

Dorothy Sloan - Books

— Copyright Dorothy Sloan 2013 —

AUCTION 23

PAGÈS IN ORIGINAL BOARDS

ACROSS TEXAS ON HORSEBACK IN 1767 & AROUND THE WORLD

475. PAGÈS, Monsieur de [Pierre-Marie-François]. *Voyages autour du monde, et vers les deux pôles, par terre et par mer. Pendant les Années 1767, 1768, 1769, 1770, 1771, 1773, 1774 & 1776. Par M. de Pagès, Capitaine des Vaisseaux du Roi, Chevalier de l'Ordre Royal & Militaire de Saint-Louis, Correspondant de l'Académie des Sciences de Paris.* Paris: Chez Moutard, Imprimeur-Libraire, rue des Mathurins, N^o. 334, 1782. [1-4] 5-432 + [1-4] 5-272 pp., 3 folded engraved plates and 7 folded engraved maps, including: *Carte d'une partie de l'Amérique Séptentrionale que contient partie de la N^{le}. Espagne et de la Louisiane...* [above neat line at top right] *Voyages de M^r. de Pagès. Pl. 2* [below neat line] *Benard direxit* (neat line to neat line: 32 x 41.7 cm). 2 vols., 8vo (22.5 x 14.6 cm), publisher's original blue marbled boards, original printed paper spine labels, uncut and largely unopened, as issued. A few instances of very minor worming, else extremely fine, original condition. A very desirable copy.

First edition of an account of a circumnavigation which includes a description of a 1767 journey across Texas and through Mexico to Acapulco. Another French language edition was published at Berne, Switzerland, in 1783, followed by a Dutch edition in 1784, a German edition in 1786, a three-volume London (1791-1793), and many other editions in a variety of languages. JCB III (2, 1772-1799) #2797. Clark, *Old South* I:285: "Describes briefly the physical character of [Texas and the South] and his contacts with Indians and with the Spaniards in Texas." Cox I, p. 65n. Graff 3161 (lists the maps). Hill I(2), p. 526n (consult his lengthy bibliographical note): "Of great importance for its information on the Spanish colonial empire in North America and in the Orient." Hill II:1285n (citing English edition). Howes P13. Barbara Johnson Whaling Sale 607. Lowery 649 (citing the map *Carte d'une partie de l'Amérique Séptentrionale que contient partie de la N^{le}. Espagne et de la Louisiane*). Mendelssohn, *South Africa*, II, p. 134. Monaghan 1151. Sabin 58168. Sibley, *Travelers in Texas* 217n. Siebert Sale 934. Spence, *Australia* 887. Streeter 1027n (citing the one-volume edition published at Philadelphia in 1795). Tate, *The Indians of Texas* 1938: "A source rich in details on the Caddoes and the Lipan Apaches." Wagner, *Spanish Southwest* 165.

Streeter (1027), citing only the 1795 Philadelphia edition, states: "An abbreviated summary by an unknown author of Pagès' account of his journey around the world first published in three [sic, i.e., two] volumes in Paris in 1782. The Texas part of the journey began at New Orleans in the summer of 1767 and was by way of the Red River to Natchitoches, then to Nacogdoches and San Antonio, this last stage being in the train of the Spanish governor of Texas, who was returning to San Antonio. Only pages 13-26 relate to the journey from Natchitoches through Texas (chapter IV, pp. 50-92 in the Paris edition), and the account is sketchy and of little value. At first I was inclined to agree with the comment of Henry Wagner, 'I have never been able to persuade myself that the author ever saw Texas...' There is, however, a reference to Pagès having been in Saltillo in 1767 in Humboldt's *New*

Spain (London, 1811 edition, Vol. II, p. 279) and there are two biographical sketches of Pagès, one in *Biographie Universelle* (Michaud), Paris, [n.d.] (Vol. 31, p. 612), and the other in *Nouvelle Biographie Générale*, Paris, 1865 (Vol. 39, columns 42-44), both of which record at some length this around the world journey and two later expeditions.” In discussing books on Texas relating to life, travel, and exploration, Streeter states that Sibley’s 1806 account seems to be the first description of any part of Texas in English, other than the 1795 Philadelphia edition of Pagès. Actually, Pagès’ narrative of the section of his voyage relating to Texas first appeared in English in Vol. I of the London edition (1791, Vol. 1, Chapters 3-5). Marilyn McAdams Sibley states that the London edition “is generally accepted as the first book in the English language which describes Texas” (“Across Texas in 1767: The Travels of Captain Pagès” in *Southwestern Historical Quarterly* 70, July 1966-April 1967, p. 595).

