

RICHARD C. RAMER



*SPECIAL LIST 544*  
*CENTRAL AMERICA*

# RICHARD C. RAMER

*Old and Rare Books*

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JULY 30, 2025

## *SPECIAL LIST 544* *CENTRAL AMERICA*

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for any reason whatsoever.

VISITORS BY APPOINTMENT



# SPECIAL LIST 544

## CENTRAL AMERICA

### *Jamaica, Belize, the Mosquito Coast, Yucatán and Guatemala*

1. **DUNN, Henry.** *Guatemala, or, the United Provinces of Central America, in 1827-8: Being Sketches and Memorandums Made During a Twelve Months' Residence in That Republic.* New York: G. & C. Carvill, 1828. 8°, recent full crimson Oasis morocco, edges stained yellow. Very fine. 318 pp., (1 l. errata). \$900.00

FIRST EDITION of "one of the classic travelogues, written by an Anglican clergyman traveling in company with the Dutch consul general during the conflicts relating to the independence movement" (Grieb). According to Griffin, the principal value of this work lies in Dunn's "perceptive observations of all aspects of Guatemalan life during his extensive travels in the country." Described are Jamaica, Belize, the Mosquito Coast, Yucatán and Guatemala, with details on government, commerce, diseases, emigration, black population, entertainment, pirates, architecture, marriages and funerals, police, prisons, education, bullfights, religious processions, earthquakes, volcanoes, mining and agricultural products (cochineal, indigo, tobacco, sugar, coffee, cotton). Dunn describes the 1821-1823 independence movement on pp. 167-205, and devotes pp. 258-283 to the Indian population.

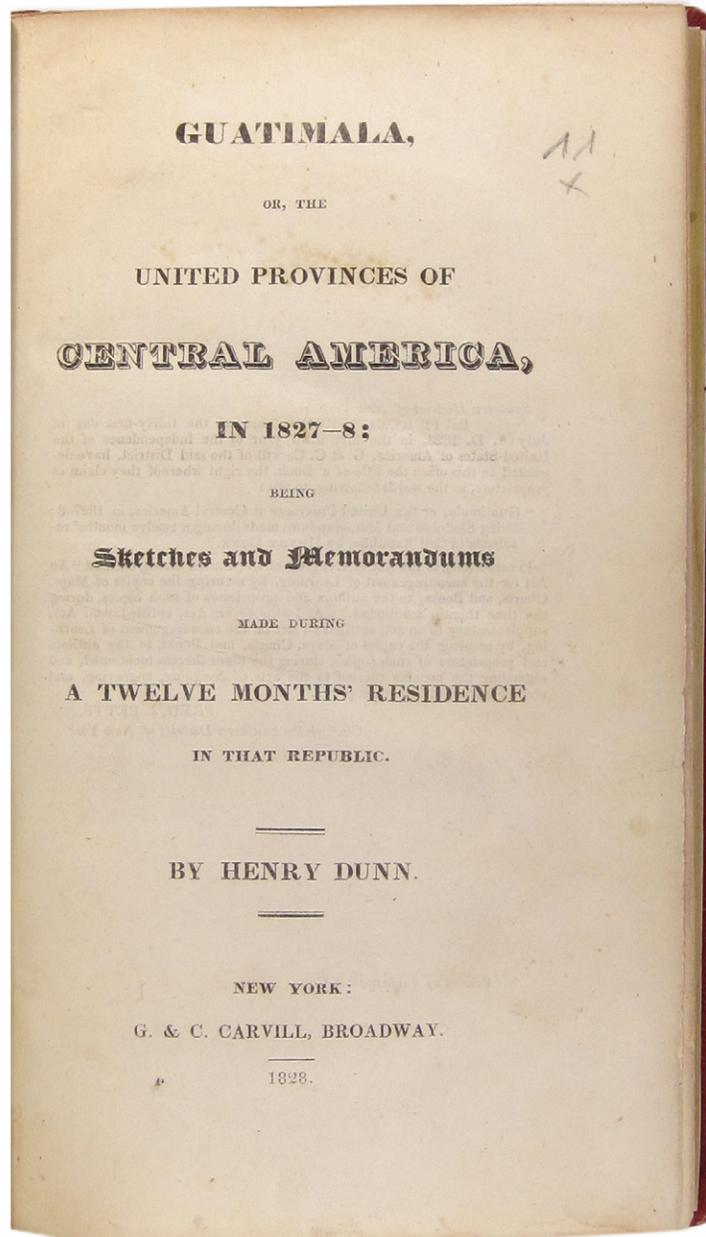
The second edition, London 1829, included a map.

\* Grieb *GU* 392. Palau 77296. Sabin 21320. Griffin, *Latin America: A Guide to the Historical Literature* 3558: without mention of the errata leaf.

