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Geographical, Statistical and Historical Map of Arkansas Territory [Stephen Long Map]

Stock#: 43811
Map Maker: Carey & Lea
Date: 1822
Place: Philadelphia
Color: Hand Colored
Condition: VG+
Size: 21 x 16.5 inches
Price: SOLD



Description:

Fine example of Stephen Long's seminal map of the region drained by the Arkansas, Kansas, Missouri & Mississippi Rivers, one of the most important maps of the American West.

Stephen H. Long led an Government expedition to the Rocky Mountains in 1819 and 1820. Following on the heels of the Lewis & Clark expedition, it is generally regarded as one of the most important early overland expeditions. This map was the primary map illustrating the official account of Long's expedition, *Account of an Expedition from Pittsburgh to the Rocky Mountains, Performed in the Years 1819, 1820. By Order of the Hon. J.C. Calhoun, Secretary of War, under the Command of Maj. S.H. Long, of the U.S. Top. Engineers. Compiled from the Notes of Major Long, Mr. T. Say, and Other Gentlemen of the Party, by Edwin James, Botanist and Geologist to the Expedition*, published in both Philadelphia and London in 1823.

While the map was produced by Long, the report of the expedition was written by Edwin James, the botanist who accompanied Long. Other members of the expedition were Thomas Say as naturalist and entomologist and Titian Peale as draughtsman. The report and map are among the 5 most important post 1850 works on the West. While the map appeared in the official account of Long's Expedition, it was also produced in large format with extra text in the first and subsequent editions of Carey & Lea's *A Complete Historical, Chronological, and Geographical American Atlas*, which preceded Carey & Lea's publication of the James map in 1823.

It was not uncommon for cartographic information to appear first in commercial atlases before publication of official reports, but this is one of the few instances where the map itself also appeared before the book.



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Wheat noted that the map represented a distinct step forward in the mapping of the West, the first to use the term Great American Desert. It corrected many errors, primarily the course of the Red River, and the corrections to the eastern slope of the Rocky Mtns. HS Tanner also spoke highly of the map in his 1823 Geographical Memoir.

Major Stephen H. Long was commissioned to ascend the Platte River and explore the headwaters of both the Red River and Arkansas River. The expedition followed the Platte River to the South Fork to the Colorado Rockies, where they discovered and named Long's Peak. On July 5, 1820, they reached present day Denver and on July 12, Colorado Springs, from which three party members, including Edwin James, set out to climb Pike's Peak.

The party continued south to the upper Arkansas River, where Long divided it into two groups. One group was instructed to continue the exploration of the Arkansas while the second group, which included both Long and James, went to explore the Red River. In early August the party followed the Canadian River, mistaking it for the Red. This mistake led the group into New Mexico and the Texas panhandle, where they suffered from a scarcity of food sources. The expedition also encountered a party of Kiowa-Apaches, the first recorded meeting between Anglo-Americans and Kiowa-Apaches. The group traveled through Oklahoma and finally reunited with the others at Fort Smith, Arkansas.

The expedition ended with neither of its main objectives met. Neither the source of Arkansas nor the Red River was found. The geographic details of the "Great American Desert" were hardly what an expansionist government wanted to hear about. But the Long Expedition was the first scientific survey of the region and dramatically increased the country's geographical knowledge of the West.

Detailed Condition: