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Library Notes

An Apparently Unrecorded Item in the Margaret I. King Library

John T. Shawcross

In Special Collections of the Margaret I. King Library, University of Kentucky, is an apparently unique copy of an otherwise unrecorded edition of a popular play of the eighteenth century: *The Fair Penitent. A Tragedy. By Nicholas Rowe, Esq.* London: Printed by T. Sabine. Produced in 1703, it seems to have been first published then as: *The Fair Penitent. A Tragedy. As It Is Acted at the New Theatre in Little Lincolns-Inn-Fields. By Her Majesty's Servants. Written by N. Rowe, Esq;* London, Printed by Jacob Tonson, 1703. (Copies of the latter are owned by the University of Arizona Library and the Folger Shakespeare Library.) There was a family of printers of the name Sabine in the middle and later eighteenth century, but listed as printer of Thomas Howard's *Roman Stories* by Donald Wing in the Short-Title Catalogue, 1640-1700 (H 3011A), is a Thomas Sabine, said to have flourished in 1700. The Howard volume is undated, and Sabine is not listed in the Stationers' Register.

D. F. McKenzie, ed., *Stationers' Company Apprentices 1701-1800* (Oxford: Oxford Bibliographical Society, 1978), N.S. Volume XIX, lists Cornelius Sabine, son of Christopher, deceased, 3 May 1748-?, p. 304, and Thomas, son of Cornelius [schoolmaster], deceased, apprenticed to Thomas Bailey (I), 3 October 1758-5 November 1765, p. 13. Thomas Sabine had a shop in 1775 in [Little] New Street, [Shoe Lane, Fleet Street], having been bound to his father and other family members, pp. 304-5. Listed also is an Edward Sabine, son of Henry, with a Fleet Street address. Apparently Thomas's sons Cornelius, James, and Thomas were apprenticed to him in the last two decades of the century.

The contemporary John Pendred had cited "Sabine, 81, Shoe-lane, Fleet-street," in "A List of the Letter-Press Printers in London, Westminster, and Southwark" in *The London and Country Printers, Booksellers and Stationers Vade Mecum* (London, 1785); see p. 4 of Graham Pollard's edition, the Bibliographical Society, supplement to Volume XIV (London, 1985). And Ian Maxted in *The London Book Trades 1775-1800* (Folkstone, Kent: Dawson, 1977), also lists the first Thomas Sabine as of 81 Shoe Lane, 1785-1825, apprenticed to Bailey in 1758, freed in the Stationers' Company in 1765, and with his living in 1780. His son Thomas, recorded as a printer in 81 Shoe Lane in 1792 and at Playhouse Yard, Blackfriars in 1796, became a partner of his father in 1799, and continued in business until 1834. (There is also a listing of the father in Ellic Howe, ed., *The London Compositor*, Bibliographical Society [London, 1947], p. 49). I do not find further printers or apprentices with this name in other indices of the seventeenth- and eighteenth-century book trade.

It seems most likely that Wing erred in including T. Sabine's printing of Howard's *Roman Stories* in his seventeenth-century Short-Title Catalogue. More likely it was produced by the older Thomas Sabine in the middle/late eighteenth century. The printing of *The Fair Penitent* found in the King Library was also probably done by Thomas Sabine the elder in the middle/late eighteenth-century. This copy of the play is a cheap edition, not particularly noteworthy for its production. No other copy is listed in the *National Union Catalogue* or the *British Library Catalogue*.