



**Barry Lawrence Ruderman
Antique Maps Inc.**

7407 La Jolla Boulevard
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Trip to the West and Texas Comprising a Journey of Eight Thousand Miles, Through New-York, Michigan, Illinois, Missouri, Louisiana and Texas, in the Autumn and Winter of 1834-5. Interspersed with Anecdotes, Incidents and Observations. With a Brief Sketch of the Texian War.

Stock#: 90001
Map Maker: Parker

Date: 1836
Place: Concord, N.H.; Boston
Color: Uncolored
Condition: VG
Size: 4.5 x 7.25 inches

Price: SOLD



Description:

"No country in the world can be compared to this"

With the 1836 War Ensign Texian Flag on the Original Binding

Second (and best) edition, with the 56-page account of the Texas Revolution not found in the original edition of 1835. Jenkins praises Parker as an observant chronicler of the early days in Texas, just before the Texas Revolution. Ray Billington has pointed out how Parker's book reflects the cultural conflicts between Texas and Mexico that came to the fore during the Texas Revolution, adding that "this is one of the earliest travel books written in English about Texas, it is of great value."

Parker, scion of a prominent New Hampshire family (his father was U.S. Senator from the state), set out on his journey in September 1834, and was back in New Hampshire by February 1835. During his month's stay in Texas he visited San Augustine, Nacogdoches, Hall's Ferry on the Brazos, San Felipe, Columbia, Brazoria, and Velasco. While the Texas portion of his account is the most interesting part of the book, he also described visits to Natchez, a voyage down the Mississippi in a steamboat, New Orleans, and such



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places as Illinois, reminding us how the western frontier has evolved since the 1830s.

The original publisher's binding of this book is notable for having a handsome gilt spine decoration incorporating one of the earliest Texas national flags, a variant of the Lone Star design. The specific flag shown matches that of the Texian naval service or war ensign adopted by David Burnet on April 9, 1836. *The Handbook of Texas Online*, describes the flag as follows:

It was similar to the United States flag and showed thirteen stripes and a blue canton with a single white star. It was passed by Congress and approved by Houston on December 10, 1836, and remained in use until January 25, 1839.

The animals of Texas are given some emphasis, including bears, buffalos, panthers, alligators, mustangs and deer, the latter two being the subject of full-page woodcuts herein. In addition to the above, "the ever active mocheto" [mosquito] is given some space in the book.

Parker describes the Texas method of breaking wild horses:

The wild horses are called by the Spaniards, mustangs. I saw some small herds of them prancing at random over the plains. They are quite wild, you can seldom approach very near them. They are of various colors and of rather smaller size than the American horse. The Spaniards are fond of good horses, and are good horsemen. Some of them make a business of catching and breaking the mustangs. This is done by building a fence in the shape of a harrow, with a strong pen at the small end, and driving them into it; or mounting a fleet horse, get as near as they can unperceived, then start after them at full speed, throw a rope with a slipnoose at one end, and the other fastened to the saddle, around the neck, haul out at right angles with their course, and choke them down.

Streeter, a little too harsh on Parker's straightforward writing style, concedes that his account has value as a description of a little-known country:

This includes a rather pedestrian account of a sightseeing journey of a little over a month in December, 1834. from the Sabine to the Colorado, then back to San Felipe and Brazoria. In the account are around forty pages with the caption heading, "General View of Texas." The "Brief Sketch of the Texian War" in the title of the second edition is given in an appendix, which tells the story in popular form to the capture of Santa Anna at San Jacinto. Parker's entire journey, as outlined on the title page, was to gather information on the regions visited. Even though quite prosaic in style, it has



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for a little known new country like Texas the interest that is present in any early contemporary account of travels - Streeter.

The frontispiece view of "Burning of the Prairies" deserves comment. Such a scene is described in Chapter X of the book, which notes how the western prairies are "all burnt over once a year," and that "a prairie storm of fire is indeed terrific. Animals and men flee before it, in vain. When impelled by a strong breeze, the wave of fire passes on, with the swiftness of the wind."

When searching for authentic backwoodsmen in Illinois, Parker declared he couldn't find any, writing "the race has become extinct." It is evident that Texas offered Parker plenty of fresh opportunities to confront the people and sites of an entirely new frontier.

Detailed Condition:

(Lacks map.) 12mo. Original publisher's blindstamped cloth with spine title "Texas" stamped in gilt, below a design of the Texian flag, with motto "Independence" upside down. Spine ends a bit frayed. 380 pages (including two full-page woodcut illustrations: wild horses page [172] and a hunting scene, page [178]) and frontispiece woodcut of "Prairie on Fire." Lacks the map, which is not found in all copies. Older private library stamp on front free endpaper. Occasional moderate foxing. Otherwise a nice solid copy in the original binding.