

## THE EARLY CAREER OF EDWARD RABAN, AFTERWARDS FIRST PRINTER AT ABERDEEN

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IN 1886 Mr. Edmond published his very careful and valuable book on the Aberdeen printers. As a bibliography it has always been considered a model piece of work, and its excellence has always appeared the more noteworthy to those who understood the very hampering conditions under which it was conceived and carried out.

As inevitably happens, no sooner was the book published than new and important sources of information came to light, and Mr. Edmond in 1888 contributed to *Scottish Notes and Queries* a few short articles on the later discoveries. These were afterwards reprinted in a small pamphlet entitled *Last Notes on the Aberdeen Printers*, issued in the very limited edition for private circulation of fifty-six copies.

At that time Mr. Edmond had moved from Aberdeen to London, and his time was fully occupied with his duties as a librarian at Sion College, and with outside literary work; so that, being far removed from all the original sources of information and in an entirely changed atmosphere, he seems never to have followed up the various clues which the newly discovered books afforded, or to have worked further at Raban's books. That he would have done so when opportunity offered can hardly be doubted, but unfortunately that opportunity never came. In the present paper I have made full use of his later discoveries, and from these, together with other new material, have endeavoured to build up the story of the adventurous early life of the Aberdeen printer and

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trace his career before he settled down in the North for the last thirty-seven years of his life. As a lad he had an eventful career, surpassed only by that of an Aberdeen lad and Scottish printer of the century following, Peter Williamson, who was kidnapped when playing in the street, shipped off to America, and there sold as a slave.

In 1886 all that was known about Raban was summed up in Edmond's introduction in one sentence: 'Upon the authority of the Parson of Rothiemay we are informed that Edward Raban was an English man by birth; and had we been disposed to doubt this source, the matter is at once set at rest by the imprint of one of his own books in which he styles himself Edwardus Rabanus, Anglus. Like so many more of his countrymen who followed the same profession he came North in search of a suitable field in which to exercise his craft.'

The discovery of a little book in the library of Lord Crawford at Haigh Hall threw a flood of light upon Raban's early career. It is a small octavo probably originally consisting of 72 leaves but now wanting all before C1. It is divided into three parts headed respectively, 'Raban's Resolution against Drunkenness,' 'Raban's Resolution against Whore-dome,' and 'Raban's Resolution against Sabbath-breakers.' The author under each heading begins with extracts from Bible history and profane history, and then passes to more modern examples derived from his own experiences. One from the first part is as follows:

I remember that in the year of Christ 1600, there was no small stir in England (especially in and about London) with mustering, pressing, furnishing and sending of Captains and Soldiers into Flanders to assist the estates of the Netherlands, who sent out their forces in the defence of God's quarrel and their own, under the conduct of the most worthy prince and champion, Maurice of Nassau. And at which time also it was my silly fortune to march from London with our English Cavallieroes. But I remember what merry days we had in London before we took shipping, for we made day and night all one,

with eating, drinking, playing, swearing, etc. There bankrout voluntary Gentlemen, bankrout Merchants and citizens, with runaway prentices, hail fellow, well met; he that could not quaff off a dozen pots of beer or a pottle of wine, and swear an hour together, he was not fit to go in our company. But hearken what followed hereupon: forsooth (not to dismay any good soldier) as soon as we were shipped, the common sort must bite in an hard biscuit, and content himself twice a day with a can of ship's bitter beer betwixt two and two, and afterward betwixt two a biscuit, and a can of water amongst four: yea before we landed at Philippina our brave Gallants were glad to receive the drops of rain, and such water as dropped from the ropes and sails of the ship, in their beaver hattes, to quench their thirst. And this was yet but a beginning of sorrows, for being landed we marched forwards driving the Spaniards out of this scance and that fort, till we came before Newport, and shortly after were sharply assaulted by Albertus of Austenrich, yet through the help of God we slew at least six thousand of the Spanish side, took many prisoners, and returned into Holland with victory.

Here we have an interesting picture of young Raban, doubtless one of the runaway apprentices, for as he did not die until 1658 he must have been a lad in 1600.

