

BOWES AND BOWES (CAMBRIDGE) LTD ARCHIVE

BAB

The Collection covers the year's 1843-1972.

The physical extent of the collection is 21 items.

Introduction

“The firm is of some antiquity, and the history of bookselling at 1 Trinity Street long predates the origins of the firm.”

According to George J. Gray in ‘Cambridge Bookselling’ (an address given to the Eastern Branch, Associated Booksellers, in 1924 and published by Bowes & Bowes in 1925), an entry in the parish book of Great St. Mary's for 1537 suggests that Spierinck, the binder, lived at 1 Trinity Street. If so, the site may have been a bookseller's shop from as early as 1505, when Spierinck first settled in Cambridge. Certainly from 1581 the names of successive occupiers of 1 Trinity Street are all known and all were concerned with bookselling:

- William Scarlett - 1581-1617
 - Henry Moody - 1620-37
 - William Lone - till his death in 1688
 - William Dickinson - till his death in 1718
 - Edmund Jeffery - 1718/19-1729/30
 - William Thurlbourne - 1729/30-1757 when he moved to 2 Trinity Street
 - John Woodyer - 1757-79
- Thurlbourne and Woodyer may have been in partnership for a time, since for some years many works bear their joint imprint. In 1719 Woodyer was declared bankrupt.
- R. Matthews - 1779/1780
 - John Deighton - 1780-?
- He later moved and returned to different premises.
- John Nicholson - 1807-1822
- His father, John ('Maps') Nicholson began business in 1752 on the west side of Trumpington Street, now King's Parade. He died in 1796. After John II moved to Trinity Street, he was joined by his son, who predeceased him.

In 1822, John II retired, and Thomas Stevenson continued the business until his death in 1845.

- Thomas Stevenson - 1822-45
- Macmillan - 1846-1907

The history of Bowes & Bowes begins in 1843 or 1844 when Daniel and Alexander Macmillan, with financial help from Archdeacon Hare, bought Richard Newby's bookshop at 17 Trinity Street. They subsequently acquired Thomas Stevenson's business and amalgamated the two at 1 Trinity Street in 1846. That same year, their nephew Robert Bowes came from Scotland to learn the business.

The early business was a mixture of bookselling, publishing, printing and selling of stationery, as becomes quite clear from the few early records that have survived.

By 1858, it was necessary to open a London branch, and in 1863, the London publishing business was detached from the Cambridge business. Alexander Macmillan moved to London and managed the publishing firm, leaving Robert Bowes to manage the Cambridge business with partners. In 1899, Robert Bowes took his son, George Brimley Bowes, into partnership, and from 1907, the firm was called Bowes & Bowes. The Macmillan/Bowes business underwent numerous name changes over the years:

- 1844-6 - D. & A. Macmillan
- 1846-9 - Macmillan, Barclay and Macmillan
- 1850-82 - Macmillan & Co.
- 1882-1907 - Macmillan & Bowes
- 1907-1986 - Bowes & Bowes

Comparatively few records have survived, but the early cashbooks, journals and letter books, and the run of printed catalogues give a good picture of the business, its diversity and growth.

NB Published items previously numbered BAB 18-200; 205-235 have been transferred to the Special Collections Library (WHS BOWES & BOWES COLLECTION)

- BAB/1** Accounts
1843-1972
10 items
- BAB 1** Dry copy letter book
December 1859-November 1860
Contains letters relating to orders for books, publishing, ordering of stationery for the Pitt Press, advertisements, copyright
1 volume
- BAB 2** Dry copy letter book
June 1862-April 1863
Contains letters relating to orders for books, publishing, ordering of stationery for the Pitt Press, advertisements, copyright.

1 volume
- BAB 3** D. & A. Macmillan: cash account book
7 October 1843-10 September 1846 (stocktaking)
This is a very simple account book, with simple Debtor and Creditor pages, with a ledger or order number, entry and amount, added at the foot of each page and carried forward. The dr. side includes till sales, standing accounts etc., the cr. side trade and housekeeping expenses, travel, etc.

1 volume
- BAB 4** Macmillan, Barclay and Macmillan: cash account book
11 September 1846-6 December 1850
This is more complicated than 3, showing bills receivable, discounts, cash and bankers in separate columns on both dr. and cr. sides. It was presumably labelled 'B', since the next book is said to have been 'C'. 3 must have been 'A'.

