

The Royal Pastime of Cupid: three early printed board games in the Bodleian Library's

John Johnson Collection of Printed Ephemera

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Introduction

The John Johnson Collection of Printed Ephemera contains three examples of the early printed board game, *The Royal Pastime of Cupid, Or Entertaining Game of the Snake*. While this paper will discuss all three examples, which are dated to either the late eighteenth or the early nineteenth century, one of its main concerns will be to present evidence to support a revision of the publication date of one particular example, the print attributed to William Dicey, the date of which is currently shown in the Digital Bodleian record as '1794'.

First, however, some background and context should be provided for the reader who may not be familiar with the history of Early Modern board games. *The Royal Pastime of Cupid* is a variant of *The Game of the Goose*, sometimes known as *The Royal Game of Goose*. *The Game of the Goose* was popular across Europe from the early seventeenth century until the nineteenth century. It is widely accepted as providing the basic model for the simple type of board game in which players throw dice to race their pieces around the board.¹

¹ See, for example: R. C. Bell, *Board and Table Games from Many Civilizations* (New York, 1979) i, pp. 14–16; David Parlett, *The Oxford History of Board Games* (Oxford, 1999) pp. 88 and 95–98; Caroline Goodfellow, *How We Played: Games From Childhood Past* (Stroud, 2008) pp. 44–45; Adrian Seville, *The Royal Game of the Goose: 400 Years of Printed Board Games* (New York, 2016) pp. 11–12 and *passim*.

While the origins of *The Game of the Goose* are unknown,² Adrian Seville notes the earliest recorded reference to the game, albeit as a warning against playing games at Christmas, can be found in a late fifteenth-century book of sermons by Gabriele da Barletta, first published in 1480.³ A century later, a copy of *The Game of the Goose* was reportedly given as a gift to Philip II of Spain by Francesco de' Medici, sometime between 1574–1587, i.e. while Francesco was Grand Duke of Tuscany.⁴ The game seems to have been brought to England by printer and bookseller John Wolfe as he registered the title 'The newe and most pleasant game of the goose' at Stationer's Hall, London, in 1597.⁵ However, no copy of Wolfe's edition is known to survive.

The Game of the Goose is played on a 63-space spiral track. Players take turns to throw dice and move their counters along the track. It is a game of pure chance and no skill is involved in moving the pieces around the board. Some squares present hazards, such as making a player miss a turn, or move a piece back to a particular square, or start again, or wait on the hazard square until another player's piece lands on the same square. For example, a piece landing on the well, typically square 31, must remain there until another player lands in the well, thereby 'freeing' the first player; a piece landing on square 58, the death square, must start the game again. A player landing on a hazard square has to pay an additional stake into the kitty. If one player's piece lands on a square occupied by another player, the pieces swap places and both players pay a stake into the kitty. Some squares offer players an advantage. For example, a piece landing on the bridge, typically

² Murray asserts Goose was '[i]nvented in Florence under Francesco dei Medici ([ruled] 1574–1587) who sent it to Philip II of Spain, and it rapidly spread to other parts of Europe'. H. J. R. Murray, *A History of Board Games Other Than Chess* (Oxford, 1952) p. 142; Seville offers a more cautious: 'probably originated [in Italy] in the fifteenth century'. Seville, *Royal Game of Goose*, p. 11.

³ Seville, *Royal Game of Goose*, p. 13.

⁴ Parlett, *Oxford History of Board Games*, p. 95.

⁵ According to John Wolfe's DNB entry, after serving some time as an apprentice to the printer John Day, Wolfe spent some time in Florence between 1576–1579. On his return to England he repeatedly printed works that were privileged to others and he also agitated against printing restrictions to the extent that he was imprisoned twice. However, the turbulence had subsided by the mid-1580s and Wolfe joined the Stationers Company (he was originally a member of the Fishmonger's Company) and he went on to become Beadle of the Stationer's Company (1587–1598) and Printer of the City of London (1593–1601). Wolfe's DNB entry notes that he printed many Italian works and, while the Florentine connection may be no more than a coincidence, it's tempting to speculate that Wolfe may have encountered *The Game of the Goose* in Florence in the 1570s and brought a copy back to London which he subsequently printed in translation.

square 6, advances to square 12. If a player's move ends on a square marked with a goose, the player's counter is moved forward by the amount shown on the dice. The aim of the game is to be the first to land on square 63. The first player to land on square 63 takes the kitty.

While *The Royal Pastime of Cupid* is very similar to *The Game of the Goose* there are, however, some differences. One of the main differences is iconographical: the spiral track in *the Royal Pastime of Cupid, or Entertaining Game of the Snake* is represented as a coiled serpent and the favourable squares are marked with a cupid figure rather than with a goose. The Cupid track spirals clockwise while the Goose track turns anticlockwise. Another difference is that the Cupid board has a landscape orientation while the earliest Goose designs adopted a portrait format. The rules of the Goose game, typically shown as twelve numbered paragraphs, are printed in the centre of the game board whilst the rules of Cupid are arranged around the outside of the spiral playing area.

The three examples of the Cupid game in the John Johnson Collection comprise a print published in Glasgow by James Lumsden & Son, c. 1810 (Fig. 1); a print by Laurie & Whittle of 53 Fleet Street, published 12 May 1794 (Fig. 4); and a print by William Dicey, of Bow Churchyard, to which the Digital Bodleian catalogue attributes a publication date of 1794 (Fig. 6), although the evidence suggests the Dicey print was actually published about half a century earlier, c. 1736–1740.

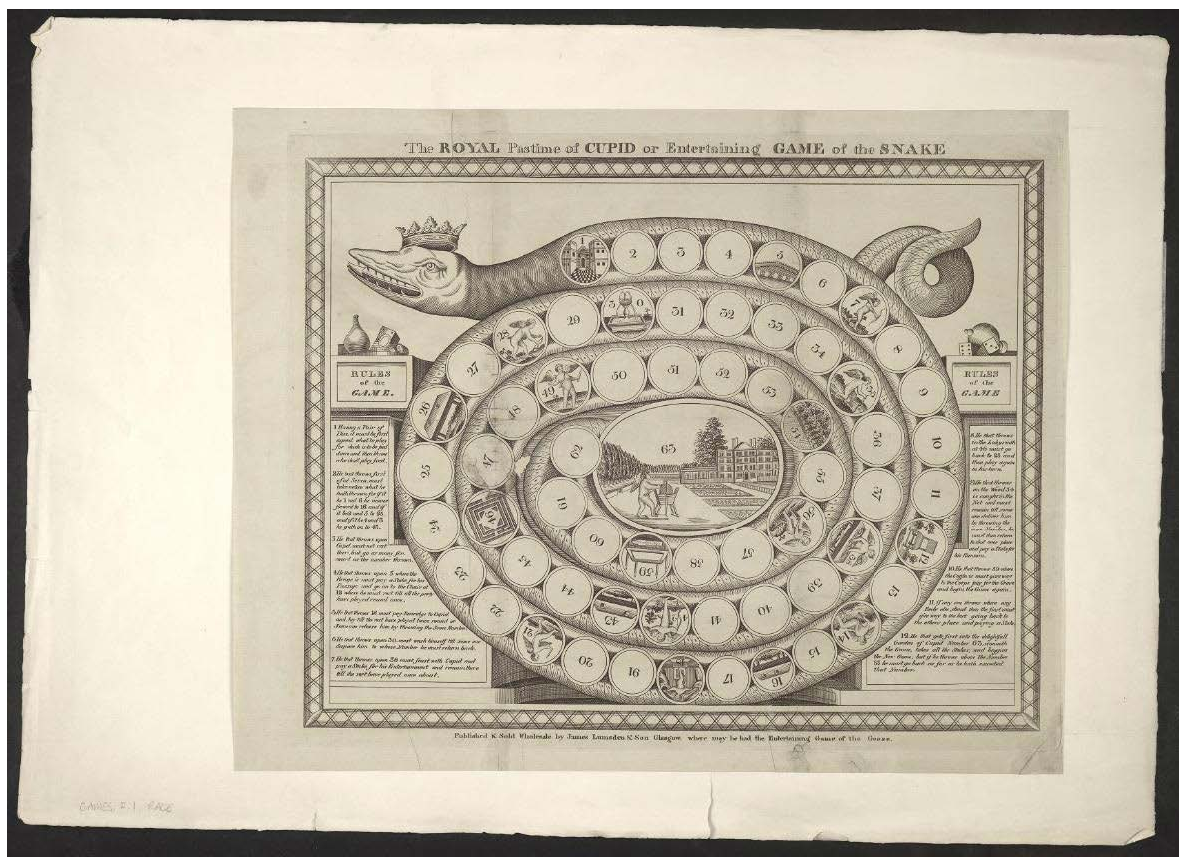


Fig. 1 *The Royal Pastime of Cupid, or Entertaining Game of the Snake*. Board game. Print. Engraving on paper. 406 x 510 mm (dimensions are the size of the impression on a larger uncut sheet). James Lumsden and Son, Glasgow. c. 1810. Digital Bodleian. Available online: <<http://digital.bodleian.ox.ac.uk/inquire/p/278f99e8-623d-45a0-93e4-631277631bef>>

James Lumsden & Son

James Lumsden (1750s–c. 1830) founded James Lumsden & Son in Glasgow in 1790. According to Bell (2007, p. 104) the company, which was active from 1790–1850, specialised in children’s literature and published some 160 works, both children’s books and chapbooks, and printed sheets. Roscoe and Brimmell (1981) offer an account of the company together with a partial list of publications. However, Roscoe and Brimmell do not list individual printed sheets, only books and chapbooks (of which they itemise 140 and 27 publications respectively), noting in passing:

The firm also put out some single sheets designed, presumably, to decorate the nursery. Only three of these have been located so far, two in the possession of Mr and Mrs Peter Opie and one in the Sotheby’s catalogue sale of March 4th 1977, lot 580.⁶

⁶ Roscoe, S. and Brimmell, R. A., *James Lumsden & Son of Glasgow* (Pinner, 1981) p. xvi.

While Roscoe and Brimmell offer no further elaboration on Lumsden's single sheet output, they do list several of the "many and various" Lumsden imprints.⁷ The version used on the Cupid game, 'Published & Sold Wholesale by James Lumsden & Son Glasgow', is not included, however. The Cupid imprint is appended: 'where may be had the Entertaining Game of the Goose'. The British Museum holds three Lumsden prints, one of which is a hand-coloured Goose game print (Fig. 2), dated 1800–1820, with the same imprint and the complementary tag: 'where may be had the Entertaining Game of the Snake'.⁸

⁷ Roscoe and Brimmell, *James Lumsden & Son*, p. xvii.

⁸ The John Johnson Collection of Printed Ephemera contains two genre prints published by James Lumsden & Son, which may be of the type referred to by Roscoe and Brimmell: 'Grandmother's pet' <<http://bit.ly/2tIxzgE>> and 'My grandfather' <<http://bit.ly/2sCIYzm>>. No Lumsden single sheet prints have been located in the Bodleian's Opie Collection of Children's Literature, which is currently being catalogued (date of completion: June 2018); see Svenja Kunze, Nursery rhymes, childhood folklore, and play: The archive of Iona and Peter Opie. Archives and Manuscripts and the Bodleian Library. Bodleian Libraries Blog. (March 2017) <<http://blogs.bodleian.ox.ac.uk/archivesandmanuscripts/2017/03/07/opie-archive/>>.

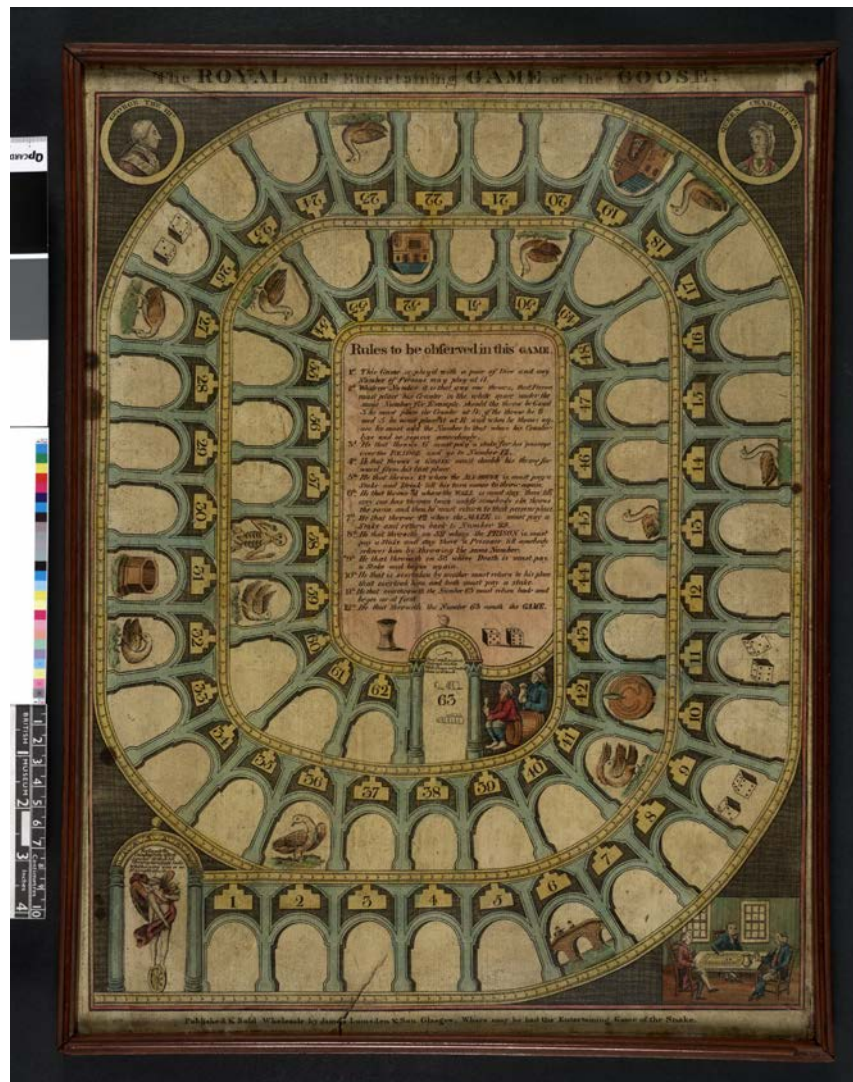


Fig. 2 *The Royal and Entertaining Game of the Goose*. Board game. Print. Hand-coloured etching on paper. 480 x 358 mm. Varnished and framed with baize backing. The portraits in roundels (upper left and upper right) show King George III and Queen Charlotte. James Lumsden and Son, Glasgow. c. 1800–1820. British Museum 1893,0331.131. © Trustees of the British Museum. Available online <http://www.britishmuseum.org/research/collection_online/collection_object_details.aspx?objectId=1428434&partId=1&searchText=game+snake&page=1>

A second copy of Lumsden's Cupid is held in the National Library of Scotland's Rare Books collection (Shelfmark: RB.I.52) [not illustrated]. While the National Library of Scotland's catalogue indicates *two* items are associated with this entry, suggesting there may be two Lumsden prints in the NLS collection, a subsequent enquiry has established there is, in fact, only a single item and the NLS OPAC will be amended to correct this error at some point in the future (as of the time of writing, July 2017, the NLS catalogue still shows two items).

A third, chromolithograph, example of Lumsden's Cupid, dated c. 1820–1830, is in the Adrian

Seville collection (Fig. 3).

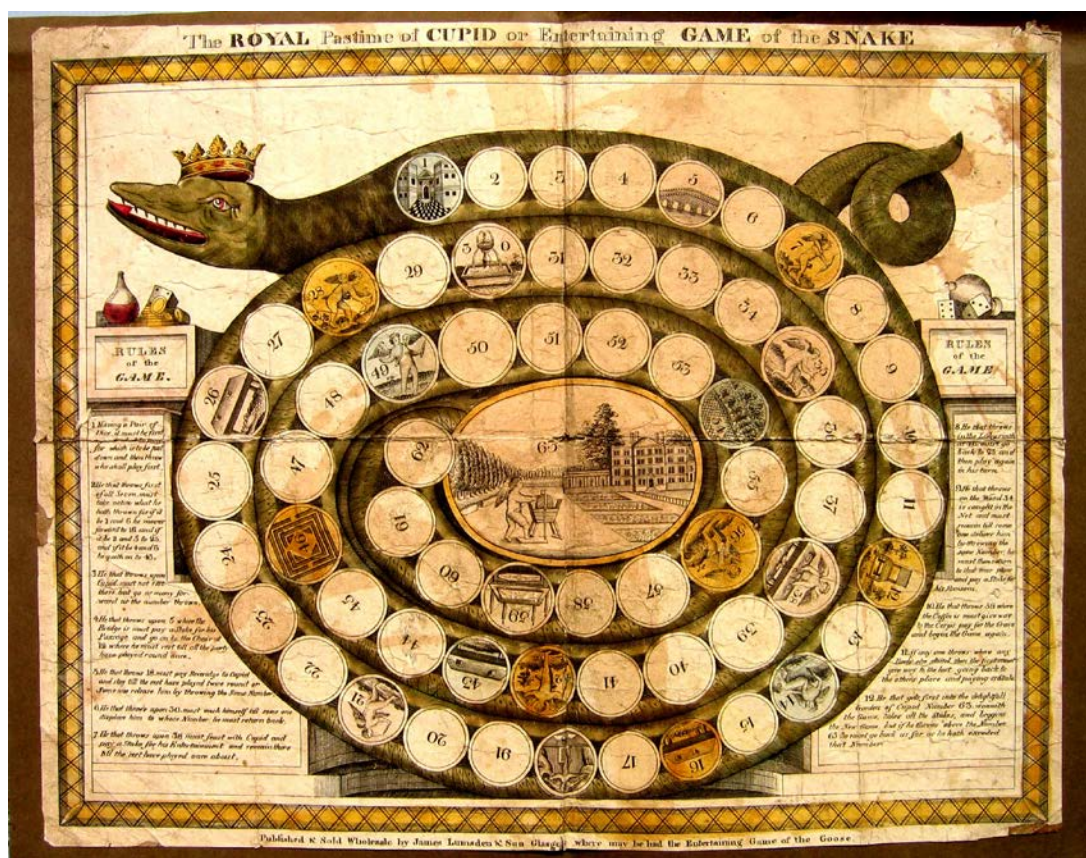


Fig. 3 *The Royal Pastime of Cupid, or Entertaining Game of the Snake*. Board game. Chromolithograph. Paper pasted on cardboard. 370 x 460 mm. James Lumsden & Son, Glasgow. 1820–1830. Adrian Seville collection. Available online: <<http://www.giochidelloca.it/scheda.php?id=1309>>.

Each of the three known examples of James Lumsden & Son's Cupid is assigned a publication date in the first or second quarter of the nineteenth century in its respective collection record, viz: Bodleian c. 1810; Nat. Lib. Scotland c. 1820; Seville 1820–1830. Given what is known about the period of activity of James Lumsden & Son (1790–1850), the triangulated dates are close enough to broadly engender confidence. While the significance of the portrait medallions in Lumsden's contemporaneous Goose must remain a matter of speculation, 1810 was the fiftieth anniversary of George III's accession, so it may be that Lumsden's edition of *The Royal and Entertaining Game of the Goose* was published to coincide with the king's Golden Jubilee.⁹

⁹ The physical health of George III (1738–1820) was in decline in the last decade of his life, leading to the Regency Act of 1811 which made the future George IV, then Prince of Wales, Prince Regent. See John Brooke, *King George III*, pp. 382–383.

Laurie & Whittle

The second example of the Royal Pastime of Cupid in the John Johnson ephemera collection is a hand-coloured copy of a Laurie & Whittle print (Fig. 4). The date of this particular issue is stated in the imprint: 'Published 12th May 1794 by Laurie & Whittle, No. 53 Fleet Street, London'. This appears to be an earlier state of R. H. Laurie's print of c. 1850 (Fig. 5).

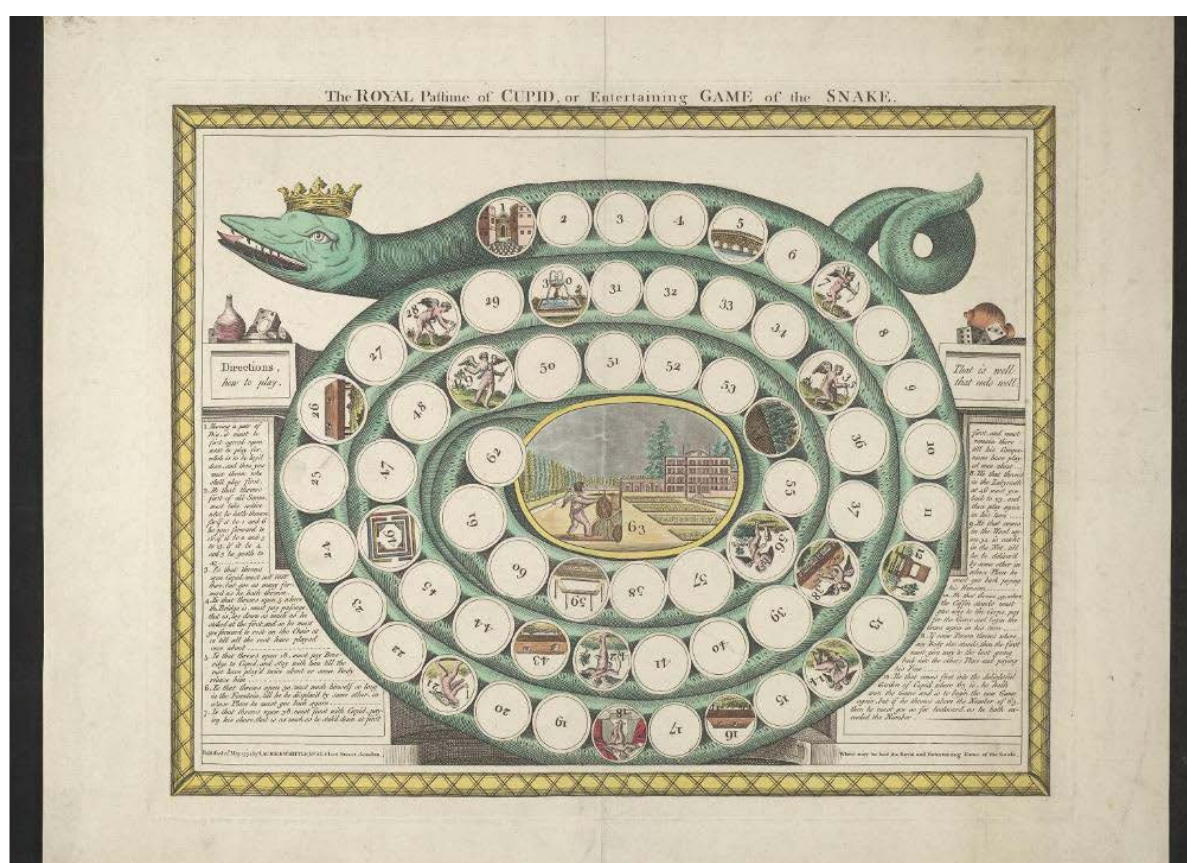


Fig. 4 *The Royal Pastime of Cupid, or Entertaining Game of the Snake*. Board game. Print. Engraving. 460 x 589 mm. Laurie & Whittle, London. 12 May 1794. Digital Bodleian. Available online: <http://digital.bodleian.ox.ac.uk/inquire/p/7e4aa3bb-b2e6-4f0a-9055-f3418ff9dd94>.

A considerable amount is known about the business operating out of 53 Fleet Street. The continuity of ownership and the relations between proprietors over a period of some 150 years can be summarised briefly. The Fleet Street premises were known, before the introduction of street numbers, as The Golden Buck. Phillip Overton's Golden Buck printshop was originally next to The Mitre Tavern (a twentieth-century commemorative plaque locates The Mitre at 37 Fleet Street), opposite St Dunstan-in-the-West. Robert Sayer (1725–1794) took over the business there after his older brother, James, married Mary Overton, widow of Phillip Overton (1681–1745) in 1747.

Soon after Robert Sayer acquired Overton's business, The Golden Buck moved to what would become 53 Fleet Street when street numbers were introduced in the 1760s. Robert Sayer also bought the business of printer and mapmaker John Senex (bap. 1678–1740) from Senex's widow and, in 1764, he also acquired the business of Phillip Overton's nephew, Henry Overton (Henry Overton II, 1751–c. 1764) at the White Horse without Newgate, Snow Hill. Also in the 1760s, Sayer took over the businesses or acquired the plates of several other print-makers/publishers and opened new premises in Bolt Court, off Fleet Street. According to Sayer's biography on the website of the British Museum, by the mid-1760s he was 'in a very considerable trade as a print and map seller and [employed] a great number of workmen to engrave under his directions'.¹⁰

As the ageing Sayer's health declined and he became semi-retired, spending more time at his property in Bath, the business was taken over by his two assistants, Robert Laurie (1755–1836) and James Whittle (c. 1757–1818). Following Sayer's death in 1794, the company traded as Laurie & Whittle until Robert Laurie retired in 1812, at which point Laurie's son, Richard Holmes Laurie (1777–1858), entered into partnership with James Whittle and the business continued as Whittle & Laurie. After James Whittle died in 1818, Richard Holmes Laurie became sole proprietor and the business continued under his name, R. H. Laurie, until the twentieth century when it merged with James Imray & Son and Norie & Wilson, becoming Imray, Laurie, Norie & Wilson.¹¹

As the business changed hands, so too the plates were transferred with the effect that the Cupid print issued by Laurie & Whittle in 1794 (Fig. 4), might be deemed an earlier state of the print published in 1850 by R. H. Laurie (Fig. 5). The website of the Victoria and Albert Museum notes that R. H. Laurie's 1850 print 'is likely [to be] an impression from the original engraving plate with some lettering altered'.¹²

¹⁰ British Museum, no date, online.

¹¹ For a full account of the history of the company, see Susanna Fisher, *The Makers of the Blueback Charts: A History of Imray, Laurie, Norie and Wilson Ltd* (Ithaca, 2001).

¹² Victoria & Albert Museum, no date, online.