The war in which Raban was engaged was the long conflict between the Protestant states of the Low Countries and the rule of Spain, between William of Orange and Philip of Spain, which beginning in 1572 continued for thirty-seven years. By 1600 both William and Philip were dead and the war was being carried on by Maurice of Nassau, Prince of Orange, and the Archduke Albert. Both sides were strongly reinforced, and at the fierce battle of Nieuport, near Ostend, the Spaniards gave way. The Spaniards under Spinola continued the war vigorously, but his troops mutinied and he pronounced the subjugation of the United Provinces impracticable. Spain was forced to treat with the Dutch, and finally in 1609 a ten-years' truce was signed at the Hague.

The next piece of autobiography comes from another book printed by Raban at St. Andrews in 1622. It is entitled, *The Pope's New Years Gifts, Anno 1622. Containing a Discoverie of the Abuses of the Romane Clergie. Written first in Latine by sundrie Authors of their owne Profession: And now*

*translated into English by G. L.* It is a quarto of twenty leaves, of which the first and last are wanting, and the only known copy is in the Advocates' Library. An interesting fact about it is that the translator G. L. is almost certainly George Lauder, grandson of Sir Richard Maitland, Lord Lethington, who joined the English army, and, like Raban, himself served as a soldier in the Low Countries. In the address of 'The Printer to the Pope' the printer tells us more of himself :

But yet before I leave I must tell your Holiness what were the first occasions, even from mine Infancy, why I could not settle my fancy in your Religion. After that I had served the worthy Estates of Holland full ten years in their tedious wars, I resolved to travel farther and see fashions. Then I took my journey from Ryneberke towards Colonia Agrippina, and from thence forward to Mentz, Frankford, Worms, Frankendale, Spier, Strasburg, etc., where I found company who were bound to visit the holy City of Rome, and I resolved to go with them. But when we came to the Alps, I was constrained to turn back again with certain English gentlemen who came from Rome ; and because their guide was dead by the way they hired me, and I convoyed them through all Germany, even to Hamburg, visiting all the fair cities and the churches as we went. And when we came into a Papish Church, it was delicately decorated with fair images and burning torches and lamps at noon-dayes : but the Lutherans were nothing so brave : as for the Calvinists they durst not preach within three mile of any town. Then again I beheld the Papish priest, he ate and drank the Sacramental Bread and Wine himself alone, and gave the people nothing till all was done, and then he came and sprinkled them with water. But the Lutherans were better fellows, the priest gave every one as much as he took himself ; and the Calvinists dealed it amongst themselves.

This extract takes us farther in Raban's career. Going off as a soldier he was in the wars on the Continent for full ten years. After this he wandered about from city to city in Germany, and finally acted as courier to an English party returning in a leisurely fashion from Rome. Putting the sum of all this at twelve years, we know all his occupation between 1600 and 1612. We have still to account for the eight years between 1612 when he was on the Continent and 1620 when he appeared as a printer in Edinburgh.

This period was certainly spent on the Continent, for after Raban had come to Scotland he speaks of himself in a preface as 'a stranger to the soil', and his ignorance as to whether his uncle Peter was alive shows that he had not been in England. He had conducted his travellers as far as Hamburg; when next we meet with him he is settled in Leyden. It is not improbable, in the light of his later career, that when he ran away from London to be a soldier he was an apprentice to a printer. There is at any rate no doubt that he took up this trade during the interval between 1612 and 1620.

Writing in 1622 in his 'Resolution against Drunkenness' in the section relating to Sabbath-breakers, he gives the following instances :

It is well known to myself that within few years there was a servant man to a rich farmer in Gelder Land who built himself a cottage house upon the Sabbath days. And being married and dwelling therein, the same house on the Sabbath day was consumed with fire, himselfe burnt and his cattle smothered. His wife being in the kirk, came running with her neighbours and might well lament her husband, but no ways help him. Yea, a master whom I served in mine owne science in the fair city of Leyden had it aye for a custom to boil his printing varnish on the Sabbath days in a garden house without the city; till at last his house took fire, and burnt the house, himself, and his only daughter. He being a rich man died thus miserable leaving none issue to inherit his trash.

