

Imprint No.: **1803.019**

Short Title: **Essays on the Liberty of the Press by George Hay.**

Author: Hay, George (1765-1830).

Title: An Essay on the Liberty of the Press.

Place Issued: Richmond

Issuing Press: Samuel Pleasants

Description: 30 pgs. + 48 pgs.; 22 cm. (8vo).

Notes: Two part imprint, each paginated separately with a different title page; the two parts were apparently available as individual titles, though most surviving copies are bound together with each other; Shaw & Shoemaker recorded each part independently (nos. 4353 & 4354).

Part I (#4353) carries a title page stating: "An essay on the liberty of the press. Respectfully inscribed to the republican printers throughout the United States. By Hortensius." This essay was published originally in William Duane's *Philadelphia Aurora* in February 1799 in response to the Sedition Act of 1798; that essay and its introduction are both dated January 1799.

Part II (#4354) carries a title page stating: "An essay on the liberty of the press, shewing, that the requisition of security for good behaviour from libellers, is perfectly compatible with the constitution and laws of Virginia. By George Hay." This was a new work, with an Introduction dated December 26, 1802 [II: 3-5] and the essay dated August 1803 [II: 6-48].

Copy filmed by the Early American Imprints Series contains both elements under Shaw & Shoemaker no. 4353, with no images supplied for Shaw & Shoemaker no. 4354.

By 1803, Hay was a prominent Richmond lawyer and a key figure in the central committee of the state's Republican party; he had served as James T. Callender's defense attorney at the writer's seditious libel trial in 1800; yet by December 1802, he had been abused in print by the now apostate Callender so frequently that he bludgeoned his old client in a Richmond street with his cane; the introduction to the second essay was written during the ensuing week, though the essay itself was not published until after Callender drowned in July 1803, even as its title clearly shows that Hay was commenting on polemicists such as Callender.

IVP Associated Names: Samuel Pleasants (331)

Bibliographic Notations

Early American Imprints? Y Series: 2 Title No.: 4353

Evans, <i>American Bibliography</i> :	---	Norona/Shetler, <i>West Virginia</i> :	---
Bristol, <i>Supplement to Evans</i> :	---	Swem, <i>Bibliography of Virginia</i> :	---
Shipton/Mooney, <i>Imprints thru 1800</i> :	---		---
Shaw/Shoemaker, <i>Checklist...1801-19</i> :	4353		---

Shoemaker, <i>Checklist...1820-29</i> :	---		---
Hummel, <i>Southeastern Broadsides</i> :	---	Hummel, <i>Virginia Broadsides</i> :	---
