



# Barry Lawrence Ruderman Antique Maps Inc.

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## Mexico or New Spain

**Stock#:** 71503  
**Map Maker:** Carey  
**Date:** 1814  
**Place:** Philadelphia  
**Color:** Hand Colored  
**Condition:** VG  
**Size:** 15.5 x 17.5 inches  
**Price:** SOLD



### Description:

#### *The First American Atlas Map of Mexico*

Matthew Carey's double-page engraved map of Mexico (including Texas and New Mexico), the first map of Mexico to appear in an American Atlas.

Published in the midst of Mexico's War of Independence (1809-1821), the map appears at a fascinating time in Mexico's history. Of significant note is that vast portion of Northern Texas which is left blank, extending nearly to the Rio Grande River. As described below, this is almost certainly a direct result of the then raging political question over whether the United States had acquired Texas as part of the Louisiana Purchase (discussed below), in addition to the paucity of information available to mapmakers for the region which on this map is left so-conspicuously blank.

Carey's map reflects the information from Alexander von Humboldt's seminal map of Mexico but pre-dates Pike's explorations. The map extends north to show Lake Timpanogos and covers most of Colorado and New Mexico, as well as providing details in Texas, including the naming of Bejax, Cibola, Provincia, S Josef, Nuestra Sra del Rosario, Galveston Bay, and the name Texas.



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The detail along the Rio Grande and in Southern Arizona is also excellent. This is the first regional map of the Southwest and Mexico to be published in an American atlas.

#### Historical Overview

Carey's map was produced at time when the question of ownership of what would become Texas and New Mexico were still very much in dispute.

In 1803 the United States acquired Louisiana from Napoleon Bonaparte, with the understanding that the purchase covered all territory ceded by France to Spain in 1762 and then back to France in 1800. As the line between France and Spain in the New World had never been clearly established, Thomas Jefferson's administration seized the opportunity to make the most of its claim to a vast, uninhabited, and largely unexplored land.

Jefferson's vision is clearly reflected in the exploratory expeditions commissioned in the years immediately following the Louisiana Purchase. Within a few years of the purchase, Jefferson had authorized 4 expeditions to explore the newly acquired Territory. While the Lewis & Clark Expedition focused on the Northwestern portions the United States, the remaining 3 expeditions, The Dunbar Expedition (1804-1805), the Pike Expedition (1806-1807), and Red River (or Freeman-Custis) Expedition (1806) were all focused on lands that were the subject of competing Spanish claims, provoking diplomatic incidents as a result of American incursions into the disputed territory.

While Jefferson's agents were busy testing the elastic boundaries of the Louisiana Purchase, the Spaniards were not idle. Wary of their new neighbor and fearful for their vulnerable possessions in Texas and New Mexico, Spanish officials in New Orleans and beyond hastened to establish their line of demarcation. The matter became even more complex when in December of 1803, the French Prefect of Louisiana, Pierre Clement de Laussat, declared that the western boundary of the Louisiana Purchase lay at the Rio Grande.

In 1806, a military agreement was entered into between General James Wilkinson of the United States Army and General Simon Herrera of the Spanish forces, making the country between the Arroyo Hondo and the Sabine River temporarily neutral ground, over which neither the United States nor Spain should exercise political jurisdiction. The agreement was generally observed by both countries; the United States took possession of territory as far west as Natchitoches, while Spain maintained a small garrison at its eastern outpost, Nacogdoches.

President Jefferson was convinced as early as 1804 that the territory included in the Louisiana Purchase extended to the Rio Grande. His insistence upon this and his efforts to promote the exploration of the western territory (to some of which Spain claimed unquestionable right), and the border dispute in the



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Sabine-Red River region, temporarily settled by the Wilkinson-Herrera agreement, brought the United States and Spain near to hostilities.

Following a royal order issued in May 1805, Jose de Iturrigaray, the viceroy of New Spain, in January 1806, named Fray Melchior de Talamantes chief of an historical commission created to ascertain from all available sources the true boundaries of the provinces of Texas and Louisiana, before the latter was ceded to Spain in 1762. However, the arrest and deposition of Iturrigaray and the subsequent arrest of Talamantes for his separatist views by the Audiencia of Mexico in September, 1808, interrupted the work of this commission. The following month, the Viceroy ad interim, Pedro de Garibay, appointed Fray Doctor Jose Antonio Pichardo (1748-1812), of the congregation of the Oratory of San Felipe Neri, to determine the historic limits of Louisiana and Texas.

Over the next four years, Pichardo compiled a monumental defense of Spain's traditional Louisiana boundary with France. Pichardo's treatise was constructed as an argumentative historical treatise, intended to survey and describe "the true limits of the provinces of Louisiana and Texas." The purpose of the Treatise was to respond to and to disprove the claim of the United States that Texas was included in the Louisiana Purchase of 1803. To augment his final report, Father Pichardo then created an elaborate new map, using only the most trustworthy sources--primarily the maps of Jean Baptiste Bourguignon d'Anville, a celebrated French geographer whom he regarded very highly, which he augmented with manuscript maps in the Spanish archives.

Finally, the Adams-Onis Treaty of 1819 resolved the land ownership dispute by conceding the validity of Spain's Claims to Texas and the lands east of the Rio Grande, in exchange for Spain's abandonment of its historical claims to Oregon and Florida.

#### Detailed Condition: