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W H SMITH TIMELINE

By Rule, Christopher

SELIA, London, 2009. Paperback. Condition: New. 69 Photographs & Drawings (illustrator). First Edition. pp. 102. Illustrated. From the "Introduction The history of W.H.Smith provides a perfect illustration of how a family-run newsagent's business, operating from a small shop in London, could develop into the country's largest wholesale distributor of newspapers as well as becoming the first multiple retailer. The story also exemplifies the Victorian ideal of 'self-help' which held that anyone, however humble their background, could rise to a position of wealth and influence so long as they had a strong sense of moral purpose and were prepared to work hard. At the start of the nineteenth century the Smith business was a modest affair with a single shop. By using the developing network of turnpike roads and fast horse-drawn coaches to distribute newspapers throughout the British Isles, the business, within a few years, had grown to be the country's largest wholesaler of London newspapers. The entrepreneurial abilities of a succession of owners ensured that the business kept abreast of rapidly-changing transport technology and the coming of the railways not only provided a much faster means of distributing newspapers but also allowed W.H.Smith to become a major retailer by opening...



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