With this curious piece of information about the fate that befell his master I had hopes that we might be able to discover the identity of that printer, that in some history or amongst the records there might be an entry relating to so tragic a disaster, but so far I have not been able to obtain any information upon that point.

I wrote to one reputed authority in Leyden asking if anything was known of a rich printer who died childless between 1610 and 1620, and I received a post-card with the information that only one Leyden printer died during that period and he left a family. As I had definite records of at least a dozen Leyden printers who died during that period I could not

consider the reply to my query satisfactory, and I still look forward to obtaining from some source or other a full identification of the man. In those leisurely days any untoward event became a nine days' wonder, especially when, as in the present case, it was to be considered as a 'judgment', and would probably occasion a ballad or broadsheet, or find its way into local chronicles or sermons.

The eight years between 1612 and 1620 are now partly accounted for. Raban was working as an assistant to a Leyden printer who died during the period, and he was thus left stranded. Now, as an Englishman, it is quite reasonable to suppose that he would seek work with one of the Leyden printers to whom his knowledge of the language would be valuable. There were several printers who issued English books: Jan Claez van Dorpe (1596-1648), Hendrik van Haestens (1598-1629), Jacob Marcus (1609-54), Jan Paedts Jacobsz (1569-1629), and others. But of all such presses then at work in Leyden one stands out of peculiar interest, and I think there can be little doubt that it was there that Raban was employed, the celebrated 'Pilgrim Press' carried on between 1617 and 1619 by William Brewster and Thomas Brewer.

William Brewster was educated at Peterhouse, Cambridge, and later entered the service of William Davison whom he accompanied on an embassy to the Low Countries in 1585-7. From 1594-1607 he was 'postmaster' at Scrooby, but becoming involved in the separatist movement was compelled to fly to the Continent. He and his followers settled first at Amsterdam, but passed on soon to Leyden, and there as a means of support started a printing press assisted with money by Thomas Brewer, a wealthy sympathizer. About 1616 Brewster purchased his press, type, and other material and set to work. In 1617 two books were issued, Thomas Cartwright's *Commentarii in Proverbia Salomonis* and William

Ames's *Rescriptio contracta*. Both these books were non-controversial, and contain imprints with Brewster's name and address. After this all the publications of the press were issued anonymously. When inquiries were set on foot about the press two other works were openly avowed by Brewster: *De vera et genuina Jesu Christi religione*, and Thomas Cartwright's *Confutation of the Rhemish translation*, a bulky folio. These were both issued in 1618 and, like the two earlier, were non-contentious as regards the British Government. These four books, and two others to be mentioned shortly, which at the examination certain experienced printers' affirmed from an examination of the type to have been printed by Brewster, are all that can with certainty be ascribed to his press. There are, however, beyond these a number, some dozen or so, of controversial and Brownists' tracts of 1618 and 1619 which may come from this press. These, however, still await a careful typographical examination before the question can be settled.

The two books with which we are most concerned were issued in 1619. They relate to the affairs of the Church in Scotland, and their publication resulted in the suppression of the Pilgrim Press. Both were the work of David Calderwood the celebrated Presbyterian apologist. The first, the *Perth Assembly*, was an attack on King James's violent attempt to force Episcopacy upon the Scottish nation at the General Assembly which sat at Perth in August 1618. Calderwood was at this time hiding in Scotland, generally at Cranstoun. Having written his attack on prelacy it was sent over to Holland to be printed, and the printed copies were smuggled back into Scotland, packed in vats, as early as April 1619. Its publication caused a great stir, and in June the Edinburgh bookseller James Cathkin was apprehended on suspicion of being concerned in its publication and was examined by no less a person than the King himself. He was able to prove

that he had no hand in the matter, and after a short imprisonment was set at liberty.

