prizes, and it is from this period that the first accounts survive detailing the books claimed by students as university and college prizes (A7/1–2; A8/1–9). These accounts provide valuable information concerning not only the choices, but in some cases even the identities of prize-winners, which is not available elsewhere.

Under A. E. Smith, the *Cambridge University Calendar* continued to be an important part of the firm's activities, cementing its central position in university life, and providing an invaluable advertising medium for both the retailing and publishing carried on under its name. From about 1888 to 1913, Smith was himself responsible for editing the volume, a tremendous labour as the work extended to beyond one thousand pages.<sup>126</sup> However, with the annual profits from the publication falling from £120 to £60 during the first decade of the century, and with his health deteriorating, Smith decided to sell the *Calendar* to the University Press in 1913 for £500 (E2).

At least initially, Alfred Smith and Edward Bell seem to have continued the publishing arrangements established by their respective fathers. Indeed, after George Bell's retirement in 1888, W. W. Smith had maintained the close working relationship with his former partner's sons, Edward and Ernest Bell, whom he even nominated as his executors. Cordial personal relationships also developed between the younger Bells and Smith's five children. Yet, while Deighton, Bell and Co. continued to act as the Bells' Cambridge agents until at least 1937,<sup>127</sup> the use of the Deighton imprint for the publications of George Bell and Sons rapidly declined from the mid-1890s, and many books when reissued appeared solely under the George Bell imprint. In part, of course, the declining role of Deighton, Bell and Co. as the Bells' Cambridge office was a reflection of the emergence after 1870 of the Cambridge University Press as a modern publisher, increasingly able to compete with the Macmillans and the Bells for the ever-expanding scholarly and educational market.<sup>128</sup> In addition, however, it was also a reflection of the vastly changed transport and communication networks, and the shifting social topography of English university life, which rendered the maintenance of a Cambridge shop-window by the Bells increasingly unnecessary. Notwithstanding the rapid decline of the Deighton, Bell and Co. imprint, however, Alfred Smith continued to publish a small number of works on commission, and even a few on the company's own account, as 'Publishing Journal 1' (B8) demonstrates.

Various miscellaneous financial records survive from this period, including annual accounts from 1906 (D8/1), papers relating to accident and employers' insurance (D11), and A. E. Smith's private ledger (D3), which contains various banking and investment accounts, and details of income and expenditure respecting 13 Trinity Street.

<sup>124</sup> *The Gentleman's Journal and Gentlewoman's Court Review*, Supplement, 29 May 1909, 3.

<sup>125</sup> Bell to Smith, 3 November 1899 (F2).

<sup>126</sup> *Cambridge Independent Press*, 12 June 1914, 5c.

<sup>127</sup> *Kelly's Directory of the counties of Cambridge, Norfolk and Suffolk*, 1937.

<sup>128</sup> On the University Press in this period see M. H. Black, *Cambridge University Press, 1584–1984* (Cambridge University Press, 1984).

*DEIGHTON, BELL AND CO., LTD.*

*Gertrude Alice Smith, 1914–30*

When Alfred Earnshaw Smith died of cirrhosis of the liver in January 1914, at the age of 58, his three sons were still at school and university.<sup>129</sup> In any case, he left the business to his wife, Gertrude Alice Smith (1856/7–1930), the daughter of a Cambridge ironmonger, who quickly took action to secure its long-term future.<sup>130</sup> Probably on the advice of her co-executor, Francis Oliver Thornton, who was a chartered accountant from London, she established Deighton, Bell and Co. as a private limited company in December 1914, appointing Thornton as a paid director, and herself as chairman. Mrs Smith continued to work in the business, but its daily management was in the hands of Walter John Prior, who had held a position of responsibility in the firm under Alfred Smith, and who in 1919 was appointed as manager and an additional director.<sup>131</sup> In addition, monthly accounts were sent to Thornton in London, who took an active role in overseeing the company's affairs. The initial legal agreements between Gertrude Smith and the limited company (H1) and the Director's Minute Book (H2) survive, and give considerable detail about the financial and general management of the company over the next half century. Further financial information is provided not only by the annual accounts (D8/1–2), but also by the miscellaneous private and business accounts recorded in two private ledgers used in this period (D3 and D4). In addition a new series of double-column Cash Books was begun (D5/1–2), which provides useful information concerning, among other things, the identities and salaries of employees. Other general business records include a War Office permit to export books to neutral countries (F3) and details of the staff bonus scheme (D12).

<sup>129</sup> Death Certificate, A. E. Smith, 2 June 1914 (Cambridge District, Apr.–June 1914, p. 58), Family Records Centre, London.

<sup>130</sup> Will of A. E. Smith, proved 30 June 1914, Somerset House, London; Marriage Certificate, A. E. Smith and G. A. Vipan, 29 July 1887 (Leicester District, July–Sep. 1887, vol. 7a, p. 299), Family Records Centre, London. On the Vipan family see the manuscript notes in K11; and Venn and Venn, *op. cit.* (88), s.v. George Walter Vipan.

<sup>131</sup> Directors' Minute Book (H2), 22.

