George and John Smith, partners in other Smith family banks. Indeed this was their fifth bank following the formation of Samuel Smith & Co of Nottingham; Smith, Payne & Smiths of London; Smith, Ellison & Co of Lincoln; and Samuel Smith, Bros. & Co of Hull.

The Derby business was based on the acquisition of the business of Richardson & Co (est. c.1778), bankers of Derby, owned by local merchants Samuel and Henry Richardson. The firm traded from Tenant Street and issued its own notes. It was also known as Derby Bank.

In 1814 John Henry Smith, son of George Smith, became resident partner until moving to the Hull bank in 1828. In 1824 the bank house moved to Rotten Row, premises which were enlarged and rebuilt in the late 1870s. In 1809 the balance sheet totalled £102,000 and grew to £265,000 by 1825. Customers included W, G & J Strutt, cotton spinners.