2. **FERNÁNDEZ DE OVIEDO Y VALDÉS, Gonzalo.** *Histoire du Nicaragua.* 2 works in 1 volume. Paris: Arthus Bertrand, 1840. Pastedowns are printed descriptions of the series *Voyages, relations et memoires originaux pour servir à l'histoire de la découverte de l'Amérique, publiés pour la première fois en français, par H. Ternaux-Compans.* 8°, contemporary crimson half straight-grained morocco (slight wear), smooth spine tooled in blind with gilt letter. Scattered light foxing. Overall in fine to very fine condition. Old ink annotation on pastedown ("X.1.43"). xv, 269 pp. 2 works in 1 volume. \$500.00

First edition thus: Chapters 1-13 form "one of the basic sources for the earliest history of the New World" (Servies 12). It includes details on the kingdom of Nicaragua; the religious and marriage rites of the Indians; the region's lakes; Masaya and other volcanoes; mineral wealth (sulfur, alum); the relation of Fr. Blas del Castillo, a Dominican, on Masaya, followed by Oviedo's thoughts on it; and an account of the author's visit to the cacique of Tezoatega in 1523.

The first edition of *La historia general de las Indias* (Seville, 1535) included the first part (Books 1-19) and portions of Book 50. Oviedo himself said that the first part was



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translated into Italian, French, German, Latin, Greek, Turkish, and Arabic. The first complete edition of all three parts of the work (in 50 books) appeared in Madrid, 1851-1855.

Gonzalo Fernández de Oviedo y Valdéz (Madrid 1478-Valladolid, 1557) participated in the Spanish colonization of the Caribbean; his chronicle is one of the few surviving primary sources about it (although it was denounced by Fr. Bartolomé de las Casas). A nobleman educated at the court of Ferdinand and Isabella, he was a page and a courtier before being appointed supervisor of gold smelting at Santo Domingo in 1514. When he returned to Spain in 1523, he became historiographer of the Indies. Before his death, he visited the Americas five more times.

Henri Ternaux-Compans (Paris 1807-Paris, 1864) was the first major collector of Americana. Scion of a wealthy French merchant family, he devoted several years to traveling through Spain and South America, collecting materials for a 20-volume series of works concerning the discovery and early history of South America that began to appear in 1836. For this volume he provided a brief biography and bibliography of Oviedo (pp. [vii]-xv).

\* Cf. Servies, *Bibliography of Florida* n° 12. Jisc locates copies at Oxford University and Cambridge University.

BOUND WITH:

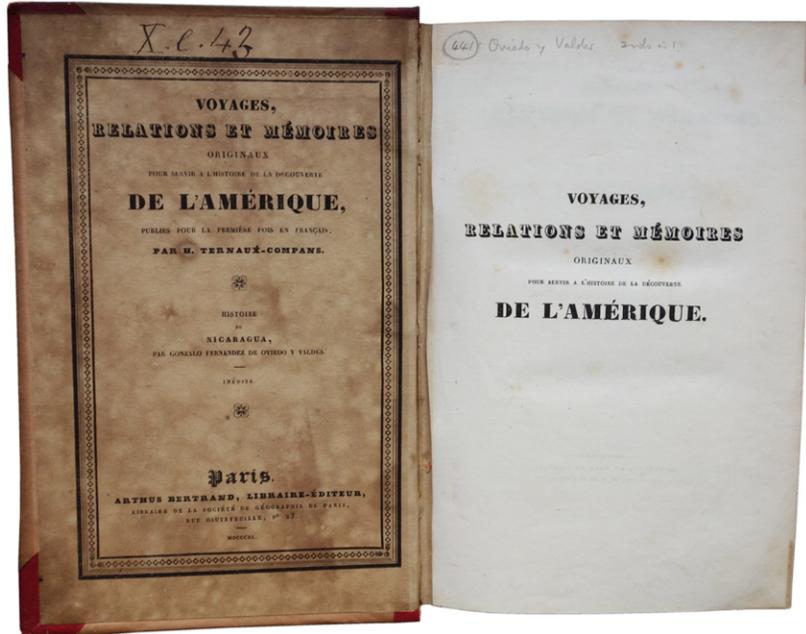
***Recueil de pieces sur la Floride.* H. Ternaux-Compans, editor. *Voyages, relations et memoires originaux pour servir à l'histoire de la découverte de l'Amérique, publiés pour la première fois en français.* Paris: Arthus Bertrand, 1841. 8°, (4 ll.), 368 pp.**

A collection of 12 sixteenth-century documents, many published here for the first time. Authors include Panfilo de Narváez, (1527); Hernando d'Escalante Fontaneda; Hernando de Soto (1539); Luis Hernandez de Biedma on de Soto's voyage (1544); Gregorio de Beteta; Guido de las Bazaras (1559); Luis de Velasco (1559); Lopez de Mendoza Grajales (1565); a 1565 anonymous letter; Nicolas Le Challeux on Ribaut's voyage, published 1566; Dominique de Gourgues, (1568?). Ternaux-Compans published these because of the early interest of France in Florida.

\* Servies 2660. Howes T104. Field 1542.

**3. FERNANDEZ-SHAW, Felix. *Panama y sus Relaciones Centroamericanas.* Madrid: Ediciones Cultura Hispanica, 1964. 8°, publisher's quarter burgundy cloth over yellow cloth boards (faded), smooth spine gilt. Internally in fine condition; overall good. 329 pp., (2 ll.). \$15.00**

FIRST and ONLY EDITION. Describes Panama's relations with other Central American nations and with Colombia.



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4. [GUATEMALA]. *Congreso Federal, Revolucion de Guatemala*. 2 parts bound in one. [Guatemala: n.pr., 1838]. 4° , stitched. Caption title. Some dampstains. Overall in good condition. Early ink manuscript signature ("Garcilla") on first leaf of second part. 48 pp., (1 l.), 25, x pp. Missing the half title? 2 parts bound in one. \$250.00

FIRST and ONLY EDITION. Signed in print on p. 25 of the second section by Pedro Valenzuela and others. Includes *Congreso Federal: Revolucion de Guatemala, primeira parte* and, with a divisional title *Al Congreso Federal, 2a parte, restablecimiento de los poderes supremos del Estado*. The x pp. section at the end begins with the caption title *Relacion de los documentos á que se refieren las notas . . .*. On p. vi appears the caption title *Copia de los artículos á que se ha arreglado la division de reforma. Acerca del Gobierno en jeneral*.

While some collations call for a preliminary leaf not present in our copy, this leaf appears to be blank in the digitized copies; we are not able to determine if it is integral to the work, but have seen a reference to a half title.

\* Valenzuela, *Bibliografís guatemalteca*, IV, 153-4, n.° 234 (transcribes the title as "Noticia del Congreso federal de la revolución de Guatemala"; no mention of any half title or divisional title; otherwise the collation given is 48, 25 pp., documentos I-X, and the date given, June 18, 1838, matches that given at the foot of p. 25 of the second part; Pedro José Valenzuela and others are recorded as authors). OCLC: 16568943 (University of California-Berkeley, Library of Congress, Tulane University, University of Texas-Austin); 13001819 (University of Kansas Rare Books); 1041141762 (Internet resource with the divisional title to part 2 bound before the x pp. section, followed by part 2); 29949524 (Microfilm at University of California-Berkeley); 1025757290 (Internet resource with the x pp. section bound between the 2 parts). Not located in CCPBE. Not located in Jisc. KVK (51 databases searched) locates only two records for *Noticia al Congreso federal, de la revolucion de Guatemala* both at the European Register of Microform and Digital Masters.

#### *Rare Early Printing from Quetzaltenango, Guatemala*

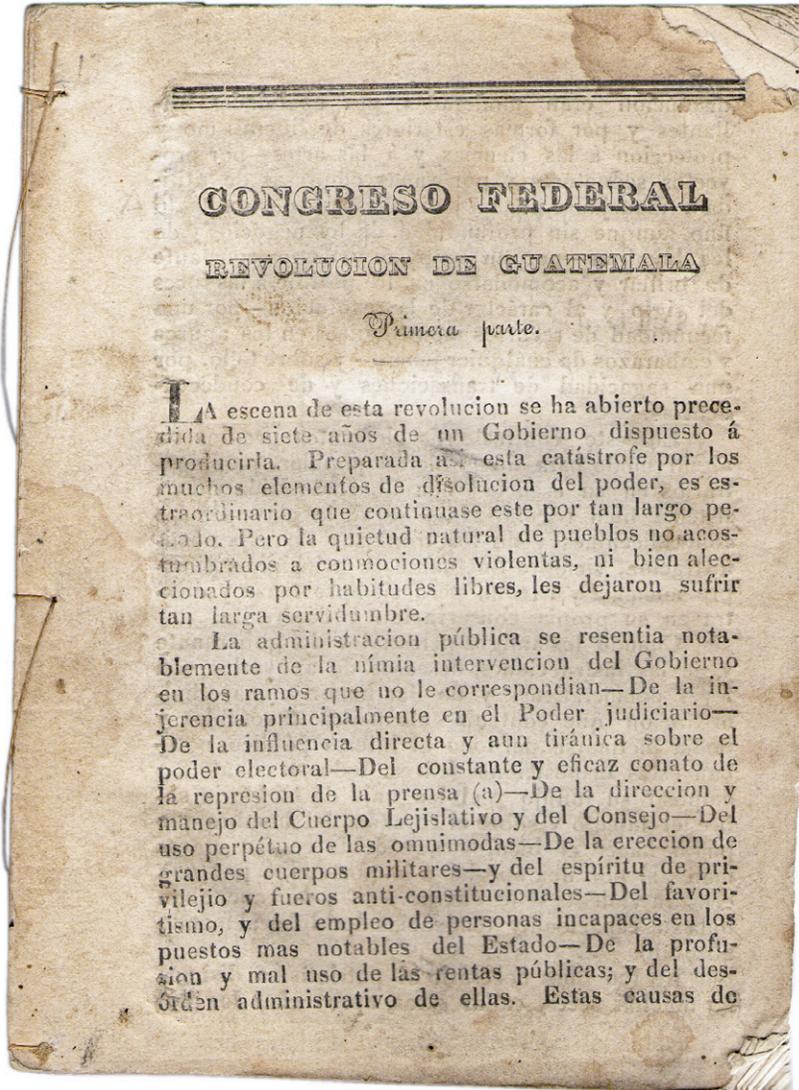
5. [GUATEMALA]. *No. 31. Decretos de la Asamblea Constituyente del Estado de los Altos*. [Guatemala]: Imprenta del Estado de los Altos, Issued at Quezaltenango, May 31, 1839. 4° , stitched. Caption title. Creased and lightly browned. In good condition. (4 ll., paginated 96-102).