Did Pagès ride horseback across Texas, or was he a talented armchair traveller? John Howard Howgego in *Encyclopedia of Exploration* prevaricates: “The veracity of some or all of his voyages has been regarded by bibliographers with suspicion, but, needless to say, his *Voyages autour du Monde* made very popular reading” (p. 7). Marilyn McAdams Sibley (p. 595-596) explored the question of the authenticity of Pagès account: “Bibliographers are mixed in their evaluation of Pagès account. ‘I have never been able to persuade myself that the author ever saw Texas,’ says Henry R. Wagner.... Thomas W. Streeter, who is inclined to agree with Wagner, grudgingly concedes that the work is authentic because Alexander von Humboldt refers to Pagès being in Saltillo in 1767.... Even so, Streeter condemns the work as ‘inconsequential,’ ‘sketchy,’ and one ‘which, even if authentic, is of little value.’ Lester J. Cappon, on the other hand, labels the work as ‘objective and quite impersonal’ and notes that Pagès’ has been commended by students of the region for his accuracy.” Sibley goes on to quote Humboldt’s comments on Pagès, and concludes that errors in geographical names “can be explained as those of a stranger in an unknown and largely uncharted country. The area between the Sabine and Rio Grande was a wilderness in 1676. The King’s Highway was but a trail of many variations which stretched across Texas. The Spanish had only slight knowledge of the country, and this they jealously guarded from their rivals, the French and English. Keeping this in mind, internal evidence in Pagès’ account seems to verify his authenticity. He accurately describes everyday conditions which writers in Paris would hardly know or manufacture: the food shortages, hunger, and monotonous diet of East Texas; the differences between the Indians of one area to another; the trials of crossing boggy river bottoms. He also alludes briefly to a quarrel between provincial governors and to a proclamation by the new governor forbidding Indians to trade with the French.” Regarding Pagès’ motivations for visiting Texas, Sibley comments in *Travelers in Texas 1761-1860* (pp. 8-9):

Some of the [early] visitors [to Texas] were not only subtle but probably less than frank in stating their reasons for being in Texas... Equally questionable [as compared to Pike] is the frankness of Pagès of the French Navy. According to Pagès, he deserted his ship and crossed Texas because he wanted to see the world in its natural state. If this is true, the French had an odd way of rewarding their deserters, for upon his return home he was quickly forgiven for his defection, and later he became a captain and received the Croix de Louis. As his government had long been curious about the extent of Spanish control in Texas and as Pagès showed uncommon astuteness in determining it, one would guess that something more than interest in nature prompted his journey.

French naval officer Pagès (1748-1793), a native of Toulouse, gives an account of his five-year journey around the world in search of the Northwest Passage. Although he did not achieve his goal, he managed to explore parts of Louisiana, Texas, and Mexico. He embarked from Cape Français, Saint-Domingue, and thence to New Orleans and up the Mississippi and Red Rivers to Natchitoches. He then travelled across Texas by horseback in 1767 via Nacogdoches, San Antonio, Laredo and into Mexico, visiting at Saltillo, San Luis Potosí, and Mexico City. The first 130 pages are devoted to these travels in America. This is an important circumnavigation with a great deal more of interest than an admittedly provincial view of Texas. Pagès left Mexico via Acapulco, sailing to the Marianas, the Philippines, Java, Bombay, Surat, Muscat (in Oman), and Persia, where he joined a caravan to Mesopotamia, Syria, Lebanon, and Palestine. He sailed through the Mediterranean, disembarking at Marseilles, France, in 1771.

The second volume includes two further voyages. In 1773-1774, he accompanied the unsuccessful second voyage of Yves-Joseph de Kerguelen-Tremarec toward the South Pole in search of "Terra Australis Incognita." The second volume also describes Pagès' experiences on a Dutch whaling voyage north to Spitzbergen in 1776. They were unsuccessful in their efforts to reach the North Pole, but they did navigate as far as 80° 30' north. Pagès includes much information on whaling and the natural history of the whale. Included among the plates is an engraved marine scene showing the flensing of a whale. The two other plates show a sailing vessel, the bouanga, an outrigger with three tiers of oars, which Pagès saw in use in the Philippines. These are rare illustrations of a distinct type of vessel, which is similar in concept to the Greek trireme.

Pagès served in the French Navy during the American Revolution and took yet another voyage around the world in 1788-1790. He settled in Santo Domingo on his Creole wife's estate. He was among the victims of the Slave Rebellion in 1793. His last years were devoted to scientific researches, and he left several important works on America unfinished upon his death.

The very fine, detailed map entitled *Carte d'une partie de l'Amérique Séptentrionale que contient partie de la N^{le}. Espagne et de la Louisiane* is among the early maps to locate the Province of Texas. Delisle's 1718 map locates the mission of the Tejas (Martin & Martin, Plate 19). Alzate's 1768 *Nuevo Mapa Geográfico de la América Septentrional* designates the region as "Provincia de los Texas" (Martin & Martin Plate 20). The map shows Pagès' route through Louisiana, Texas, and Mexico. Other of the maps have value, including both the one depicting Australia and the world map in a Mercator projection showing the track of the voyage. The maps were engraved by "Benard", likely Robert Bénard, who did the maps for the French edition of Cook (see Tooley).

(\$1,500-3,000)