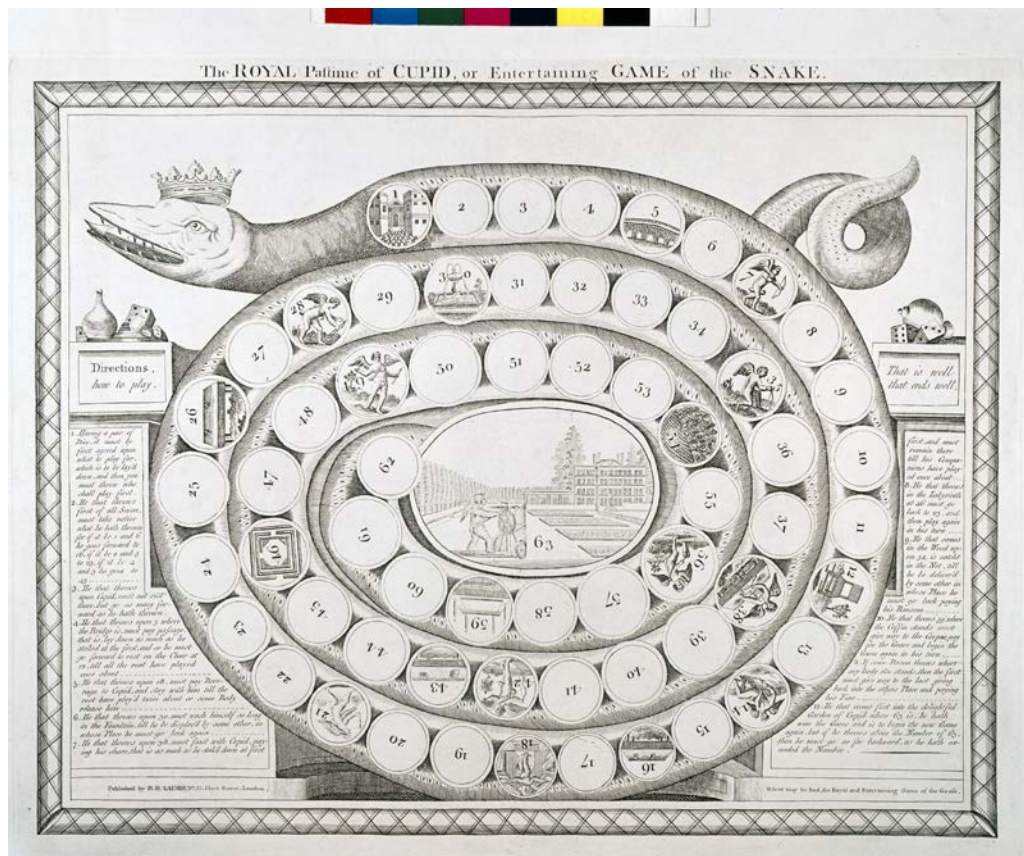


Fig. 5 *The Royal Pastime of Cupid, or Entertaining Game of the Snake*. Board game. Print. Engraving. Paper with linen backing. 387 x 505 mm. R. H. Laurie, London. 1850. Victoria & Albert Museum: E.1747-1954. © Victoria and Albert Museum, London. Available online <<http://collections.vam.ac.uk/item/O26286/>>.

In a recent article about a Spanish version of the Cupid game published in the 1620s, Marjolein Leesberg observes:

[F]rom the late-seventeenth century the Game of the Snake was ... successful in England in a copy of Visscher's [Dutch] board. Around 1800 an engraving of *The Royal Pastime of Cupid or Entertaining Game of the Snake* was published in Glasgow by James Lumsden, in which the central image was replaced with a cupid in a garden, in the rules called 'the delightful Garden of Cupid'. The game still appeared about 1850 in a copy of the latter.¹³

However, Leesberg's assumption that print published in 1850 (by R. H. Laurie) is a copy of Lumsden's design is incorrect. Leesberg must be unaware of the continuities (of ownership and stock) pertaining to the business operating out of 53 Fleet Street. Given the publication dates, it

¹³ Marjolein Leesberg, 'El Juego Real de Cupido: a Spanish board game published in Antwerp, c. 1620'. *Delineavit et Sculpsit* 39 (2015) pp. 39–40.

seems to be more likely that the Lumsden issue is a close copy of the print published by Laurie & Whittle in 1794 in which the central motif shows cupid honing his arrow on a wheel in a formal garden.¹⁴

William Dicey

The third example of *The Royal Passtime of Cupid* to be found in the digital Digital Bodleian collection was, according to the imprint, 'published and sold by W. Dicey at his Printing Office in Bow Church Yard London' (Fig. 6). The Digital Bodleian catalogue attributes a date of 1794 to this print. However, the Bodleian date may not be accurate. Insights from recent research into the Diceys' publishing interests reveal that the Diceys were not printing in 1794: William Dicey himself died in 1756; Cluer Dicey died in 1775 and the family's involvement in the London-based print trade had ended by 1770.¹⁵

¹⁴ The iconography of the final square in British editions of *The Royal Pastime of Cupid* seems to occur in three types: Cupid honing his arrow in a formal garden; a peasant couple in a *hortus conclusus* accompanied by a cupid playing rough music; and a cupid alone with his bow. The first type can be seen in the 1794 Laurie & Whittle print (Fig. 4) and in the R. H. Laurie re-issue of 1850 (Fig. 5) as well as in the Lumsden print c. 1810–1830 (Fig. 1). The second type, used by Dicey, c. 1736–40 (Fig. 6) and Garrett, c. 1690 (see Duggan 2017, examples 11 and 12) appears to have its origins in Visscher's print of 1625 (see Leesberg, '*El Juego Real de Cupido*', p. 40). The third type is seen in the Carington Bowles edition of c. 1756 and the Bowles & Carver print of c. 1763–1780 (see Duggan 2017, examples 9 and 10).

¹⁵ David Stoker, 'Another look at the Dicey-Marshall publications: 1736–1806'. *The Library*, seventh series, 15 no. 2. (2014) pp. 111–157 at 114.