Initially, Gertrude Smith was the only shareholder (with the exception of a token holding by Thornton), the shares having a nominal value of £5,000. However, over succeeding years the share capital was gradually increased, and holdings were taken by several members of the family and by employees in the company. One important object in forming a private limited company had probably been to tackle the chronic problem of undercapitalization. This had resulted in part from the five-fold division of W. W. Smith's estate, and, whereas Alfred Smith had continued to owe considerable sums to his surviving siblings (Walter and Harold Smith, and Edith Byad Hoets), his widow effectively converted these debts into share-holdings in the company. By 1920 the firm's share capital stood nominally at £8,000, more than one third of which was owned by Gertrude Smith's brothers- and sister-in-law. Further issues of shares in 1922 and 1924, which were considered necessary to provide working capital, brought in a few private investors (chiefly clients of Thornton), and took the shareholding to £10,700 by 1928.

On the retail side, business was initially much as before. The agencies for University Press and India Office publications seem to have lapsed in the 1920s, but the foreign trade continued to be particularly important, and in 1921 the company opened accounts with banks in Leipzig and Paris. In February 1923, the company purchased from Sidney Johnson the old family bookselling firm of Elijah Johnson, which had been founded by his grandfather in the early part of the nineteenth century.<sup>132</sup> Located almost directly across Trinity Street at number 30, the shop promised a convenient expansion of premises for Deightons, and a stock not dissimilar to its own. In addition, it had the cachet of another old-established reputation, and the new owners continued for several years to operate it as a subsidiary company under the original name (there are separate accounts for the company for 1924–5 in D9; see also D8/1). However, concerns had been expressed only the previous year concerning the lack of operating capital in the business, and even though the premises were rented from Trinity College (a copy of the lease is in J4), the company had to take on an overdraft to cover the £2,100 which was paid for stock, fixtures and goodwill. A key motive for purchasing the new shop was

<sup>132</sup> On Elijah Johnson see Gray, *op. cit.* (2), 34; and Bowes, *op. cit.* (80), 8.

almost certainly that it would provide a suitable operating environment for Leslie Earnshaw Smith (b. 1897), the youngest of Alfred and Gertrude Smith's three sons, who had joined the staff the previous year. Taking on many of the existing staff,<sup>133</sup> Leslie Smith managed the shop under the supervision of Walter Prior, who continued to be general manager, and in November 1925 he was appointed an additional director.

Leslie Smith was especially interested in developing the second-hand and rare book side of the business. However, his desire to purchase valuable stock at a time when the company was relying on a fluctuating overdraft for operating capital, and his wish to concentrate the English literature books (new and second-hand) at number 30, leaving the older shop to sell textbooks, foreign books, and stationery, seems from the start to have been a source of concern within the company. In addition, there were problems resulting from Smith's apparent lack of business experience, and in 1926 the financial management of the two shops was amalgamated under one roof. Tensions between Smith and Prior continued to mount, and profits fell sharply. In 1927, the company sought to curtail expenditure by giving up the lease of the warehouse in Green Street, and the basement cellar of number 13 had to be prepared to take the stock and fittings. Matters finally came to a head when Prior was forced to resign as managing director, which he did as of September 1928, purchasing a business away from Cambridge. Oliver Thornton, who had indicated that he would 'necessarily' also resign as a director if Prior was required to do so, recommended that Gertrude Smith should sell her controlling share in the business, while acting to secure her son's continued position. However, after consulting with her three sons, who were entitled to benefit equally by her will, the chairman reported that they were unanimous in desiring an alternative course of action. The course of action agreed upon was that Gertrude and Leslie Smith should (at least nominally) be joined as directors by her remaining sons, Harold

<sup>133</sup> One of the staff taken on was A. E. Flack (b.1897), who started work for Elijah Johnson in 1910, and was still working full-time for Deighton, Bell and Co., as manager of the secondhand department, as late as 1967. 'Bookman's decision', *Cambridge News*, 16 August 1967. Flack continued to work part-time in the firm until his death in the early 1980s.

Earnshaw Smith (1891–1950) and Eric Earnshaw Smith (1893–1972), and that a new working partner, preferably a graduate, should be introduced, 'willing to take up certain Shares and to work in harmony with Mr. Leslie Smith'.<sup>134</sup>

The search instigated for such a partner, both by advertisement and by personal inquiry, was ultimately unsuccessful. Instead, in November 1929, the company appointed William Eagle (b. 1893/4) as manager of the new and second-hand textbook department at 13 Trinity Street.<sup>135</sup> Eagle brought with him twenty-one years of experience with the Edinburgh university booksellers, James Thin & Co. However, he did not become a shareholder or director, and apparently left the firm after a couple of years. Leslie Smith consequently became managing director in succession to Prior. In April 1930, Eric Earnshaw Smith and the Cambridge solicitor, Harry Frederick Shaw, became additional directors. A month later Gertrude Smith, now aged 73, died.

The departure of Prior provides the explanation for a series of new ledgers begun in 1928, including a new set of loose-leaf trade ledgers (B3/1–3). The loose-leaf nature of these ledgers means that they have been repeatedly pruned over the years, and are consequently far from complete. In addition, they have apparently been reorganized at several periods. A separate foreign trade ledger has survived with entries dating from 1932 (B4), which may originally have been part of the main sequence. In addition, the surviving publishing ledger (B9), again heavily pruned, may once have been combined with the trade ledgers, which in some cases are labelled 'Trade and Publishing'. The publishing ledger only contains entries for the handful of books which the firm was still publishing when the accounts were finally closed in the 1960s.

*Leslie Earnshaw Smith, 1930–38*

To MR HEFFER on receiving his rhymed advertisement (with apologies to IMS)

There's Deighton Bell, they know as well,  
And Galloway and Porter,

<sup>134</sup> Directors' Minute Book (H2), 218f.

<sup>135</sup> Directors' Minute Book (H2), 233.

