



Barry Lawrence Ruderman Antique Maps Inc.

7407 La Jolla Boulevard
La Jolla, CA 92037

www.raremaps.com

(858) 551-8500
blr@raremaps.com

Mapa de los Estados Unidos de Mejico, Segun lo organizado y definido por las varias actas del Congreso de dicha Republica y construido por las mejores autoridades . . . 1847

Stock#: 55814
Map Maker:

Date: 1877
Place: Mexico, D.F.
Color: Uncolored
Condition: VG
Size: 24.5 x 16 inches

Price: SOLD



Description:

Rare Mexican Copy of the Treaty Portion of Disturnell's Map of Mexico

A full scale copy of the relevant portion of John Disturnell's map of Texas, Upper California, and Mexico, illustrating the section of the map which was described in the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo.

Published in Mexico City in 1877, the map would seem to have been printed be printed as a pre-cursor to the boundary disputes which would be addressed in the boundary treaty between Mexico and the United States in 1884.

Printed on verso in Spanish and English:

On the verso of the map appears the following partial legend:

El mapa original, anexo al tratado, y del cual se ha copiado la parte que este comprende, tiene una hoja adjunta, en la cual se lee lo siguiente:

. . . This is the map, referred to in the fifth article of the Treaty of Peace, Friendship, Limits and (sic) Settlements, between the United States of America and the Mexican Republic, signed this day.

Witness our hands and seals at Guadalupe Hidalgo, this second day of February, one thousand



Barry Lawrence Ruderman Antique Maps Inc.

7407 La Jolla Boulevard
La Jolla, CA 92037

www.raremaps.com

(858) 551-8500
blr@raremaps.com

Mapa de los Estados Unidos de Mejico, Segun lo organizado y definido por las varias actas del Congreso de dicha Republica y construido por las mejores autoridades . . . 1847

eight hundred and forty-eight.

N.P. Trist, Bernardo Couto, Miguel Atristain, Luis Cuevas.

Secretaria de Relaciones Exteriores. Mexico. Setiembre 12 de 1877. Jose Fernandez, oficial mayor.

"This is the map, referred to in the fifth article of the Treaty of Peace, Friendship, Limits and Settlement, between the United States of America and the Mexican Republic, signed this day. Witness our hands and seals at Guadalupe Hidalgo, this second day of February, one thousand eight hundred and forty-eight." With additional printed identification that this is a copy of the original issued by Jose Fernandez, and dated September 12, 1877.

Jose Fernandez was, in February 1877 a Senior Official at the Mexican Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

The Mexican-American War and its aftermath

The road to conflict for the United States and Mexico started a decade before the formal outbreak of war. In 1836, Texas won its independence from Mexico. Although they appealed to the United States for annexation, some in the US government balked at Texas' inclusion as it would tip the balance between slave and free states. In addition, Mexico threatened war if the US moved to annex the Republic.

This changed when James K. Polk, a dedicated expansionist, was elected President in the election of 1844. Polk annexed Texas and offered to buy the territory that is now the Southwestern US. Mexico refused. In response, Polk ordered troops south of the Nueces River, which was recognized as part of the Mexican state of Coahuila. On April 25, 1846, the Mexican cavalry attacked the US soldiers, who were under the command of Zachary Taylor. Several skirmishes followed. On May 13, Congress declared war; the United States was involved in its first war fought mainly on foreign soil.

Although Mexico valued the lands north of the Rio Grande River, they were sparsely populated. The US Army easily overran the area while Taylor and his men pushed into the Mexican heartland. Desperate, the Mexican government recalled the disgraced General Antonio Lopez de Santa Anna from exile in Cuba. Santa Anna had been in touch with Polk and promised the President to end the war on favorable terms to the US. Somewhat predictably, Santa Anna went back on his word as soon as he was on Mexican soil.



Barry Lawrence Ruderman Antique Maps Inc.

