



Frank's Way: Frank Cass and Fifty Years of Publishing

Gerry Black

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This is a history of Frank Cass, the man, and Frank Cass, the company. The two are inextricably linked together, so it is inevitably a mixture of both a company history and a biography, set against the dramatically changing background of the publishing trade during more than fifty challenging years. It recounts the story of Frank's life, from when as a 19-year-old he started the first day of his working life as an assistant in a bookshop, through being a bookshop owner selling antiquarian and other second-hand books, to an independent publisher reprinting out-of-print academic books, then new academic books, and finally academic journals that covered a wide field ranging from politics and military studies to sport and the environment, from international human rights to European security, from legal history to middle eastern studies. His working life spanned almost sixty years from 1949 to 2007, and each decade presented its own challenges and opportunities. Frank survived the 1950s when the country was recovering from the austerity that followed the Second World War; the 1960s, a period of growth but one demanding additional capital to feed it; the 1970s of Edward Heath's three day week and James Callaghan's 'winter of discontent'; the 1980s, when almost every publishing firm, including some of the largest, was forced to make severe cutbacks and lay off staff; and the 1990s and the millennium which brought with them the spectacular growth of the Internet which many believed would threaten the very existence of the book and lead to its demise in its traditional form. Although Frank Cass & Co was much the largest part of Frank's publishing interests, in the 1970s he invested in Irish Academic Press and Vallentine Mitchell. After the sale of Frank Cass & Co to Taylor & Francis, Frank devoted much of his time to developing the lists of these two companies, remaining actively involved with both until just a few weeks before he passed away. Through a mixture of history and anecdote, this book tells the story of Frank Cass's great adventure in publishing.

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