And Mr Bowes and Bowes and Bowes,  
He knows—he knows—HE knows—HE knows!  
And what old David doesn't know  
Is what the telephone calls O—<sup>136</sup>  
Or can you put it shorter?

JME (*Cambridge Review*, 58 (1936–7) 124)

On her death, G. A. Smith left her entire estate equally between her three sons. Her two older sons, Harold Earnshaw Smith (1890–1950) and Eric Earnshaw Smith (1893–1972), had both read classics—at Cambridge and Oxford respectively.<sup>137</sup> After that, however, their paths had diverged. Harold was ordained as an Anglican priest in 1914, and, serving as a missionary in London and Nigeria, became one of the leading evangelical ministers of his generation, ultimately being appointed in 1936 as Rector of the large evangelical congregation at All Souls, Langham Place in London.<sup>138</sup> In contrast, after recovering from a war wound in 1916, Eric was recruited by an old Oxford friend to work for the War Trade Intelligence Department, and after the War he continued to work for what later became General Command Headquarters. Late in his career he was seconded to the University Grants Committee, and in his retirement—partly from financial necessity—he was active in translating various French works into English.<sup>139</sup> Of the three brothers, least is known of Leslie, who was, by all

<sup>136</sup> The '0' (nought) on old-style British telephones called up the operator, and was generally called 'o' (oh); in other words, there was 'nought' that Gustave David did not know. On David see Mumby and Norrie, *op. cit.* (4), 293, 382; and *David of Cambridge: some appreciations* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1937).

<sup>137</sup> *H. Earnshaw Smith*, *op. cit.* (122); and *University of Oxford. First supplement to the historical register of 1900, containing a complete record of university honours and distinctions for the years 1900–1920* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1921). I am grateful to Simon Bailey (Archivist, Oxford University Archives) and Robin Darwall-Smith (Archivist, University College, Oxford) for help in tracing the Oxford career of Eric Earnshaw Smith. Harold Earnshaw Smith later took the surname 'Earnshaw-Smith'.

<sup>138</sup> *H. Earnshaw Smith*, *op. cit.* (122); and Raymond Luker, *All Souls, Langham Place: a history* (London: All Souls Church, 1979), 50–7. I am grateful to John Stott and Elisabeth Earnshaw-Smith for providing me with copies of these items, and much helpful supplementary information about Harold Earnshaw-Smith.

<sup>139</sup> E. S. Craig and W. M. Gibson, eds., *Oxford University roll of service*, 3rd ed., (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1920); *The British Library general catalogue of printed books to 1975*, 362 vols. (London and Bingley: Saur, 1979–1987); and letter from E. Earnshaw Smith to H. A.

accounts, a pleasant and gentle man, but who was also somewhat reserved and uncertain, apparently living with his mother until her death.

All three brothers continued to hold shares in the company for many years, but neither of the older brothers was greatly involved in its management (although Eric continued to act as a director until 1938), and it was Leslie who became chairman in succession to his mother. Moreover, by the time the three brothers inherited their mother's share in the business, the depression had already had a very considerable impact upon it. The first time the directors met after her death, they resolved to explore with Trinity College the possibility of giving up the lease of 30 Trinity Street. The rare book business which Leslie Smith had laboured to expand was, by definition, a luxury trade, and it was consequently affected disproportionately by the depression. In September 1931 the annual lease of number 30 was consequently allowed to lapse. The stock was relocated to the main shop, and it may have been at this time that the first floor was opened for the display of books. It was hoped that the savings made on expenses would stem the recent decline in profits. However, the continued depression left the business in such a parlous state that by December 1932, it was unanimously resolved to negotiate the sale of either the premises or the business, if possible. By September of the following year, Eric and Leslie Earnshaw Smith had bought out the entire shareholding of the company, except for the shares owned by their brother, Harold. Having by then seen the worst of the depression, profits gradually began to rise again. However, with profits again falling in the later 1930s, Leslie Earnshaw decided to change his business to that of a hotelier. Accordingly, in 1938 he sold most of his shareholding in Deighton, Bell and Co. to Horace Anthony Webb (1891–1972), who became chairman and managing director, and left the firm to become proprietor of the George Hotel at Shipston-on-Stour. Shortly afterwards, the three brothers sold 13 Trinity Street to St Catharine's College (J5).

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Webb, 21 November 1955 (F6). I am grateful to Eric Earnshaw Smith's widow, Georgina, for supplying me with this and other helpful information about her late husband.



As the poem at the head of this section perhaps suggests, Deighton, Bell and Co., while still undoubtedly remaining an important business, had, by the late 1930s, lost much of its pre-eminence in the university trade—not only to the increasingly successful Heffers, but also to Bowes and Bowes and the relative newcomer Galloway and Porter.<sup>140</sup> Nevertheless, the firm continued to maintain a wide customer base, which extended through the issuing of catalogues to a large postal trade, both in Britain and abroad.<sup>141</sup> The one new book-selling record dating from this period is a regular daily breakdown of sales, both cash and credit, analysed under the headings new and second-hand, which was begun in 1935 (D6), possibly in succession to an earlier, more elaborate analysis of sales begun in 1925.<sup>142</sup>

The firm's publishing activity had dwindled to a very low ebb by the 1930s, and it was around the time of Gertrude Smith's death that the firm ceased to describe itself as a publisher in the local directories. Nonetheless, it was in 1932 that the firm took on what was to become its most important publishing venture of the twentieth century, namely F. R. Leavis's literary quarterly, *Scrutiny*. Like other Deighton publications of this period, the journal was published on a small commission, although, in addition, the cover bore a full page advertisement for the firm. Deighton, Bell and Co.'s involvement was clearly limited to handling the distribution of the journal, and for this early period the archive sadly contains only the authors' accounts (B9), together with documentation of the necessary libel insurance (D15).

*Horace Anthony Webb, 1938–59*<sup>143</sup>

By the time Horace Webb entered the business, he had already been in the book-trade for many years. Born in Linton, near Ross-on-Wye, he was the son of a monumental mason, and was descended

<sup>140</sup> Mumby and Norrie, *op. cit.* (4), 293, 382.

<sup>141</sup> A large collection of early twentieth-century catalogues survives at the premises of Deighton, Bell.

<sup>142</sup> Directors' Minute Book (H2), p. 151.

<sup>143</sup> I am particularly grateful to Webb's daughter, Audrey Rivet, for information concerning the business during the period of her father's ownership; Mrs Rivet worked in the business from 1942 to 1947, herself later running a bookshop in Crowborough, Sussex. I should like to thank Robin Myers for putting me in contact with Mrs Rivet and others involved in the recent history of the firm.

from a long line of masons. He had entered the book-trade from school, and had worked for many years for William Glaiser Ltd of High Holborn, before taking over on his own account Glaiser's bookshop in Greenwich in 1935. There he specialized in books for the Royal Naval College, but also maintained a large antiquarian stock, and a lending library at the rear. With a growing family, Webb soon needed a larger business to provide for their needs, and possibilities offered themselves in both Cambridge and Oxford. However, on learning that a consortium of staff from Blackwells were interested in purchasing the old Oxford firm of James Parker & Co., he turned his attention to Deighton, Bell and Co.<sup>144</sup> The business which he took over in Cambridge was not dissimilar to that which he sold in Greenwich, with a large new stock for the institutions, scholars, and students of the university, combined with a valuable antiquarian business, and a small amount of students' stationery.<sup>145</sup> The English language stock was mainly on the ground floor, with the antiquarian stock on the first floor. In addition, the first floor housed the celebrated foreign department, which continued to be one of the firm's chief claims to fame. Until the outbreak of war, Deightons had accounts with the leading publishers of most nations, and among its staff were Russian, French, and German speakers.<sup>146</sup> It was said at this period to be the pre-eminent supplier of foreign language books in the country. However, the war affected both supplies and staff. Books in French and German had to be supplied almost entirely through second-hand editions, although some books in French were also supplied from Canada and the US. Spanish books were more often supplied from Buenos Aires and Mexico than from Madrid, and war conditions meant that they took some ten months from the date of order to arrive. After the war, the foreign department apparently never regained its previous pre-eminence.

The antiquarian stock was also notable, and Webb purchased numerous valuable libraries, disposing of less desirable stock through a stall on Cambridge market, in emulation of the celebrated Gustave

<sup>144</sup> On the purchase of Parkers see Mumby and Norrie, *op. cit.* (4), 381.

<sup>145</sup> Oldfield, *op. cit.* (4), 903. The stationery supplied included students' notebooks and bulk demands for the University offices and examination syndicates.

<sup>146</sup> *Ibid.*

David. The firm was also at an advantage in obtaining first refusal of collections of books by virtue of being licensed for probate valuation.<sup>147</sup> Early in the war, Webb purchased the old-established Cambridge bookselling, stationery, publishing, and printing firm, J. Hall & Co., in Trumpington Street, with the purpose of obtaining stock.<sup>148</sup> Curiously, in addition to a valuable book stock, the shop was found to house a wide range of stationery, including hand-made paper, quill pens, and yards of lawyers' red tape. The premises were subsequently let to Students' Bookshops Ltd., who transferred their business from London because of the war-time conditions.<sup>149</sup> Under Webb, Deighton, Bell and Co. issued catalogues of antiquarian stock two or three times a year, and initially the basement was used for packing books ready for dispatch. Subsequently, probably after building work in 1947, the front basement was used for stationery, including greetings cards.<sup>150</sup>

The business also continued to fulfil many of the more traditional functions of a University bookseller, operating accounts for university and college book prizes (A7/2 and A8/7–9), catering for various book clubs, and acting as agents for thesis binding. One elderly Trinity don, the celebrated A. S. F. Gow (1886–1978), even expected to have his sundry commissions carried out by the staff—from sending his cut-throat razors to be sharpened to wrapping his Christmas presents. There were, however, new departures. At the time of Webb's arrival, Deighton, Bell and Co. stocked children's books only at Christmas time, and this was at the suggestion of Dorothy Moore, wife of the philosopher G. E. Moore (1873–1958), who made it a hobby to draw up her own selection of children's Christmas books. After a couple of years, however, a permanent children's department was established in the first floor room among the antiquarian books.

Although by this period the firm was no longer advertising itself as a publisher, a small number of publications continued to be issued by

<sup>147</sup> Directors' Minute Book (H2), 310.

<sup>148</sup> The firm was reportedly founded in 1798. See Gray, *op. cit.* (2), 34; Bowes, *op. cit.* (80), 8; and McKitterick, *op. cit.* (9).

<sup>149</sup> See Ian Norrie, *Mumby's publishing and bookselling in the twentieth century*, 6th ed. (London: Bell & Hyman, 1982), 86, 188; and Jean Sanderson, 'Cambridge bookshops', *The Private Library* 5 (1964) 73–6, p. 73.

<sup>150</sup> Directors' Minute Book (H2), 338.

the firm, either on commission, or on its own account. Prominent among these, of course, was *Scrutiny*, and Leavis used to come in weekly to confer with George Smith of the foreign book department, who dealt with the journal. Back numbers were stored in a room in the basement which, during the war, was shored up for use as an air raid shelter.<sup>151</sup> Trade sales ledgers for *Scrutiny* survive from 1945 onwards (B5/1–2), and the authors' accounts in the publishing ledger (B9) are also supplemented from 1946 by separate copies of the triennial accounts sent to the proprietors, tallies of sales, and records of stock remaining (F4/1). Most other publications taken on at this period were little more than pamphlets, although a few books were issued, including F. J. Foakes Jackson's *History of the Christian Church to AD 461*, the copyright of which had apparently been purchased from J. Hall & Co.

Leslie Earnshaw Smith had continued to act as a paid director of Deighton, Bell and Co. and, with the war ruining the tourist trade, he abandoned his venture in hotel-keeping in 1942 and rejoined the staff of the company as a manager.<sup>152</sup> In keeping with his former preferences, he bore particular responsibility in the preparation of the rare book catalogues, working for the company until his retirement from the staff in January 1954 and as a director the following year.<sup>153</sup> The firm initially prospered under Webb, and the annual accounts (D6/1) suggest that it was extremely successful in the mid-1940s. However, Webb was advised to diversify, and in 1946 he consequently purchased for the company a major share-holding in Goose & Son Ltd., a large firm of booksellers, printers, publishers, stationers, bookbinders, and engravers founded in Norwich in the late nineteenth-century.<sup>154</sup> The following year Goose & Son itself purchased a bookshop in Bectles from D. A. Shields. There are legal papers relating to the purchase of both companies in the archive (H3). This ambitious venture was, however, disastrous, and the annual accounts for Goose & Son Ltd.

<sup>151</sup> The archive contains financial records relating to the Air Raid Patrol fire prevention rota in which staff from Deighton, Bell and Co. and neighbouring businesses were involved (D3).

<sup>152</sup> Directors' Minute Book (H2), 312.

<sup>153</sup> Employees' Wages Book (D11); and letter from L. Earnshaw Smith to Webb, 1 May 1955 (F6).

<sup>154</sup> Directors' Minute Book (H2), 341; and Mumby and Norrie, *op. cit.* (4), 299.

(D10) show that over the next decade the firm's notional capital was eroded to the extent of several thousand pounds. Partly as a result, a similar decline ensued at Deighton, Bell and Co., and the consequent non-payment of dividends was a serious hardship to Eric Earnshaw Smith, who continued to own a large number of shares in the company.<sup>155</sup> At Webb's retirement in 1959, the adverse balance on the profit and loss account stood at £6,250, with £2680 unpaid on the 5% cumulative preference shares for the preceding eight years—together amounting to the majority of the firm's notional capital of £10,702. It presumably for less than this notional figure that the entire shareholding was sold in 1959 to William Dawson & Sons, Ltd. of London.<sup>156</sup>

In addition to the existing ledgers, several new records date from this period. In 1945 a new 'Magazine charge book' was begun (A6), doubtless a descendent of earlier series charge books (A5/1-3). There also survives a trade day book for 1944-49 (B6), cross-referenced to the trade ledgers; one in a series of sundries journals, covering the period 1947-62 (D7); and a record of employees' wages for the years 1953-56 (D13).

*William Dawson and Sons, Ltd., 1959-1987*<sup>157</sup>

A firm of early nineteenth-century foundation, Dawsons had, by the turn of the century, become prominent in the expanding wholesale export trade, and were major journal subscription agents. In the years following the outbreak of the second world war, however, the wholesale export business declined, and Dawsons withdrew from the trade altogether in 1970.<sup>158</sup> During the same period, the firm developed a significant trade in rare books, initially responding to requests for back issues of science journals. In the 1950s, at the instigation of one of their directors, Herbert Marley, they became internationally important as one of the leading firms dealing in antiquarian science

books.<sup>159</sup> With the growth of the rare-book side of the business, Dawsons decided that the large volume of stock could be better handled through a number of outlets, in addition to their London premises, not least because the firm had acquired an expensive reputation. In this context, a business with an old-established name in the centre of Cambridge seemed an attractive choice.

The new manager installed at Deighton, Bell and Co. was David Bickersteth, who found it to be an old-fashioned university booksellers, still selling new and second-hand books (arranged in English and foreign departments), together with a limited amount of stationery—much as it had been at the start of the century. However, the firm had long since ceded its place as the leading University booksellers, having lost out largely to W. Heffer and Sons, Bowes and Bowes (now owned by W. H. Smith), and Galloway and Porter, which had continuously expanded while Deighton, Bell and Co. had remained largely unchanged.<sup>160</sup> Initially, David Bickersteth sought to reinvigorate the college trade, but the dearth of new stock was so great that a huge investment would have been required, and around 1963 the decision was made instead to concentrate exclusively on the antiquarian trade.<sup>161</sup> This was in keeping not only with the strengths of the parent company, but also with a reported trend toward specialization among the Cambridge bookshops at this period, so that they were 'not competing for the same buyer all the time, but will send the unsatisfied customer to another who can offer him a wider selection, and know that the service will be returned'.<sup>162</sup> Moreover, as Bickersteth recollects, not only did the firm's old established name mean that it was in any case frequently offered books on the death of old Cantabrigians who had maintained contact with the firm, but the rare book catalogue trade had the additional advantage that, compared to the new book trade, it was relatively little bedevilled by the system of credit from which Cambridge tradesmen have habitually suffered.