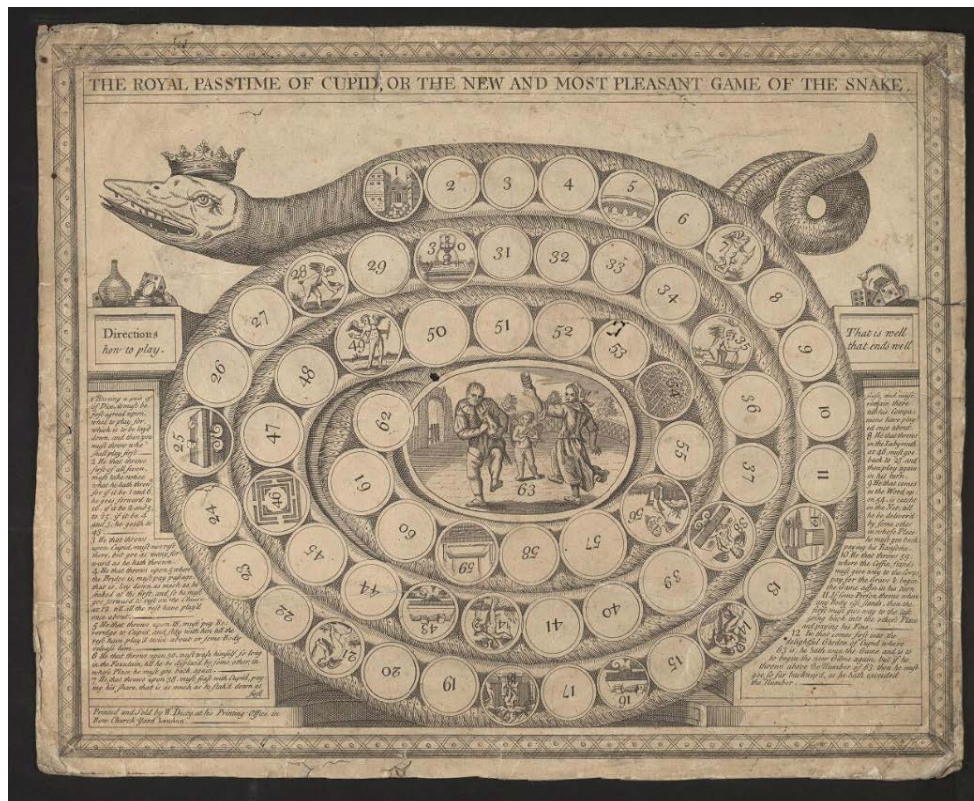


Fig. 6 *The Royal Passtime of Cupid, or the New and Most Pleasant Game of the Snake*. Board game. Engraving. 400 X 500 mm. William Dacey. Bow Church Yard London. Date cited: 1794. Digital Bodleian. Available online: <<http://digital.bodleian.ox.ac.uk/inquire/p/6ff20133-45bb-4276-a090-cc2b2851ffba>>.

A brief summary of the Dacey family enterprise will establish key dates and, importantly, some of the imprints employed by the Diceys at different times. David Stoker notes the earliest item associated with the Bow Churchyard press is a sheet dated to 1710 (ESTC T50093), bearing the imprint 'J. Cluer'.¹⁶ William Dacey (1690–1756), originally apprenticed to a leather-maker, is 'turned over' to John Cluer in 1711. John Cluer (c. 1681–1728) marries William Dacey's sister, Elizabeth, in 1713.¹⁷ About seven years after joining Cluer's business in Bow (i.e. the length of an apprenticeship) William Dacey, in partnership with Robert Raikes, establishes the *St Ives Mercury* in 1719 and the *Northampton Mercury* in 1720.

¹⁶ Stoker, 'Another Look at the Dacey-Marshall Publications', p. 155.

¹⁷ Stoker (2014, p. 155) suggests William Dacey may have married John Cluer's sister Mary: this might explain the names of their children: William Dacey's son is named Cluer Dacey while John Cluer's son is named Dacey Cluer. Cluer Dacey went into business with his father while Dacey Cluer died in infancy. However, an earlier connection exists between the Cluers and the Diceys in the marriage of William Dacey's father, Thomas (Thomas Dacey I, c. 1650–1705) to Elizabeth Cluer (*bap.* 1671–unknown). According to Burke, Elizabeth Cluer is John Cluer's cousin. See Bernard Burke, *A Genealogical and Heraldic Dictionary of the Landed Gentry of Great Britain of Great Britain and Ireland* (London, 1862) p. 367.

William Dicey, Robert Raikes and John Cluer were in partnership with Benjamin Okell, the inventor of Bateman's Pectoral Drops, by 1726 when Cluer published an abstract of the patent for the medicine, establishing their 'sole benefit of making and vending the said medicine' (ESTC T071049). According to Griffenhagen and Bogard, bottles of Bateman's Pectoral Drops were not labelled but were sold wrapped in a broadside.¹⁸ An advertisement dated to 1728 showing Cluer's Printing Office in Bow Churchyard as an outlet for the medicine, along with Dicey's premises in Northampton and Raikes's office in Gloucester, can be seen in the British Museum collection (Fig. 7). The Diceys were also involved in the sale of a range of other proprietary medicines, including Daffy's Elixir.¹⁹

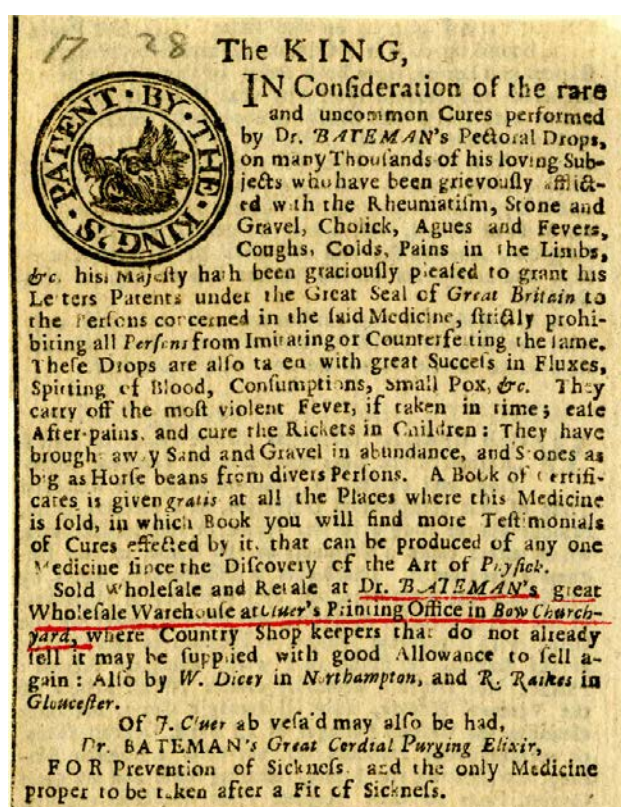


Fig. 7: Newspaper advertisement for Dr Bateman's Pectoral Drops, 1728. 'Sold wholesale and retail at Dr Bateman's great Wholesale Warehouse at Cluer's Printing Office in Bow Churchyard ... Also by W. Dicey in Northampton, and R. Raikes in Gloucester'. British Museum. Heal,83.1. © Trustees of the British Museum.

¹⁸ George B. Griffenhagen and Mary Bogard, *History of Drug Containers and Their Labels* (Madison, 1999) p. 72.