7407 La Jolla Boulevard
La Jolla, CA 92037

www.raremaps.com

(858) 551-8500
blr@raremaps.com

Mapa de los Estados Unidos de Mejico, Segun lo organizado y definido por las varias actas del Congreso de dicha Republica y construido por las mejores autoridades . . . 1847

Installed as head of the Mexican Army, Santa Anna also assumed the Mexican presidency in March 1847. However, the Mexican forces were being pushed back. General Winfield Scott took Veracruz, the most important port city in Mexico, and advanced toward Mexico City. Following the path of Hernan Cortes three centuries before, Scott marched from the sea to the capital city. It fell in September 1847.

With the US Army on the streets of the capital, the war was over. Santa Anna resigned, forcing a new government to form and to negotiate the terms of a peace treaty. On February 2, 1848, the parties signed the Treaty of Peace, Friendship, Limits, and Settlement, better known as the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo. The Rio Grande, not the Nueces River, marked the new boundary between the countries and it was decided based on scrutiny of the Disturnell Map. Mexico finally had to recognize the loss of Texas and agreed to sell a huge swath of territory-the modern states of California, New Mexico, Arizona, and parts of Nevada, Utah, Wyoming, and Colorado-for a paltry 15 million dollars.

The Disturnell Map and its effect on American and Mexican cartography

The war had been followed closely by the American public in periodicals. Seeing an opportunity, John Disturnell (1801-1877), released this map of the United States of Mexico. Disturnell was a New York City-based publisher best known for his prolific output of geographic materials, particularly guidebooks, gazetteers, and maps. His guidebooks for travelers were based on his own travels in the US and the American West. In addition to his book dealing, he was also librarian of the Cooper Union Library.

The United States of Mexico map was an instant success, with seven issues in 1847 alone. The first of these (the seventh edition) had only two inset maps in the Gulf of Mexico, while later issues, like this example, had four. This seventh edition of the map came to be known as the Treaty Map, as it was brought to the negotiations by US negotiator Nicholas Trist.

Based as it was on maps two decades old and portraying an area little explored or surveyed, the Disturnell map had many and considerable errors which would have profound ramifications for the peace process and for ensuring relations between Mexico and the United States. For example, the negotiators decided that the border would run along the Rio Grande River and then depart west overland from a point eight miles north of Paso (now Ciudad Juarez). The problem was that the Disturnell map, placed Paso 42 miles north of its true position. In reality, it was two degrees farther west and thirty minutes farther south than shown on the map. Another agreement, the Bartlett-Garcia Conde Compromise, was completed to clarify the start position of the border.

Recognizing the limits of the existing cartography, the Treaty called for the creation of a "boundary line



Barry Lawrence Ruderman Antique Maps Inc.

7407 La Jolla Boulevard
La Jolla, CA 92037

www.raremaps.com

(858) 551-8500
blr@raremaps.com

Mapa de los Estados Unidos de Mejico, Segun lo organizado y definido por las varias actas del Congreso de dicha Republica y construido por las mejores autoridades . . . 1847

with due precision, upon authoritative maps, and to establish upon the ground landmarks which shall show the limits of both republics" (as quoted in Dear, para. 9). After the war, both the Mexicans and Americans sought to better survey and establish the border. They each created four separate boundary commissions; the first three to survey the 2,000 mile border and the fourth convened jointly to map the border in 1856-7. The surveying alone took six years, from 1849 to 1855.

During the surveying, the two governments continued to negotiate the border's route. Both were unhappy with the Bartlett-Garcia Conde Line and the US wanted a clearer passage for a southern transcontinental railroad route, i.e. they wanted land south of the border-defining Gila River. These talks concluded in the Gadsden Treaty, or Gadsden Purchase of 1853 (known as the Tratado de la Mesilla in Mexico), which transferred an additional 29,670 square miles to the United States in return for 10 million dollars and clarified the start point for a second time. Both the lines for the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo and the Gadsden Purchase are marked on this copy, indicating an interested owner who followed the border surveys closely.

In Mexico, the dependence on the Disturnell map due to a lack of accurate Mexican-created maps was a source of shame. Mexican geographer Antonio Garcia Cubas characterized the Mexican cartography at the time as, "a girl, deformed and wasted away" (as translated by Carrera, 46). However, the engineers of the Mexican boundary commission executed their work with skill and the later nineteenth-century became a Renaissance for Mexican mapping. The Disturnell map was a catalyst for this innovation.