<sup>155</sup> See letters from E. Earnshaw Smith to Webb, 2 February 1952 and 21 November 1955 (F6).

<sup>156</sup> Norrie, *op. cit.* (149), 188.

<sup>157</sup> I am especially grateful to David Bickersteth and John Beech for information about Dawsons, and about Deighton, Bell & Co. under their management.

<sup>158</sup> Mumby and Norrie, *op. cit.* (4), 287, 560. See also *Bookseller*, 3 May 1958, 1566.

<sup>159</sup> See, for instance, Diana H. Hook and Jeremy M. Norman, *The Haskell F. Norman Library of Science and Medicine*, 2 vols. (San Francisco: Jeremy Norman & Co., 1991), i, xxxv and lxvii.

<sup>160</sup> Mumby and Norrie, *op. cit.* (4), 292-3, 381-2, and 523-5.

<sup>161</sup> Norrie, *op. cit.* (149), 188.

<sup>162</sup> Sanderson, *op. cit.* (149), 76.

In the re-organisation that followed, the basement was once again turned into a storage and packing room for the catalogue trade, and most of the ground floor, with its notable floor-to-ceiling bookcases, was sub-let to Heffers in 1964 for use as a paperback shop.<sup>163</sup> A second doorway was created in the shop-front (now once again a window), allowing access to a partitioned section of the ground floor which was retained by Deighton, Bell and Co. for more general second-hand stock, and also to the main shop floor upstairs, which housed the rare book stock. The southernmost window on the shop front was also retained by Deighton's, providing for a small but significant passing trade. However, the bulk of the trade (perhaps three-quarters) was now carried on through catalogues, of which Deighton, Bell retain a full set from the Dawson period. The catalogues were frequent, and generally sold valuable stock. Moreover, stock which had been difficult to sell through Dawsons' catalogues, as a result of the firm's somewhat expensive reputation, could be sold much more easily through Deightons' catalogues.

It is from this period that the series of extant stock books (A10/1–8) date. Recording alongside a running number the details (vendor, date, price) of stock purchased above a certain value, and on the opposite page similar details for the sale of the stock, the books were intended to provide a financial record of more significant transactions for head-office. In 1974, a second sequence was begun, in order to allow the simultaneous recording of purchases on both shop floors. The second sequence of books (A10/5–7) was used downstairs, while the original sequence (A10/4, 8) was used upstairs. The final demise of publishing at Deighton, Bell and Co. in the mid-1960s has also left some interesting archives. The closing of most of the remaining accounts with authors in 1963 and 1964 is recorded in the publishing ledger (B9), and a separate list of remaining stock was drawn up in 1963 with this in view (C1/8). However, a handful of publications continued to be handled on a commission basis for several more years, including the *Proceedings of the Cambridge Antiquarian Society*, which in 1968 possibly bore the firm's last imprint. Correspondence and papers relating to this publication survive (F5), as does correspondence

relating to the possibility of Deighton, Bell and Co. reprinting *Scrutiny* (F4), a venture ultimately taken on by the University Press.

When David Bickersteth left in 1967, he was succeeded as manager by John Beech, who had been in the firm for a couple of years. The business continued to flourish under Beech, who was ultimately appointed a director of Dawsons. In addition to purchasing Deighton, Bell and Co., Dawsons had begun Bow Windows Bookshop in Lewes, Sussex, and the lucrative firm of Frank Hammond in Sutton Coldfield. However, the purchase was not an unmitigated success, and for a spell in the 1970s John Beech managed the latter from Cambridge, before it was amalgamated with Deightons—the stock and one member of staff transferring. The retirement from the Dawson's board of Marley in the late 1970s marked a decline in interest in the rare book side of the business, and a subsequent financial crisis at the Pall Mall shop precipitated its sale to Pickering & Chatto in 1982. Thus, although Deighton, Bell and Co. continued to flourish, an offer for the firm in April 1987 by the Cambridge bookselling giants, Heffers, was accepted, since the shop no longer fitted comfortably in the Dawson business.

#### DEIGHTON, BELL

*Heffers, 1987–98*<sup>164</sup>

At the time of their purchase, Heffers had been considering buying an antiquarian book company for several years. They had by then numerous specialist departments throughout the city, and had, according to their chairman, Nicholas Heffer, been 'especially interested' in acquiring Deighton, Bell and Co. Indeed, when Heffers had given up their own second-hand book department in 1974, due to lack of space, they had sold their stock to the older firm, with whom they had since maintained a very good relationship of mutual recommendation to customers.<sup>165</sup> Shortly after the take-over, John Beech left Deigh-

<sup>163</sup> Sanderson, op. cit. (149), 74.

<sup>164</sup> I am particularly grateful to Ian Kidman and Frank Collieson of Heffers for information about the company under its present ownership. I should also like to acknowledge the assistance of Frank Stubbings in putting me in contact with Mr. Collieson, and for other helpful suggestions.

<sup>165</sup> 'New deal sees Heffers expand', *Cambridge Evening News*, 28 April 1987.



ton, Bell to start business as an antiquarian bookseller on his own account. He was replaced by the present manager, Ian Kidman, who had been with the company since 1982, and in two previous spells amounting to a further ten years. Following the purchase, Heffers removed their paperback stock from the ground floor shop, turning the entire premises over to second-hand and antiquarian books. The shop front was consequently remodelled to remove the second doorway and ground-floor partitions which had given separate access to the first floor. However, with the high cost of renting the property, there was a commercial imperative to make more intensive use of the property, and in 1992, the ground floor was refitted to take Heffers' Art and Architecture department. Deighton, Bell has continued to occupy the first floor, issuing four rare book catalogues a year and frequent lists of second-hand books. In October 1994, the shop celebrated two hundred years of bookselling in the same premises with a reception and small exhibition. However, with the likely forthcoming sale of Heffers in the next few months, it is a moot point whether Deighton, Bell will have much future history to record.