\$400.00

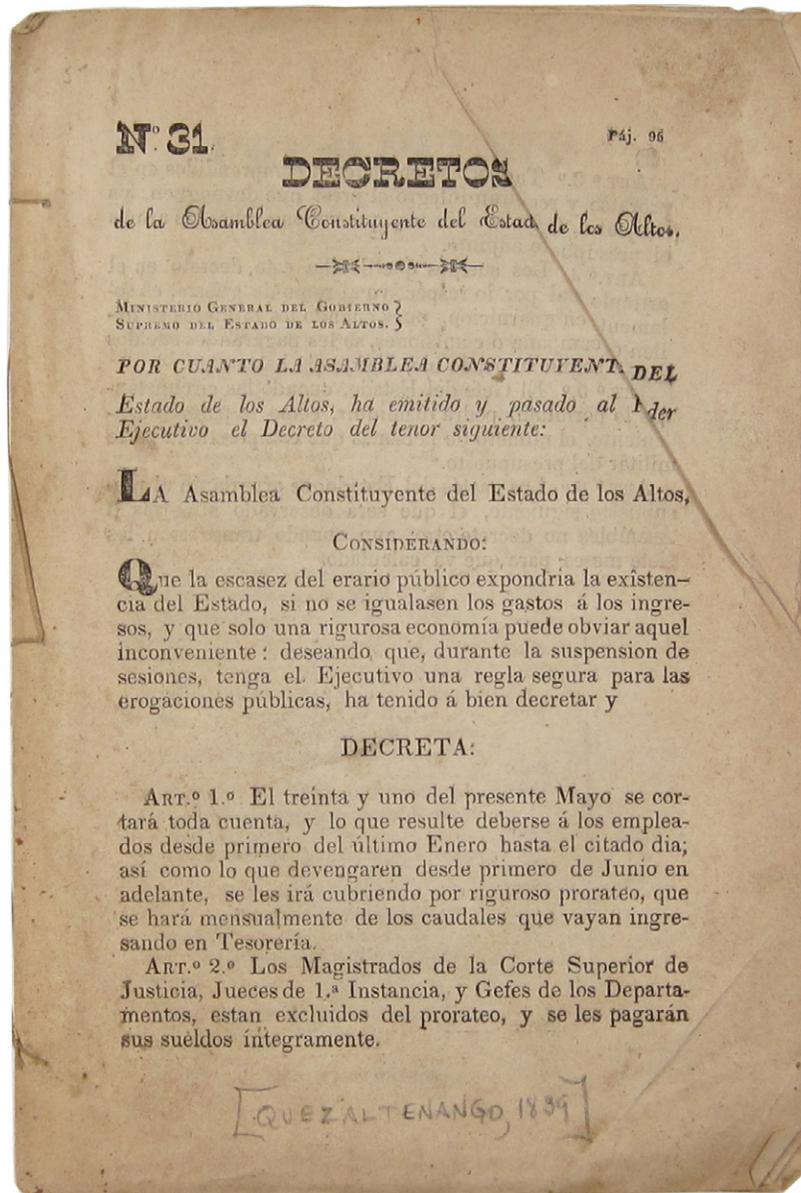
FIRST and ONLY EDITION. Rare example of early printing from Quetzaltenango. The decree establishes a source of income so that the executive can run the government while the Asamblea Constituyente is on hiatus. The projected expenses of the government are set out in great detail on pp. 97-100.

The decree is signed in print by José Antonio Aguilar and Marcelo Molina, two of the triumvirate (the third was José M. Gálvez) who governed Los Altos during its brief stint as an independent country.

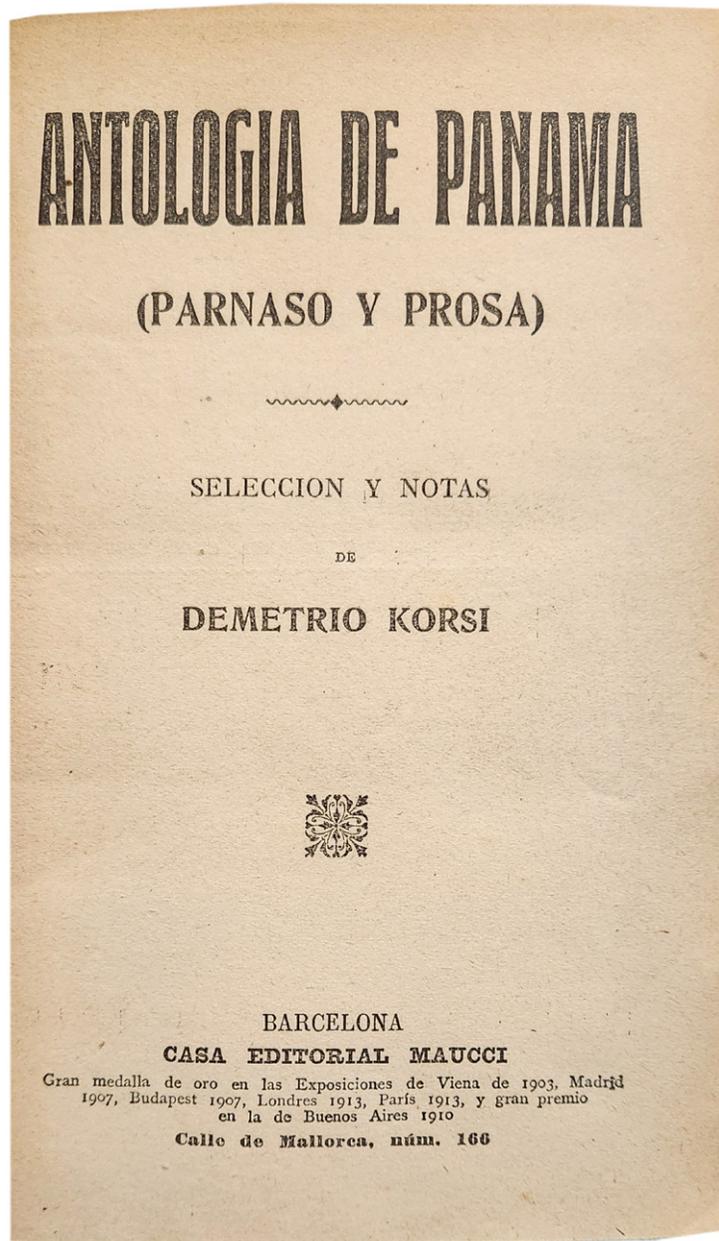
This is one of the earliest imprints from Quetzaltenango. In OCLC, the earliest Quetzaltenango imprints all date to 1839 (a series of other decrees, plus the periodical *El Popular* and a decree by Carlos Salazar). Valenzuela does not list this work, and only lists four others printed at Imprenta del Estado de los Altos in 1839: an anonymous poem, a



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decree by Carlos Salazar, a plan issued by the executive, and *Discurso sobre los deberes y educación de la juventud* (translated from English).

The Mayan city Xelajú was perhaps 300 years old when the Spanish conquistador Alvarado arrived. The city's name in colonial times was Quetzaltenango, the Nahuatl name used by Alvarado's Indian allies. Quetzaltenango was capital of the state of Los Altos, one of the component provinces of the Federal Republic of Central America, which declared on May 31, 1838, that its component states were free to create their own republics. The independence of Los Altos, declared that year, was short-lived. On April 2, 1840, Rafael Carrera conquered Quetzaltenango, shot its liberal officials and incorporated Quetzaltenango and most of Los Altos into Guatemala.

\* Not located in Valenzuela, *Bibliografía Guatemalteca*; for other works printed in 1839 at Imprenta del Estado de los Altos, see IV, nos. 270, 294, 297, 306. OCLC: not located; 16573827 (Tulane University), with 16 unnumbered leaves, includes *Decretos* 33-38 and 40. Not located in CCPBE. Not located in Rebiun. Not located in Jisc. Not located in KVK (51 databases searched).

#### *Anthology of Panamanian Authors*

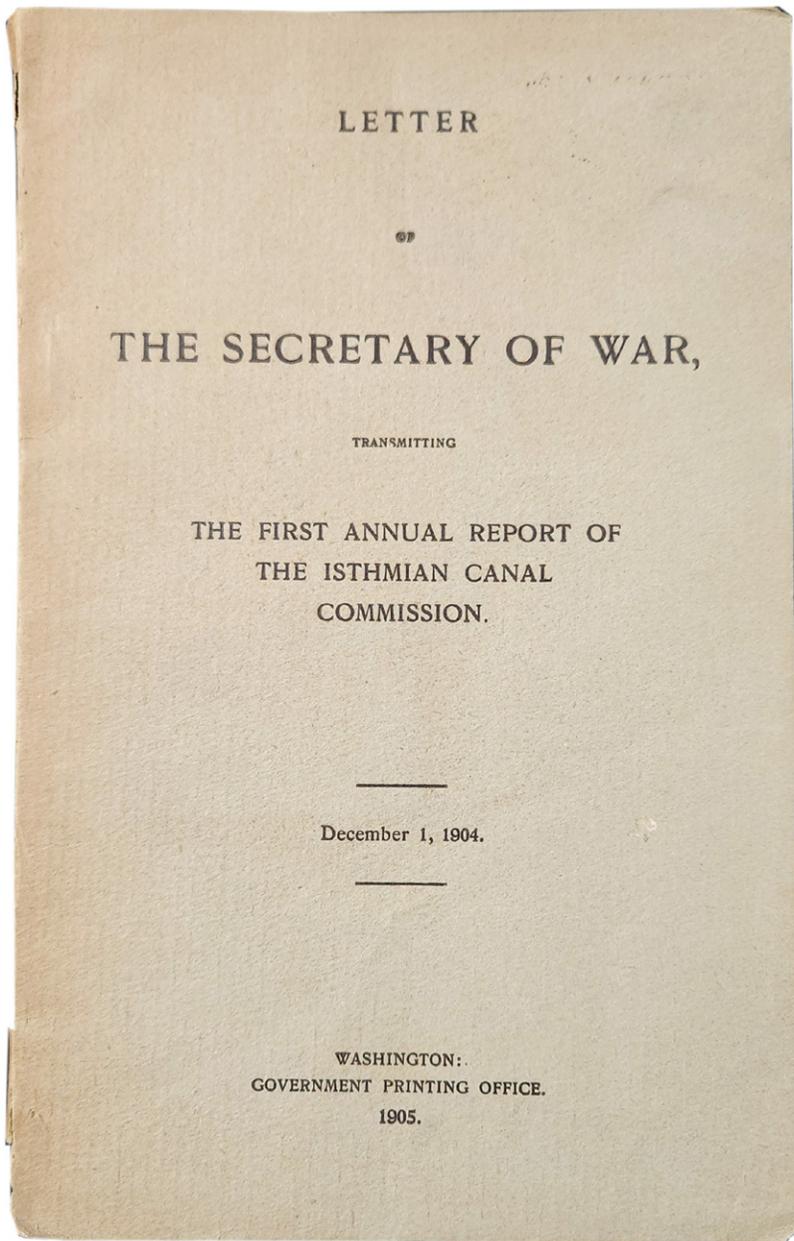
**6. KORSI, Demetrio, ed.** *Antología de Panama (parnaso y prosa). Selección y notas de ...* Barcelona: Casa Editorial Maucci, (1926). 8°, later green quarter morocco over cloth (minor wear), spine smooth (faded to brown) with crimson leather lettering piece, gilt bands and ornament, decorated endleaves. Typographical ornament on title page, typographical headpieces. Light browning. In good to very good condition. Blue on white rectangular paper ticket of Librería A. Batlle, Barcelona, tipped on to upper outer corner of rear pastedown. 320 pp. \$75.00

FIRST and ONLY EDITION of this important anthology of poetry and short prose works by 70 Panamanian authors of the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Many of the works were culled from periodicals and are otherwise inaccessible. A brief biography of each writer is included. Korsi, a Panamanian poet resident in Paris, published one book of poetry, *El viento en la montaña* (Paris, 1926).

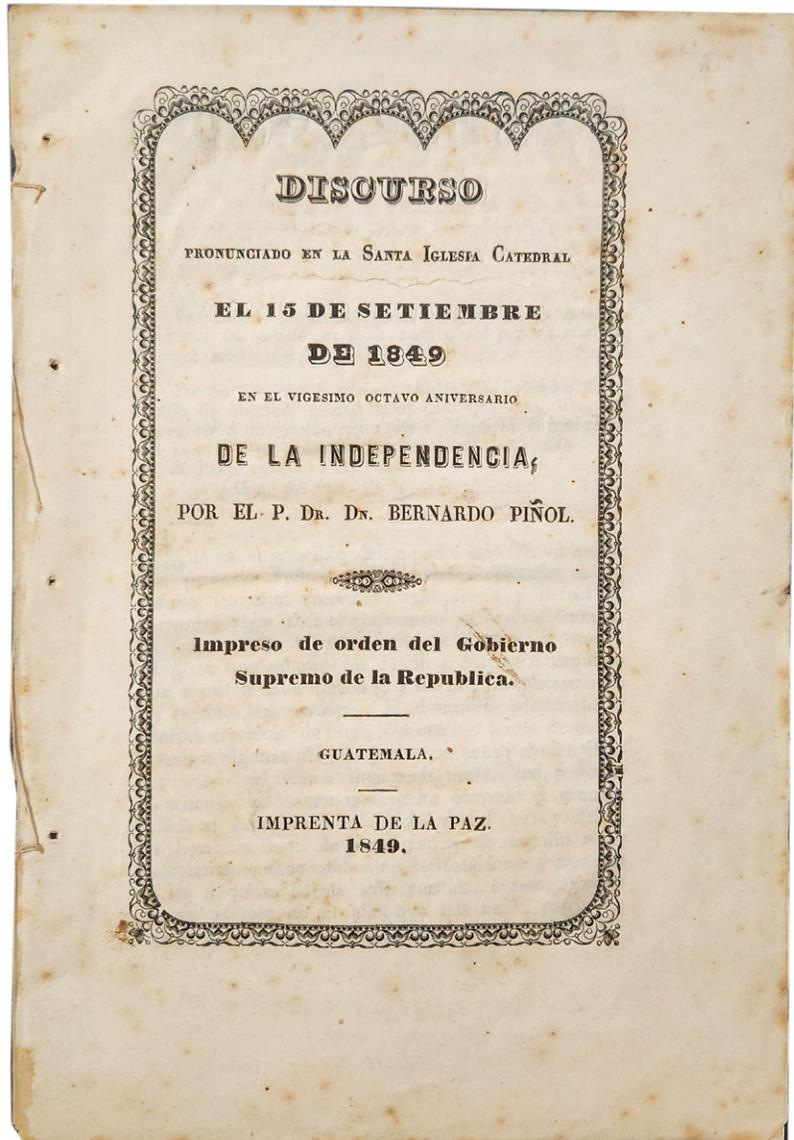
\* Palau 13158.

**7. [PANAMA CANAL].** William H. Taft. *Letter of the Secretary of War, transmitting the First Annual Report of the Isthmian Canal Commission. December 1, 1904.* Washington: Government Printing Office, 1905. Large 8°, original pale green printed wrappers (slightly chipped and spotted). In very good condition. Rubber stamp of the U.S. Consulate, Lourenço Marques on title page. Calling card of W. Stanley Hollis, American consul at Lourenço Marques, tipped onto title page. [3]-95 pp., (1 blank l.). \$25.00

Taft reports to the President on problems that have arisen in the building of the Panama Canal, expenses and income of the project, and the government of the area; also



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included are Congressional documents authorizing the building of the canal. Construction had not yet resumed: "The chaotic condition of affairs in the Isthmus, due to the time which has elapsed since the New French Canal Company ceased to work, the lack of care of the plant and equipment, and the rapid growth of vegetation in that soil and climate, all brought about such a state of confusion that it will require several months yet to restore the condition of the work of canal building to that of a going concern" (p. 5).

**8. PINOL (Y AYCINENA), Bernardo.** *Discurso pronunciado en la Santa Iglesia Catedral el 15 de Setiembre de 1849 en el vigesimo octavo aniversario de la independencia ... Impreso de orden del Gobierno Supremo de la Republicxa.* Guatemala: Imprenta de la Paz, 1849. 8°, stitched. Light foxing. In very good condition. (6 ll.) \$200.00

FIRST and ONLY EDITION. At the cathedral in Guatemala City on the twenty-eighth anniversary of the country's independence, the future archbishop of Guatemala argues that the nation has suffered so much unrest and civil war because the people's desire for liberty has not been tempered by religion: "La libertad que no es dirigida por la Religion, es un torrente que arrolla cuanto se le opone: es una verdadera licencia, que contraria a las leyes: que no respeta los derechos de otro; ni quiere reconocer autoridad alguna" (f. 3v). By 1849, following years of civil war, Guatemala was dominated by Rafael Carrera, who was backed by the Church, conservatives, and large landowners.

\* Not in Palau. OCLC: 12758144. WorldCat locates copies at University of Kansas, University of Texas-Austin, the British Library, and the Biblioteca Nacional de Chile. Not located in Jisc (but the British Library has a copy). Not located in CCPBE.

#### *Rivera Assumes the Presidency of Guatemala*

**9. RIVERA [Cabezas], Antonio.** *A los habitantes del estado. [Begins] La Asamblea Legislativa me ha llamado a ejercicio de Poder Ejecutivo por decreto de este dia, en que declara haber lugar a la formacion de causa al Gefe del Estado.* Guatemala: n.pr., 1830. Folio (31 x 21.2 cm.), unbound. Light waterstains in margins. In good to very good condition. Broadside. \$2000.00

A crisis caused the Guatemalan national assembly to remove Doctor Pedro José Antonio Molina Mazariegos as president and to appoint Antonio Rivera, a liberal politician, in his place. Rivera assumed the presidency on 9 March 1830, on which day he issued this announcement that he had assumed the position and calling on the people to remain calm.

\* Valenzuela III, 579. Not located in OCLC. Not located in CCPBE. Not located in Jisc.

## A LOS HABITANTES DEL ESTADO.

**L**A Asamblea Legislativa me ha llamado al ejercicio del Poder Ejecutivo por decreto de éste día, en que declara haber lugar á la formacion de causa al Gefe del Estado.