¹⁹ Richard Simmons notes in his introduction to the *Dicey-Marshall Catalogue* (online) that William Dicey's father Thomas was involved in the sale of Daffy's Elixir in the 1670s. Simmons also lists some of the other medicinal preparations sold by the Diceys. (See: "The Diceys: cheap print in the era of the eighteenth-century consumer revolution". Online. No pagination. <<http://diceyandmarshall.bodleian.ox.ac.uk/intro1.htm>>)

After John Cluer dies in 1728, his widow, Elizabeth (*bap.* 1671–1736), runs the Bow Churchyard business alone before marrying Cluers's foreman, Thomas Cobb, in 1731.²⁰ Following Elizabeth's death in 1736, 'Cobb assigned the business to his brother-in-law, William Dicey, who sent his son Cluer Dicey to take charge'.²¹ The Bow Churchyard press runs alongside the other Dicey business interests, viz. the *Northampton Mercury* and a substantial patent medicine operation.

Stoker notes the Bow Churchyard business 'is described initially as William Dicey, but after 1740 as William Dicey & Co., W. & C. Dicey, or Dicey & Co.' while from 1756 to 1763 it is 'Cluer Dicey & Co., or Dicey & Co.'.²² An example of an early William Dicey imprint can be seen in the *Prognostiations of Erra Pater* (ESTC T203418), dated c. 1735 (Fig. 8). An example of a later imprint, c. 1740, can be seen in *A New Introduction to the Art of Drawing*, 'Printed and sold by William and Cluer Dicey, Bow Church Yard' (Fig. 9).

²⁰ Elizabeth Cluer announced her continuation of the business in an advertisement dated 1728. See <<http://www.bodleian.ox.ac.uk/johnson/online-exhibitions/a-nation-of-shopkeepers/printing#gallery-item=161181>>.

²¹ Clayton, T., 'Dicey family (*per.* c.1710–c.1800)'. Oxford Dictionary of National Biography. Online edition (2011).

²² Stoker, 'Another Look at the Dicey-Marshall Publications', p. 155.

Vet A 4 L. 165 (17)
 The Memorable and Everlasting
PROGNOSTICATIONS
 OF
ERRA PATER,
 THE
 Renowned JEW of JEWRY,
 AND
 Celebrated Doctor in Physick and Astronomy.
 Containing many surprizing Predictions and Prophecies,
 remarkable Sayings, rare Receipts and Prescriptions to
 preserve Health, proper Days to bleed or purge, Rules
 to know whether the Year will be plentiful or no, as
 also the Beginnings and Ends of the Terms: With many
 more rare and remarkable Curiofities.



London: Printed by William Dicey, in Bow Church-Yard.

Fig. 8: William Dicey imprint: 'Printed by William Dicey, in Bow Church-Yard'. *The memorable and everlasting prognostications of Erra Pater, the renowned Jew of Jewry and celebrated doctor in physick and astronomy* (ESTC T203418). c. 1735. Available online: <<https://historicaltexts.jisc.ac.uk/login.library.ucs.ac.uk/eccoii-1645301300>>



Fig. 9 William and Cluer Dicey imprint: 'Printed and Sold by William and Cluer Dicey at the Printing Office in Bow-Church-Yard, London'. *A New Introduction to the Art of Drawing* (ESTC T127781) c. 1740. Available online <<https://historicaltexts.jisc.ac.uk/login.library.ucs.ac.uk/ecco-0664800200>>

The imprint used on Dicey's edition of *The Royal Passtime of Cupid*, 'Printed and sold by W. Dicey at his Printing Office at Bow Church Yard London' (Fig. 10), suggests the publication dates to before 1740 when, as Stoker notes, the Dicey imprint refers to William Dicey's son, Cluer Dicey,

directly, either in the form 'W. & C. Dicey' or 'William and Cluer Dicey' or by implication, as in:

'William Dicey & Co.'. ²³

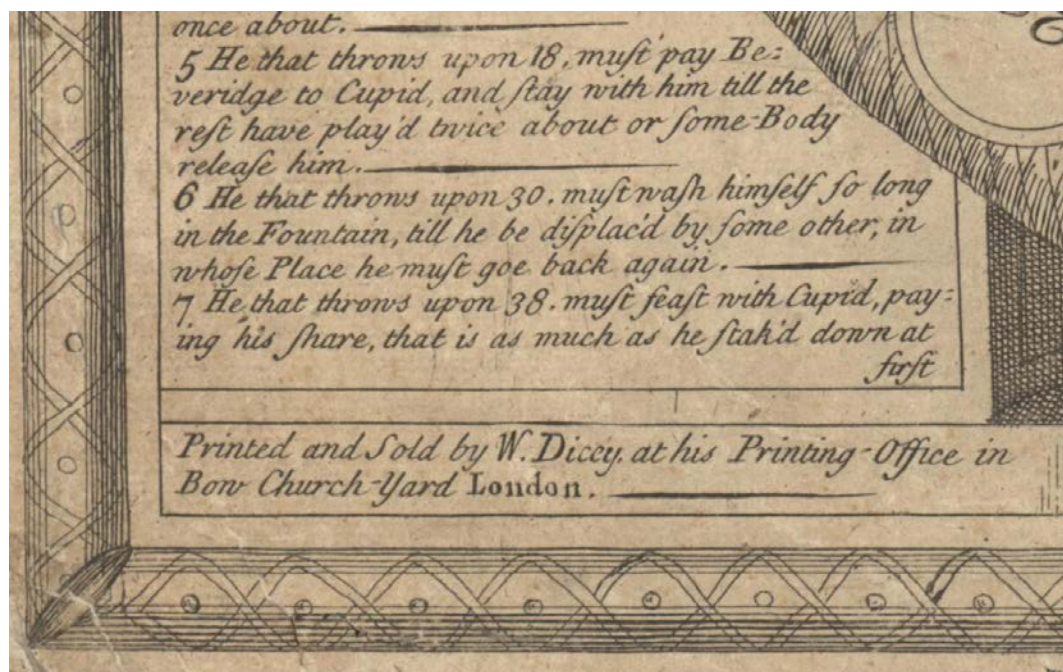


Fig. 10 William Dicey imprint: "Printed and sold by W. Dicey, at his Printing-Office Bow Church-Yard London", *The Royal Passtime of Cupid* (detail). c. 1736–1740. Digital Bodleian. Available online: <<http://digital.bodleian.ox.ac.uk/inquire/p/6ff20133-45bb-4276-a090-cc2b2851ffb>>.

The Dicey press in Bow Churchyard was augmented in 1754 by another press, very close by, in Aldermay Churchyard (located about 100 yards along Bow Lane) which was maintained by Cluer Dicey (1715–1775) and Richard Marshall (*fl.* 1763–1779). The Dicey-Marshall partnership lasted until 1770, at which point the Aldermay Churchyard concern was continued by the Marshall family.²⁴ After William Dicey's death in 1756, Cluer Dicey's son, Thomas (Thomas Dicey II, 1742–1807) took over the Northampton business. The last reference to the Bow Churchyard press being active is in 1763 when Boswell notes in his London Journal (10 June) that he visited 'the old printing office in Bow Church-yard kept by Dicey', sometime after which, Stoker notes, the premises are

²³ Stoker, 'Another Look at the Dicey-Marshall Publications', p. 157.