Checklist of the archives of Deighton, Bell and Co. (Cambridge University Library, Add. 9453)

The extant archives comprise only a very small proportion of the working ledgers and papers of the firm during its long history, and it is consequently often difficult to gain an exact sense of where they fitted into the various systems of recording information used at different times. Moreover, the many changes in management, and the subtle shifts in the primary focus of the firm's activities, meant that there were frequent changes in the recording of information, which occurred not only between, but also within individual records. At the time of its deposit in the University Library, the archive had very little inherent structure. I have sought to retain what little structure existed, but have also attempted to introduce order to the more disordered parts of the archive. However, given the shifting nature of the materials (especially of some of the ledgers), the descriptions used here must be taken as provisional, at least until the archive has been more thoroughly explored.

## A. RETAIL ACCOUNTS

### A1-4 General retail sales

A1/1 Sales ledger (general), 1854-62 ['Ledger A.A.2']

A1/1a Index to A1/1

A1/2 Sales ledger (general), 1862-69 ['Ledger A.A.3']

A1/2a Index to A1/2

A2/1a Index to sales ledger (Trinity/St. John's students), c.1854-63  
['Ledger B.B.3']

A3/1 Sales ledger (small colleges students), 1856-71 ['Ledger C.C.2']

A3/1a Index to A3/1

A4 Sales journal (University Library), 1909-14 ['University Library  
General Fund']

### A5-6 Serials sales to subscribers

A5/1 Serials charge book, 1881-92

A5/2 Serials charge book, 1892-1931

- A5/3 Serials charge book, 1903–29  
 A6 'Magazine charge book', 1945–48  
**A7–9 Prize accounts**  
 A7/1 University prize accounts, 1896–1921  
 A7/2 University prize accounts, 1921–62  
 A8/1 College prize accounts, 1903–10  
 A8/2 College prize accounts, 1911–16  
 A8/3 College prize accounts, 1922–26  
 A8/4 College prize accounts, 1927–30  
 A8/5 College prize accounts, 1931–33  
 A8/6 College prize accounts, 1934–37  
 A8/7 College prize accounts, 1938–42  
 A8/8 College prize accounts, 1943–44  
 A8/9 College prize accounts, 1945–48  
 A9 College prize accounts—college rules and outstanding prizes, 1936–54

**A10 Stock and sales of second-hand books**

- A10/1 Stock book (nos. 1–9416), 1965–70  
 A10/2 Stock book (nos. 9417–16094), 1970–72  
 A10/3 Stock book (nos. 16095–31521), 1972–75  
 A10/4 Stock book (nos. 31522–41421), 1975–79  
 A10/5 Stock book (nos. 41422–41991), 1974  
 A10/6 Stock book (nos. 42000–47539), 1974–76  
 A10/7 Stock book (nos. 47550–50523), 1978–84  
 A10/8 Stock book (nos. 54520–60525), 1979–81

**B. TRADE AND PUBLISHING ACCOUNTS**

**B1–6 Trade accounts**

- B1 Trade debt book, 1821  
 B2/1 Trade and publishing ledger, 1842–48 ['Booksellers and Authors 3 No.4']  
 B2/2 Trade and publishing ledger, 1848–58 ['Ledger A.4']  
 B2/3 Trade and publishing ledger, 1858–69  
 B3/1 Trade ledger (A–H), 1928–59  
 B3/2 Trade ledger (I–Z), 1928–59  
 B3/3 Trade ledger, 1928–58 ['sheets withdrawn as at June 30<sup>th</sup>, 1958']  
 B4 Foreign trade ledger, 1932–60

- B5/1 *Scrutiny* trade sales ledger, 1945–49  
 B5/2 *Scrutiny* trade sales ledger, 1950–54

- B6 Trade day book, 1944–49

**B7–9 Publishing accounts**

- B7 Printing and publishing journal, 1855–1911 ['P[rint] & P[aper] Ledger']  
 B8 'Publishing journal 1', 1907–28  
 B9 Publishing ledger, 1929–63

**B10 Advertisements and postal charges journal, 1890–1937**

**C. STOCK BOOKS**

**C1 Publishing stock**

- C1/1 'Receipts and deliveries', 1861–73  
 C1/2 'Receipts and deliveries', 1874–81  
 C1/3 'Receipts and deliveries', 1881–89  
 C1/4 'Receipts and deliveries', 1887–1934  
 C1/5 'Receipts and deliveries', 1895–1934  
 C1/6 'Receipts and deliveries', 1908–37  
 C1/7 'Receipts and deliveries', 1938–66  
 C1/8 Publishing stock, 1963

**C2–3 Retail Stock**

- C2 'University press books', 1890–95  
 C3 'Warehouse', 1893–1925

**D. GENERAL FINANCE**

**D1 Bank books**

- D1/1 Bank book (J. Deighton & Sons in account with J. Mortlock & Sons), 1814–26  
 D1/2 Bank book (the same with the same), 1826–33  
 D1/3 Bank book (the same with the same), 1834–40  
 D1/4 Bank book (the same with the same), 1840–45

**D2–4 Drawing, banking, rent, salaries and other miscellaneous accounts**

- D2 'Private Ledger', 1854–1893

- D3 Private ledger, 1896–1944 ('ARP Fire Prevention Debits & Payments')
- D4 'Private Ledger', 1920–48
- D5 Cash books**
- D5/1 Cash book, 1914–24
- D5/2 Cash book, 1924–49
- D6 Daily analysis of cash/credit sales**
- D6 Daily sales summary, 1935–51
- D7 Sundries journal**
- D7 Sundries journal, 1947–62
- D8–10 Annual accounts**
- D8/1 Annual accounts and balance sheet, Deighton, Bell and Co., 1906–58
- D8/2 Annual accounts (Vendor's account), 1914–22
- D9 Annual accounts and balance sheet of Elijah Johnson & Co., Cambridge, 1925
- D10 Annual accounts and balance sheet of Goose & Son Ltd., Norwich, 1949–58
- D11–13 Employees**
- D11 Papers relating to accident and employers insurance, 1907–21
- D12 Memorandum describing staff bonus scheme, 1919
- D13 Employees' wages book, 1953–56
- D14 Income tax**
- D14 Papers relating to income tax paid on the company's profits, 1894–1914
- D15 Insurance**
- D15 Libel insurance policy and renewals (respecting *Scrutiny*), 1933–53
- E. PUBLISHING CONTRACTS**
- E1 Agreements with authors and publishing partners (including copyright registration forms), 1820–96

- E2 Accounts (1900–09) and agreement (1913) relating to the *Cambridge University Calendar*

**F. BUSINESS CORRESPONDENCE**

- F1 Correspondence and papers relating to F. J. Sebley, 1892–96
- F2 Correspondence with the India Office, 1899–1911
- F3 War Office permit to export books to neutral countries, 1918
- F4 Correspondence and papers relating to the publishing of *Scrutiny*, 1946–62
- F5 Correspondence and papers relating to the publishing of the *Proceedings of the Cambridge Antiquarian Society*, 1959–64
- F6 Letters from E. E. Smith and L. E. Smith to H. A. Webb, 1952–55.

**G. PAPERS RELATING TO THE ESTATE OF JOHN DEIGHTON (1791–1854)**

- G1/1 'Executor's accounts of J. Deighton 1859'
- G1/2 Papers relating to outstanding debts and payments made from Deighton's estate, c. 1856
- G1/3 Two books of creditors' receipts for Deighton's estate, 4 June 1856
- G1/4 Account of sums outstanding from sales ledgers AA1–2, BB1–2, CC1, trade ledger, and tutors accounts, c. 1853–4

**H. COMPANY RECORDS RELATING TO DEIGHTON, BELL AND CO. LTD**

- H1 Agreements for sale and assignment of business from G. A. Smith to Deighton, Bell and Co. Ltd., 7 and 14 December 1914
- H2 Directors' minute book, 1914–60
- H3 Legal papers relating to Goose & Son Ltd., Norwich and D. A. Shields (booksellers), Beccles, 1946–50

**J. PROPERTY**

- J1 Agreement for lease of 13 Trinity Street from George Bell to W. W. Smith, 22 January 1875
- J2 Papers relating to taxes and duties on 13 Trinity Street, 1895–1913

- J3 Agreement for lease of dwelling-house, 13 Trinity Street, from A. E. Smith to Emma A. Hancock, 30 November 1907
- J4 Agreement for lease of 30 Trinity Street from Trinity College to Deighton, Bell and Co. Ltd., 5 August 1924
- J5 Correspondence relating to the sale of 13 Trinity Street to St Catharine's College, 1939

**K. PRIVATE PAPERS RELATING TO THE SMITH FAMILY**

- K1 Papers relating to a trust established by the will of William Earnshaw, mercer and draper of Sheffield (father-in-law of W. W. Smith), 1848–1881
- K2 Mortgage between W. W. Smith and Henry Gotobed, 1 June 1860
- K3 Papers relating to the estate of Elizabeth Earnshaw (mother-in-law of W. W. Smith), 1865–85
- K4 Notice of administration of the estate of Emily Smith (wife of W. W. Smith), 10 February 1876
- K5 Papers relating to the life assurance of W. W. Smith
- K6 Notebook recording cash and banking accounts of W. W. Smith, 1875–91
- K7/1 Bank book (W. W. Smith in account with London and County Banking Co., Cambridge), 1877
- K7/2 Bank book (the same with the same), 1882–90
- K7/3 Bank book (the same with the same), 1890–94
- K8 Papers relating to the estate of Anne Maria Page (W. W. Smith executor), 1883
- K9 Papers relating to the estate of W. W. Smith (chiefly correspondence between Edward Bell, executor, and A. E. Smith), 1896–7
- K10 Portrait of W. W. Smith and family, c. 1885
- K11 Miscellaneous twentieth-century notes and papers relating to the Smith family

**L. MISCELLANEOUS ITEMS**

- L1 Miscellaneous twentieth-century notes and papers concerning the history of Deighton, Bell and Co.

- L2 Miscellaneous printed ephemera relating to the history of Deighton, Bell and Co.
- L3 Engraved portrait of Lawrence Hyde, Earl of Rochester
- L4 French bookseller's catalogue, 1896
- L5 Share certificates for the University Life Assurance Society in the name of Rev. John Croft of Christ's College, Cambridge, dated 1 June 1825
- L6 Private and business accounts of Charles Henry Hawkins, inn-keeper and coach-builder of Colchester, 1860–86

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