Meanwhile Sir Dudley Carleton, British Ambassador in Holland, had been inquiring into the matter and wrote from The Hague in July 1619: 'I have seen within these two days ' a certain Scottish book called Perth Assembly written with ' much scorn and reproach of the proceedings in that Kingdom ' concerning the affairs of the Church. It is without name ' either of author or printer, but I am informed it is printed ' by a certain English Brownist of Leyden, as are most of the ' Puritan books sent over of late days into England.' The other book by Calderwood was the *De regimine Ecclesiae Scoticanæ brevis Relatio*. Concerning it Sir Dudley Carleton wrote to Sir Robert Naunton apropos of Brewer's examination: 'Amongst the books touching which I have caused ' him to be examined, I have inserted some, as that "Ames ' "in Grevincovium", which as he cannot deny, so he may, ' and doth, confess it without difficulty: but by that ' character [i. e. type] he is condemned of the rest. And ' certain experienced printers, which have viewed the letters ' [i. e. type], affirm that all and every one of the books with ' which he is charged, particularly those "De regimine ' "Ecclesiae Scoticanæ" and "Perth Assembly" were printed ' with them.'

As these two books are so intimately associated with Scottish history, and of such interest, I quote another letter about them in full. I may add for those who wish to follow farther, that much of this correspondence is reprinted in Arber's *Story of the Pilgrim Fathers*:

Sir Dudley Carleton to Sir Robert Naunton.

Right Honourable. By letters of 14th and 17th of this present, by Marten the post, of which I sent the duplicates by my Lord Lisle, the 18th; I advertised your Honour of all we had here worth his Majesty's knowledge.

And, withal, I sent your Honour a book intituled 'Perth Assembly'; of which, finding many copies dispersed at Leyden, and from thence some sent

into England, I had reason to suspect it was printed in that town, but upon more particular enquiry, do rest somewhat doubtful.

Yet in search after that book I believe I have discovered the printer of another, 'De regimine Ecclesiae Scoticanæ,' which His Majesty was informed to be done in Middelburg; and that is one William Brewster, a Brownist, who hath been for some years, an inhabitant and printer at Leyden, but is now, within these three weeks, removed from thence, and gone back to dwell in London, where he may be found out and examined not only of this book, 'De regimine Ecclesiae Scoticanæ' but likewise 'Perth Assembly'; of which if he was not the printer himself, he assuredly knows both the printer and the author.

For, as I am informed, he hath had, whilst he remained here, his hand in all such books as have been sent over into England and Scotland. As particularly a book in folio intituled 'A confutation of the Rhemists' Translation, Glosses, and Annotations on the New Testament;' anno 1618 was printed by him.

So was another in 160 'De vera et genuina Jesu Christi Domini et Salvatoris nostri Religione'; of which I send your Honour herewith the Title Page. And if you will compare that which is underlined therein with the other, 'De regimine ecclesiae Scoticanæ,' of which I send your Honour the Title-page likewise; you will find it in the same character. And the one being confessed, as that 'De vera et genuina Jesu Christi Religione', Brewster doth openly avow; the other cannot well be denied. This I thought fit, for his Majesty's service to advertise your Honour.

From the Hague, this 22nd of July 1619.

Sir Dudley Carleton having satisfied himself that Brewster was the printer immediately called on the authorities of Leyden to suppress his work, and in September 1619 they took the required action. A warrant was issued by the University under which Brewster's type and books were seized. Soon after this Brewster with many of his associates sailed to America. With the closing of the printing office, Raban, supposing him to have been an assistant, would have found himself out of work. The people with whom he had been associated had become unpopular and had mostly migrated to America. The hue and cry after the Brownists and all connected with them made England an undesirable place of refuge. There remained Scotland where Calderwood was popular, and it was perhaps through his advice, for he was at the time himself a refugee in Holland, that Raban started

to seek his fortune in Scotland as a printer. But apart from all this theorizing, plausible and probable as it appears, we come now to the strongest argument and one founded on fact, namely: much of the material used by Raban in his earliest Scottish books is identical with that used by Brewster at Leyden. A very short examination of books from the two presses will show that many of the ornaments and initials are the same, while some of the initials of both are marked by the same blemishes.

In September 1619 a certain quantity of type was seized which had been hidden in a garret at Brewer's house, and this was transferred for safe keeping to the University of which Brewer was a member, and which could protect his goods. How much of the type was here we do not know, but it appears to have been in the custody of the University until May 1620. What Raban possessed was not the type, but the initials and ornaments.

One point which specially wants inquiring into by some one with access to the original books is the resemblance or otherwise between Raban's work and that of the Pilgrim Press in matters of small detail. Method of using signatures, catch-words, numerals, and such minutiae should be compared, for once a printer has acquired small habits he generally quite unthinkingly and unintentionally continues them. On the other hand, a man who had been merely an assistant and obliged to follow the methods of his master, might follow out his own ideas on becoming his own master.

About Raban's earliest books there is still much to be learned, and two at least require more detailed examination. These are the second and fourth quoted by Edmond, with the following titles:

*Viri Clarissimi A. Melvini Musae, et P. Adamsoni vita at Palinodia, et Celsae commissionis ceu delegatae potestatis Regiae in causis ecclesiasticis brevis et aperta descriptio. Anno M.DC.XX.*

The second is

*Parasynagma Perthense et juramentum Ecclesiae Scoticanæ et A.M. Antitamicamcategoria. Anno M.DC.XX.*

Both of these are ascribed to the St. Andrews' press on account of their type. It would be, however, a strange thing for the 'Printer to the University' to issue two books by authors especially obnoxious to the 'Ruling powers'. The second book was a particularly dangerous one, consisting of another version of Calderwood's *Perth Assembly*, whose first publication brought about the suppression of Brewster's press and a hue and cry throughout Scotland, while the piece issued with it, Melville's *Anti-Tami-Cami-Categoria* (first published in 1604) was a violent attack on the universities of Oxford and Cambridge for passing resolutions hostile to the Puritans at the beginning of James I's reign.

The other Latin book of 1620 which has a full colophon with place and printer is the *Paraenesis ad Scotos* of Daniel Tilenus, a work deprecating the changes in the Presbyterian Church and attacking Calderwood and his followers. This last work so pleased King James that he invited the author to settle in England. Now it is difficult to imagine that a printer should issue from a university press books which were rigorously suppressed, the work of men who were living abroad for safety. As a new arrival in a new country it seems improbable that Raban would at once endanger his position by such a risky undertaking. It would certainly appear safer to leave the matter of the printer and place of production of these books an open question until they have undergone a very searching examination.

At St. Andrews Raban continued for about two years issuing some dozen books, but some time before July 1622 he had moved his press to Aberdeen. The reason for the migration we do not know, but it may have been at the instigation of Dr. Baron or Bishop Forbes. By the end of 1622 he was

settled at the 'Town's Arms', the accredited printer to the city and the university.

Having traced as far as possible Raban's personal history up to the time of his settling in Aberdeen, we may turn to another part of the subject and inquire about his family history.

All that Edmond remarked was, 'Upon the authority of 'the parson of Rothiemay we are informed that Edward Raban was an Englishman, and had we been disposed to doubt this source the matter is at once set at rest by the imprint of one of his own books in which he styles himself Edwardus Rabanus, Anglus'. So far so good, but unfortunately at the time Edmond did not know that in another book the printer signs himself, 'Edwardus Rabanus, Anglo Britannus, Gente Germanus,' which puts the matter in an entirely different light. The later expression puts it beyond all doubt that Raban was born in England of German parents.

The only relative that he mentions in any of his scraps of personal history is an uncle whom he somewhat undutifully admonishes in his *Resolution against Drunkenness*: 'Yet because my father's brother Peter Raban is a parson at Melton mobre in Wooster-shyre of England, I will be bold with him (if hee be yet alive) even to put him in remembrance of the doctrine of St. Paul who was the very pattern of chaste and zealous priesthood.' As the vicar of Melton Mowbray, which by the way is in Leicestershire, from 1613 to 1659 was the Rev. Zachary Cawdrey, we may presume, if Raban's assertion is correct, that his uncle had long been dead.

Another note of Raban's refers to his German ancestry. It occurs in his Almanack for 1625, of which Edmond had apparently never seen a copy :

Kings and princes shall be at stryfe with the Church : and the Kings shall prevayle. But if our jocund Papists get anie disturbance, they are not the

Church that is meant here. As for my boldnesse in but touching the Beast, I crave pardon in two respects: First, because this was written in the yeare of their Jubilie; for it is sayde that then they deale out mountains of mercie. (But if their mercie bee for money, I am to seeke.) Secondlie I crave my pardon even for Pope Joanna her Holines sake, in respect she was my native country woman, and was delivered of a goodlie childe in the streetes of Rome, going on procession.

Now according to all early historians, Pope Joan was a native of Mainz, and though we can hardly strain the point so far as to consider Raban intended to convey that he came from that city, he certainly meant that he was of German origin.

If we may consider Raban's choice of printing as a profession as due in any way to family tradition, we have at any rate some reason for connecting him with the great German family of printers and booksellers of the same name, the Rabans who worked in Frankfurt, Herborn, Wittenberg, and Helmstadt.

Nothing, as you are aware, is more difficult to obtain than information about continental printers of the second half of the sixteenth and first half of the seventeenth centuries, so that my information about the German Rabans is necessarily very incomplete. The first member of the family was George, who was printing at Frankfurt as early as 1561 and worked there at any rate until 1578. He was associated with the brothers Sigismund and John Feyrabend, who issued a number of handsome books illustrated by the best German wood-engravers. From 1582 to 1585 we find the office owned by Christopher Raban, who moved in 1587 to Herborn, where he set up its first press. In 1591 Bechtold Raban was printing at Frankfurt, but from 1603 to 1614 he was established as a bookseller in Wittenberg, and a book dated 1616 was published there by his heirs. The last of the name is Zacharias, who was at Helmstadt in 1620 and 1622. It should be noticed that these German Rabans, who generally spelt their name with an 'e' (Raben), also frequently in Latin colophons translated it into Corvinus (= German 'Raben', English 'Raven').

Our printer was not directly connected with them in any way, and had no typographical relations with them. They were all distinctly German, while Raban's printing material originated in Holland.

Edmond's attempt to discover anything about Raban's family and connexions through the columns of *Notes and Queries* produced only one reply, that 'there was a family of the name of Raban, booksellers at Olney, in Buckinghamshire sixty or eighty years since'. He added: 'I have been unable to follow up this information with inquiries on the spot which possibly might disclose a connection between the Olney Rabans and our "Laird of Letters", or, more probably, would be fruitless, for the surname is not of such uncommon occurrence as I at one time supposed.'

Knowing that Raban's parents or grandparents had come over from Germany to England, we have still to find out where they were settled. Our only clue at present is the assertion by Raban that his uncle, Peter Raban, was parson of Melton Mowbray. There is no trace of any one of that name having been a rector of Melton Mowbray, but it was a very large parish with four smaller churches attached, and Peter Raban may have been curate to one of these. One point to be noticed is that the name Raven is found frequently in the near neighbourhood between 1560 and 1640, some even in Melton Mowbray parish itself. I have found one person named Raban, a Deborah Raban whose will was proved at the Lichfield court (under which Melton Mowbray would come) in 1634, and a Richard Raben in 1569.

In Nichol's *History of Leicestershire* several monumental inscriptions are given of persons named Raven living in and around Melton Mowbray, one of them being a churchwarden there in the early years of the seventeenth century. In the Lists of Denizations published by the Huguenot Society there is no trace of any one who could be connected with the

family, but many of the foreigners who migrated to this country never took out letters of denization at all, especially those who settled in country districts.

There is another source of information, unfortunately not yet fully available, from which we might doubtless derive many new facts. This is the immense mass of records relating to the various subsidies levied at different times on the inhabitants of England. For taking a subsidy, full lists of the inhabitants of the various counties and towns were taken, and opposite each person the value of their property was given and the amount due as tax. Foreigners had to pay a double tax, so that even if no other information were forthcoming, this serves to identify those of foreign birth. In many cases, however, especially in the later subsidy lists, many details were given, the man's wife and family were enumerated and particulars given as to where he came from and how long he had been in the country. Lists of the aliens living in London from the time of Henry VIII to James I have been extracted from the various London rolls, and published by the Huguenot Society, but we find no Rabans in this list, making it almost certain that they lived in the country.

It is satisfactory to know that there are still some sources unworked from which we may expect to obtain definite information, subsidy rolls, wills, and parish registers, many of which are gradually appearing in print.