²⁴ Stoker (2014, p. 125) notes that Robert Sayer sued the Diceys on 27 March 1770 for breach of privilege relating to a portrait of King Christian VII of Denmark. The partnership between the Diceys and Richard Marshall also came to an end in 1770. While the two events may be unrelated, the coincidence might merit some further investigation. Stoker also refers to an earlier case against the Diceys, initiated by The Stationers' Company, in 1740 (p. 142).

used as a warehouse for the patent medicine business.²⁵ On the end of the Dicey family involvement with the London print trade, Stoker observes:

There is no evidence that Cluer Dicey, his son Thomas, or any other members of their family were involved in any form of publishing from Bow Churchyard after 1763, or from Aldermay Churchyard after 1770. Cluer's name is to be found on a few Northampton imprints between 1771 and his death on 3 October 1775, but he appears to have largely retired to his estate at Little Claybrook in Leicestershire, leaving his profitable patent medicine business under the control of Thomas. His will, drawn up on 17 September 1772, confirms that he was still on friendly terms with Richard Marshall, but no longer had any business interest in the Aldermay Press. The Dicey family did, of course, remain printers and newspaper proprietors in Northampton throughout the nineteenth century.²⁶

On this evidence, it would appear that William Dicey's *Royal Passtime of Cupid* must have been published between 1736–1770, i.e. between the date William Dicey took over the Bow Churchyard press and date Stoker notes the Diceys' involvement in the London print trade ceases. Indeed, the inclusion of the *Royal Passtime or the Game of the Snake* and the *Diverting Passtime of the Game of the Goose* in the William and Cluer Dicey trade catalogue shows that both games were available by the time the catalogue was published in 1754 (Fig. 11).

²⁵ See Stoker, 'Another Look at the Dicey-Marshall Publications', pp. 112–116.

²⁶ Stoker, 'Another Look at the Dicey-Marshall Publications', p. 116.

A CATALOGUE OF

MAPS,
PRINTS,
COPY-BOOKS,
DRAWING-BOOKS,
&c.

HISTORIES,
OLD BALLADS,
Broad-Sheet and other
PATTERNS,
GARLANDS, &c.

PRINTED and SOLD by
WILLIAM and CLUER DICEY,
At their WAREHOUSE,
Opposite the South Door of *Bow-Church* in *Bow-Church-Yard*, LONDON.



Printed in the YEAR M. DCC. LIV.

258. c. 109.

Fig. 11 William and Cluer Dicey, 1754 Trade Catalogue. Title page. (ESTC T188172). Available online: <https://historicaltexts.jisc.ac.uk/login.library.ucs.ac.uk/ecco-1013000800>

COPPER ROYALS. 17

75. The Head of our Blessed Saviour.
The Heads of the Twelve Apostles, viz.
76. *St. Peter.*
77. *St. Andrew.*
78. *St. James Major.*
79. *St. John.*
80. *St. Philip.*
81. *St. Bartholomew.*
82. *St. Matthew.*
83. *St. Thomas.*
84. *St. James Minor.*
85. *St. Judas Thadæus.*
86. *St. Simon.*
87. *St. Matthias.*

MIXED FANCIES.

88. THE Guardian and young Lovers Contest.
89. THE Lawyers Coat of Arms; with a Description of a Plaintiff and Defendant, after a seven Years Law-suit.
90. Royal Pastime, or the Game of the Snake.
91. Diverting Pastime, or the Game of the Goose.
92. The Humours of *Bartholomew Fair*.
93. The Diversions of *Southwark Fair*.
94. Lilliputian Banquet and Concert.
95. ——— Ball and Masquerade.

96. Lilli-

Fig. 12 William and Cluer Dicey, 1754 Trade Catalogue. Page 17: Mixed Fancies. (ESTC T188172). Available online: <https://historicaltexts.jisc.ac.uk/login.library.ucs.ac.uk/ecco-1013000800>.

The Dicey catalogue of 1754 is organised by theme and also by size. For example, the first section, 'Maps', begins with two-sheet maps (on two sheets of Elephant paper: an Elephant sheet is 23 x 28in (584 x 711mm)), followed by single-sheet maps and then pocket maps. After this, large prints (on two sheets of Elephant paper) are followed by sets of prints. The second section presents 'A Catalogue of Copper Royal Sheet Prints', which is to say, prints from a copper plate on a Royal sheet 20 x 25in (508 x 635mm). After the Copper Royal prints is a selection of 'Mixed fancies', which includes the *Royal Pastime, or the Game of the Snake* [sic] and the *Diverting Pastime, or the Game of the Goose*, items 90 and 91 (Fig. 12).

Stoker notes the 1754 catalogue, known only in a single example, consists of two sections. Some pages appear to be missing and some pages from a later date may have been inserted.²⁷ However, the 'Mixed fancies' section containing the games is in the first part and would appear to be unaffected by the observed flaws to the catalogue's integrity.²⁸

While the Dicey issue of *The Royal Passtime of Cupid* could have been published any time between 1736 and 1756; that is, between the date William Dicey took over the business in Bow Churchyard and his death when, as Stoker observes, the Dicey imprint changes to 'Cluer Dicey & Co' or 'Dicey & Co',²⁹ the fact that it is included in the 1756 catalogue and an early form of the William Dicey imprint is used suggest an earlier date, i.e. 1736–1740.³⁰

²⁷ Stoker, 'Another Look at the Dicey-Marshall Publications', p. 113 n. 11.

²⁸ Both Cupid and Goose games are also listed in the later 1764 Dicey-Marshall catalogue (see Simmons, online).

²⁹ Stoker, 'Another Look at the Dicey-Marshall Publications', p. 55.

³⁰ The Dicey imprint variations are discussed by Victor Neuberg, 'The Diceys and the Chapbook Trade', *The Library* xxiv, 3 (September, 1969) pp. 219–231 *passim* and by Stoker 'Another Look at the Dicey-Marshall Publications', p. 155 and p. 221 with a list appended on p. 157. William Dicey's early provincial imprints from the 1720s are discussed by Gilles Duval, 'Les Diceys et le commerce de la gravure sur feuille volante à Londres au XVIII^e siècle' ['The Diceys and the Print Trade in Eighteenth Century London'], *Revue française d'histoire du livre*, 126–127, Nouvelle série (2005–2006) pp. 177–214 at 180–182.

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