1 volume
- BAB 5** D. & A. Macmillan: journal 'B2'
19 February 1845-30 April 1846
Each entry consists of the name of the client, rough address, title of work(s) ordered, price and an account or ledger number. There is a note at the end 'Transferred to Day Book F'.

1 volume
- BAB 6** Macmillan & Bowes: account book
c. 1886-1911
This is a working account of the cost, sales etc. of works published. Entries are arranged under the name of the

publication or the series, alphabetically. The cost of printing, corrections, composition of new copy for new editions etc. is sometimes given, but mostly the account relates to advertising and casual sales.

1 volume

BAB 201 Annual Accounts of Bowes & Bowes (Cambridge) Ltd; 1940/1-1951/2
1940-1952

1 item

BAB 202 Annual Accounts of Bowes & Bowes (Cambridge) Ltd; 1955/6-1960/1
1955-1961

1 item

BAB 203 Annual Accounts of Bowes & Bowes (Cambridge) Ltd; 1971/2
1971-1972

1 item

BAB 204 Annual Accounts of W J Bryce Ltd; 1971/2
1971-1972

1 item

BAB/2 Press cuttings books
1891-1933
5 items

BAB 7 Press cutting book
1891-7

1 volume

BAB 8 Press cutting book
1907-15

1 volume

BAB 9 Press cutting book
1915-23

1 volume

- BAB 10** Press cutting book
1922-6

1 volume
- BAB 11** Press cutting book
1927-33

1 volume
- BAB/3** Scrapbooks and notebooks
1869-1947
6 items
- BAB 12** Macmillan's Catalogues 1872-1899
1872-99
Scrapbook of catalogues, Macmillan & Co. and Macmillan &
Bowes.

1 volume
- BAB 13** Notebook list of blocks, Bowes & Bowes
Undated-1947
Gives photograph, size, subject, number of blocks; early entries
undated, later ones 1933-7, one 1947.

1 volume
- BAB 14** Robert Bowes, Biographical notes on the University Printers
from the commencement of Printing in Cambridge to the present
time
1884
Privately printed 1884. Interleaved copy, with list inserted of
recipients of presentation copies.

1 volume
- BAB 15** Poems by Two Brothers
c.1892
Bound volume about the MS of 'Poems by Two Brothers', an
autograph MS of poems by Alfred, Lord Tennyson and his
brother Charles, bought by Robert Bowes at Sotheby, Wilkinson
& Hodge's sale, 21-3 December 1892.
The volume contains: relevant page from Sotheby, Wilkinson
and Hodge's Catalogue (pp 61-2, lot 842), with prices annotated;
Bill made out to Mr Macmillan and Bowes for £480; Press
cuttings about the MS at the time of the sale and after the
decision to sell it to America but to publish a new edition

including the 4 poems not previously published in the 1827 edition, and the prize poem on Timbuctoo, and attributing the poems to their separate authors on palaeographical and stylistic grounds (Frederic Tennyson may have written 6 poems in a third hand, since Alfred, Lord Tennyson later said it should have been called 'Poems by three Brothers').

1 volume

BAB 16

Box file of miscellaneous papers

undated

Includes correspondence etc. about actions for debt against customers.

1 item

BAB 17

Scrapbook of miscellaneous items thought to be of historical interest

c.1869-c.1909

Offprints of addresses about Cambridge bookselling, Bowes & Bowes; correspondence with Austin Dobson about Hogarth, Mildmay portrait, 1908-9; letter announcing that G. B. Bowes had been taken into partnership with his father, Robert Bowes, 1899; photographs, eg. of 1 and 2 Trinity Street; draft agreement between Alexander Macmillan and Rev. Joseph Rawson Lumby for lease of upper floor of 1 Trinity Street, with schedule of fixtures annexed. This was presumably used for a later new lease, since the specific details have been crossed out; Chas. Wisbey & Son (estate agent)'s valuation of Mr Lumby's occupation of premises, 1880; draft agreement between Alexander Macmillan and Robert Bowes, and Rev John James Lias for lease of upper floor of house; schedule of fixtures annexed, 1880; letter, Rev J. J. Lias to Robert Bowes about Wisbey's letter, which must have said that Lias had left the house in a poor state of repair and decoration, 1892; inventory of fixtures of Rev S. G. Ponsonby, 1894; list of books bought from Thomas Arthur, secondhand bookseller, Strand, with prices, 1869.

1 volume