The Treaty of 1884

The Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo, which ended the war in 1848, provided that the boundary line between the two countries would follow the middle or deepest channel of the Rio Grande. The treaty, however, failed to end the controversy. Seasonal fluctuations in the volume of water carried by the Rio Grande caused erosion of the riverbanks as well as sudden changes in the channel. Major flooding could produce, destroy, or modify islands.

Under international practice, if gradual changes occurred in riverbanks through erosion or accretion, then the boundary would follow the new river channel. In the event of a sudden change, however, the boundary would not change but would run along the line of the old riverbed. A joint survey by the United States and Mexico in the 1850s had assigned the various islands in the Rio Grande to one or the other country. Islands north of the main channel belonged to the United States, and those south of it were under Mexican jurisdiction.



Barry Lawrence Ruderman Antique Maps Inc.

7407 La Jolla Boulevard
La Jolla, CA 92037

www.raremaps.com

(858) 551-8500
blr@raremaps.com

Mapa de los Estados Unidos de Mejico, Segun lo organizado y definido por las varias actas del Congreso de dicha Republica y construido por las mejores autoridades . . . 1847

Although the United States and Mexico agreed on these general principles, the two countries had never signed a formal treaty incorporating them and often encountered problems in trying to apply the principles to specific cases. Complicating the issue was the fact that the islands in the Rio Grande were often centers for illegal activities, especially smuggling and rustling. In 1874 and 1875 the Mexican government presented two draft treaties urging the United States to reach an agreement to deal with these problems. Although the two treaties incorporated principles already accepted by the United States, no response was made until 1884, when a dispute developed over the island of Morteritos, near Roma, Texas, on the Rio Grande. In January officials from Roma occupied the island. Mexican authorities protested the "invasion" and claimed that the island was part of the Mexican state of Tamaulipas; they agreed to allow the status quo on the island pending negotiations.

Mexico's claim to the island was based on a survey made in April 1880 by one of its engineers, Ignacio Garfias. The Garfias report indicated that the deepest channel of the river was north of the island and always had been, and that Morteritos was therefore Mexican territory. Mexico also pointed out that the United States had never occupied the island, nor had it interfered with Mexican authorities on the island prior to 1884.

The United States government's response was that Mexican officials had simply misread the map drawn up by the Emory Boundary Commission survey team in the 1850s. The Mexican government had confused the island of Sabinitos, acknowledged by the United States to belong to Mexico, with the island of Morteritos. In 1884, Mexico admitted that there had been confusion over the islands in question and recognized American jurisdiction over Morteritos in exchange for a formal treaty dealing with the question of changes in the Rio Grande. Once the specific issue of Morteritos had been settled, negotiations for a treaty went forward rapidly. In November 1884 the United States and Mexico signed a boundary treaty to "avoid difficulties which may arise through changes of [river] channel." The treaty recognized principles that both countries had been operating on from the beginning.

Under the agreement gradual changes in the Rio Grande through erosion or accretion would lead to a change in the boundary, which would follow the new channel. Sudden changes in the course of the river would not lead to a change in the boundary; the boundary would continue to lie along the original riverbed as set down by the Treaty of Guadalupe-Hidalgo and the boundary survey of the 1850s.

The Treaty of 1884 established general principles for dealing with boundary problems arising from changes in the river. An additional boundary convention signed in 1889 set up an International Boundary Commission to process all disputes arising out of changes in the river. The Treaty of 1884 was the basis for



**Barry Lawrence Ruderman
Antique Maps Inc.**

7407 La Jolla Boulevard
La Jolla, CA 92037

www.raremaps.com

(858) 551-8500
blr@raremaps.com

**Mapa de los Estados Unidos de Mejico, Segun lo organizado y definido por las varias
actas del Congreso de dicha Republica y construido por las mejores autoridades . . .
1847**

resolving a number of disagreements in the twentieth century, including the lengthy Chamizal dispute at El Paso.

Rarity

The present map is extremely rare. We were not able to locate another example.

Detailed Condition:

Minor toning in several places.