We have now been able to trace in fairly accurate outline the main points of Raban's career. As a lad he ran away and joined the army, presumably about the age of twenty, and served for the ten succeeding years in the Low Countries. Then after a year or two of wandering he settled down as a printer in Leyden. In 1619 the breaking up of the printing office compelled him to seek work elsewhere. That he should have gone to Scotland, to him an unknown land, rather than to England, his

own country and where he presumably had relatives, points to some strong motive for its avoidance; and his implication in the publication of prohibited books once granted, the reason is not far to seek. After a short stay in Edinburgh in 1620 he moved on the same year to St. Andrews, and two years later settled permanently in Aberdeen. We may take his age at that time to have been a little over forty.

Forty years bring discretion, and we find Raban avoiding controversial books. In place of tracts by the virulent Presbyterians Melville and Calderwood, he prints books by Daniel Tilenus their milder opponent, but he soon discarded books of this class, and confined himself to the more orthodox business of printing notices and school-books for the Town Council, theses for the University authorities, sermons and theological discourses for the divines, and almanacs and lighter pieces for Melvill, the bookseller. Raban's first wife Janet Johnston died in 1627. By 1637 he was married again to Janet Ailhous, who appears to have survived him, but of his private life we at present know very little and that little only accidentally. In the preface to his peculiar compilation published in 1638, and entitled 'The Glorie of Man, consisting 'in the Excellencie and Perfection of Woman', he speaks of having been on the Continent during the latter part of 1637 and beginning of 1638, but with this exception he appears to have passed his life more or less peaceably at Aberdeen. In 1639 he and his wife were punished for brawling with some neighbours, and in the year following he was brought before the General Assembly on the charge of altering and abridging the prayers in his edition of the Book of Common Order. He was, however, pardoned and dismissed with a caution. Between 1640 and 1642 he appears to have got into difficulties. During these three years he issued only four books, and in 1641 was brought up at the Town House on account of a debt of sixty pounds 'Scots'.

The death, early in 1643, of his friend and constant employer, David Melvill the bookseller, must have been a severe blow to Raban, and for the remaining years of his life his productions decreased rapidly in number. During these fifteen years he only printed some twenty books, in fact at the end of 1649 he gave up his office, and in January 1650 the town appointed James Brown as his successor. Raban must even then have been an old man, but he lived on for another nine years, dying at the end of 1658, and on 6 December he was buried in St. Nicholas Churchyard, at the 'West Dyke'.

Whether Raban left any family is not known. Perhaps new discoveries may throw light on this and many other points. But there is one person of his name that is certainly deserving of mention, the Edward Raban who printed in France in the second half of the seventeenth century.

In 1656, two years before the Aberdeen printer's death, a little octavo book of twenty-four pages entitled *Les Antiquitez de la ville et cité d'Orange* was issued at Orange. In the Council book of that city under the date 30 January 1656 is a note setting forth that the Council has granted the sum of 36 livres to the Sieur Raban, printer of that town, as a recompense for a little book which he has printed about the antiquities of the said town, and which he has dedicated to the members of the town council, and has also presented certain copies to be deposited in the archives and given one to each town councillor.

Beyond this book I have so far found no mention of any other by this printer. He printed two editions of it at Nîmes in 1660 and 1662, and returning to Orange issued other editions in 1673, 1674, 1676, 1678, and 1681.

The British Museum has copies of three editions, the first, published at Orange in 1656, one published at Nîmes in 1660, and the third at Orange again in 1673.

Brunet in his description of the first edition enters it under

'Raban (Édouard) Ecossais', and I have always been anxious to know whether he derived 'Ecossais' from the title of the book or added it himself under the impression that this printer was identical with the Aberdeen one. The British Museum copy of this first edition unfortunately wants the title, so that we are still left in doubt. There is, however, no reference to 'Ecossais' either in the dedication or in any other part of the book, nor is it upon the title-page of the later editions. On the whole, therefore, it seems probable that it is an addition by Brunet, though he makes no mention of printing in Aberdeen which one would have expected.

The Christian name Edward was at that time a very uncommon one on the Continent, though common in England. Altogether it looks as though this printer might have some connexion with his namesake. There appears to have been a French family of Raban, for I possess a book with the autograph inscription 'Ex libris Petri Raban Veromandui, acolythi suessionensis', showing that this Peter Raban then resident at Soissons was a native of St. Quentin on the Somme.