La suprema dignidad no es cargo de cuyo desempeño me créa capáz, y mas en circunstancias tan dificiles, como por desgracia son las presentes; mas permitaseme decir, que como estoy acostumbrado á los sacrificios por la causa pública, yo obedezco al presente la ley, haciendolo grande, no solo por que toma sobre mí un peso grave, sino por que es en la ocasion de una responsabilidad declarada, á un funcionario cuyas virtudes aprecio.

El cuerpo legislativo sin duda las conoce, pero estimando que en su administracion las leyes han sido infringidas, las quiere hacer valer, aun en la persona de un ciudadano, cuyos servicios públicos son notorios—Es este un ejemplo grande de una escrupulosidad verdaderamente republicana, pues ni el respeto, ni la memoria de los merecimientos sirven de salva-guardia ante el legislador que mide con la vara de la ley.

Ella debe ser mi guia, y lo será indefectiblemente por los dias en que el poder estubiere en mis manos—Las leyes ofrecen seguridad, justicia y paz, y siendo á mi cargo su ejecucion, á estos grandes objetos dedicaré mis desvelos.

Si durante mi mando no hubiere motivo de que se derrame una sola lágrima, esta sola recompensa cumple mis deseos.

La Capital y el Estado, se hallan en calma: ayudadme ciudadanos á conservarla, y sobre este fondo hermoso podrán trazarse todos los bienes.

Guatemala marzo 9. de 1830.

*Antonio Rivera.*

WALKER'S EXPEDITION  
TO  
NICARAGUA ;  
A HISTORY OF THE  
CENTRAL AMERICAN WAR ;  
AND THE  
SONORA AND KINNEY EXPEDITIONS,  
INCLUDING ALL THE RECENT  
DIPLOMATIC CORRESPONDENCE,  
TOGETHER WITH A NEW AND ACCURATE  
MAP OF CENTRAL AMERICA,  
AND A  
MEMOIR AND PORTRAIT OF  
GENERAL WILLIAM WALKER.  
BY  
WILLIAM V. WELLS,  
Consul-General of the Republic of Honduras.



NEW YORK:  
STRINGER AND TOWNSEND.  
1856.

*California and Nicaragua*

**10. WELLS, William Vincent.** *Walker's Expedition to Nicaragua; a History of the Central American War; and the Sonora and Kinney Expeditions, Including All the Recent Diplomatic Correspondence, Together with a New and Accurate Map of Central America, and a Memoir and Portrait of General William Walker.* New York: Stringer and Townsend, 1856. 12°, publisher's black cloth, blocked in blind, spine gilt (some wear). Wood-engraved seal of Nicaragua on title page. Some browning, scattered foxing; 2-cm. tear in margin of map, which is otherwise in fine condition. Overall in good to very good condition. Signatures in ink of J.T. Williams, dated 1858, on front pastedown, front free endpaper, and blank verso of frontispiece. Stamp of Kenneth Williams on blank verso of frontispiece. Frontispiece (wood-engraved portrait with added tint block), vi, [11]-316 pp., large folding hand-colored map. \$600.00

FIRST EDITION of this "highly partisan defense of the filibusters' regime" (DAB) in Nicaragua under William Walker. Save for Walker's own *The War in Nicaragua* (1860), *Walker's Expedition* is the best contemporary account of Walker's life and expedition to Nicaragua in 1855-56. Wells' account carries events up through Walker's election as president of Nicaragua and formal recognition of his government by the United States in June 1856. Walker remained in power for another 10 months. A German translation was published at Braunschweig, 1857.

The fine map of Central America bears the imprint of J.H. Colton, New York, 1856, and includes insets of the Isthmus of Panama and "The Nicaragua Route."

William Walker (Nashville, Tennessee 1824-1860, Honduras) trained as a lawyer and physician but is famous for filibustering expeditions in which he attempted to establish personal "colonies" where slavery would be established. In 1853 he attempted to set up shop in Baja California and Sonora, but was easily repulsed by the Mexican government. A few years later, he went head-to-head with Cornelius Vanderbilt for control of the lucrative traffic from the Caribbean to the Pacific via Nicaragua—the fastest route for steamships to carry those in the East to the California gold fields.

Wells (1826-1876) was born in Boston and lived a life of adventure, first on the high seas and then, beginning in 1849, in California prospecting for gold. Seeking new worlds to exploit, Wells journeyed to Honduras in 1854. The "gold" he found there, though not metallic, was nonetheless remunerative: from 1855 to 1874 he served as sometime consul for Honduras. His *Explorations and Adventures in Honduras* was published in 1857. Wells spent the last twenty years of his life in San Francisco and New York, where he worked as a journalist and author when not furthering the economic interests of Honduras and Mexico.

\* Howes W256: collating as our copy. Not in Sabin. On Wells, see *Dictionary of American Biography* X, 646.



*Item 10*



*Item 6*

Our Lisbon Office

**RICHARD C. RAMER**

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