

American Bibliographical Notes

WILLIAM PETER VAN NESS AS *Aristides*

An Examination of the Various Charges Exhibited against Aaron Burr, Esq. Vice-President of the United States: . . . by Aristides [William Peter Van Ness, 1778-1826] is entered as Shaw and Shoemaker 5491-93 and 7646-50. These entries can be corrected and supplemented in various respects.

Shaw 5491 is the first impression and collates [A]²B-P⁴Q²; (5), 6-118, (2) pp. It is the only impression of this unrestrained and corrosive political attack which carries the name of the publishers. As it was, the publishers, Ward and Gould, were sued for libel and had to respond in damages or with humble apologies in a number of cases. P. [119] contains two lines of errata. A copy is located at the American Antiquarian Society.

Shaw 5492 has two impressions, both Philadelphia, 1803, which may be seen at the New York Public Library. The first gathering has been reset. In one impression, p. 4 begins 'ready' and in the other it begins 'terest.' The text is substantially the same as the first edition except that on p. 71 there are two new paragraphs which do not appear in other impressions. It collates [A]-K⁴; (3), 4-77, (3) pp. The 'ready' impression is at AAS.

Shaw 5493 is in error. It transcribes in part the half-title of Shaw 7650 (1804).

Shaw 7646-49. *An Examination. . . . a New Edition, Revised and Corrected, with Additions . . .* was published early in 1804, possibly by George F. Hopkins and probably in New

York City. The collation is [A]²B-P⁴Q²; (5), 2-116 pp. The last line of the title quotation omits 'and crimes.' P. 89, line 14 has 'Ewd' for 'Edw.' One of two errata is corrected. There are one or more changes on almost every page. Deletions total about eight pages and additions about the same. The work discusses James Cheetham's *A Reply to Aristides . . .*, which is dated January 21, 1804. Shaw 7647-49 are apparently ghosts. New York Public Library does not have a copy of the supposed Philadelphia impression of 1804, Shaw 7649.

Shaw 7650. The half-title of this 'Virginia edition' is transcribed in the fine print of Paul Leicester Ford, *Bibliotheca Hamiltoniana*, entry 91 (it is not 'reprinted', however, as there stated) and in Sabin 98530. The collation is [A]-C³D⁶; (5), 6-41, (1), 43-59, (1) pp. P. 10, line 12 has 'Hiterto'; p. 21, eighth last, has 'Odgen' for 'Ogden.' The work follows the original to p. 10, then omits about five-eighths of the original, and then continues but omits the final paragraphs. Pp. 35 and 36 have inapplicable page references found at p. 69 of the original. The appendix, pp. [42]-59, which is an attack on Alexander Hamilton, is also ascribed to Van Ness. It was also separately printed as described in Sabin 98530, Shaw 5718, in 20 pp., 1804.

A 'cheap' edition, and probably the first 1804 impression, is: *An Examination of the Various Charges Exhibited against Aaron Burr, Esq. Vice-President of the United States, and a Development of the Characters and Views of his Political Opponents. By Aristides* |[4 lines quoted] |*Cheap Edition* | |*Published February . . . 1804* | |*Price 31 Cents*. The collation is [A]-G⁴; (3), 4-56 pp. Contents: title, blank; *An Examination*, &c. [3]-56; 'Finis,' p. 56. A paragraph check shows the text the same as the first edition, with the errata corrected. It appears to be pirated since it was published about the time of the official 'New Edition.' This impression is not recorded in the standard bibliographies.

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