MEXICANA AT THE UNIVERSITY OF KENTUCKY
Including selections acquired on the
Lou Emma Wilson Mexicana Fund

CATALOG of a exhibit on the
Occasion of the 31st Annual Kentucky
Foreign Language Conference

24 April – 15 May 1978
Special Collections Gallery
University of Kentucky Libraries
MEXICANA AT THE UNIVERSITY OF KENTUCKY

The Mexicana Collection was last exhibited in the Department of Special Collections (in the old Rare Book Room, Kind Library South) during the Kentucky Foreign Language Conference of 1972. To the best of my knowledge, the display consisted only of books purchased on the Lou Emma Wilson Mexicana Fund, which numbered 31 titles. Although six years is not a long time in the history of books or of ideas, it has been such a fertile period for Mexicana in the University Libraries that a new exhibition seemed imperative. The meeting of the 31st Foreign Language Conference, one of the most important of its kind, was again an appropriate time for the display. The 35 titles in the catalog represent a fair sample of both our Mexicana and the generosity of Dr. Alberta Server who donated most of the items and without whom the collection would not exist.

The Collection consists of 54 pieces, including books, maps, facsimiles, and a manuscript book. Forty-two of these were purchased on the Wilson Fund established by Dr. Server in her mother’s memory, and about a dozen more titles have been given or purchased with general funds. It does not make a large collection, generally speaking, but it includes many unusual and interesting pieces and has the makings of a distinguished collection. For example, two of the entries are extremely rare: Item 32, Estimvlos recordativos.... 1725, is the only recorded copy, and while item 29, Juan de Palafox y Mendoza’s Varon de deseos.... 1642, is recorded in another collection, the National Library at Madrid, that copy is less perfect than ours.

Subjects represented in the collection include history and geography, literature, religion, and folk arts. Of special interest are the three Palafox items, 27-29, not only for their subject but because they are among the earliest books printed in Puebla, Mexico, which is, incidentally, Dr. Server’s “home town”. Items 24-26 are nearly compete runs of the three earliest Spanish periodicals published in America, and item 6 is a delightful hand colored map of Mexico City as it appeared to the Conquistadors, taken from Girolamo Porro’s L’isole piu famose del mondo .... 1572. There are also small collections relating to the history of the Spanish conquest (5 items), and the 19th century geography and travel (7 items). In all, 14 items were published before 1800, and five appeared before 1700 (not counting facsimile editions).

Exhibits result from cooperative efforts; this one perhaps more than most. We give special thanks to Prof. Joseph Jones of the Department of Spanish and Italian, and to Judy Fugate of the Collection Development Department for their help organizing and describing the exhibit. We are grateful to Dr. Keller for his introductory remarks which tell the story of the Fund and its remarkable namesake; and, above all, to Dr. Alberta Server who made it possible.

David Farrell
Curator of Rare Books
INTRODUCTION
“Lou Emma Wilson and Alberta Wilson Server”

At the age of twenty, Lou Emma Wilson set out from Kentucky with her husband, a railroad engineer, for a very primitive and revolution-torn land, Mexico in the early twentieth century. Mrs. Wilson was a courageous woman, for she knew not a word of Spanish and had an infant daughter, Alberta, to care for. Their first home was a one room casita de adobe in a railroad company camp. There was running water – a single faucet in the corner – but no other plumbing, of course, and no stove; cooking had to be done over a charcoal brazier. But Lou Emma Wilson rose to the challenge. After living in various towns – Porfirio Díaz, Tampico, Jalapa, Puebla, and Mexico City – the Wilsons settled in Puebla. They bought a small hotel, “The American House,” and a store that sold overalls, work gloves, and other supplies for railroad men. Dr. Server recalls that life in Puebla was pleasant, aside from the lack of conveniences. The climate was wonderful – no snow or excessive summer heat – and the Wilsons had fresh fruit and vegetables the year around. Better still, Puebla had a small and friendly American colony and an English school run by an elderly British woman. Young Alberta was able to obtain a good formal education at the Methodist Mission School which provided eight grades in English. She was one of three Americans among six hundred girls. Still later, Mrs. Wilson put her daughter under tutelage of a Methodist minister’s wife who was preparing her own children for American high school.

Mrs. Wilson used to tell colorful stories of their years in Mexico. There were terrifying earthquakes, torrential rains, and a jungle in the backyard where Alberta was badly stung by a poisonous caterpillar as she was climbing a tree. Reveille sounded each morning from the penitentiary barracks across the street; fresh water was purchased weekly from a peddler; mule-drawn streetcars provided transportation; there were picnics atop ancient pyramids. Diseases such as scarlet fever and diphtheria were rampant, and Mrs. Wilson recalled yellow flags flying from houses where the sick resided. She made Alberta wear a pouch of asafetida around her neck and soaked the hems of her skirts in formaldehyde. “But the proof of the pudding was in the eating,” says Dr. Server. “I was a remarkably healthy child and had no serious illnesses”.

Then came the Revolution which threw Mexico into some chaos for many years. Bullets flew past the Wilson home, and the danger was such that most women left Puebla. But Lou Emma Wilson, like her daughter, loved Mexico and would willingly have remained for the rest of her life. Alberta Server still regards Mexico as her segunda patria and feels completely at home there. It was their love of Mexico that led Dr. Server to establish in her mother’s memory the Lou Emma Wilson Mexicana Fund for the purchase of rare books on Mexico. She believes, as does the Department of Spanish and Italian, that in years to come scholars will visit Lexington to use this growing collection.
When the Wilson family first returned to Kentucky, Alberta felt like a fish out of water, since the children she met knew none of the Mexican games she knew. Snow, which she had seen only from a distance, enthralled her, and to this day she loves winter. She had no difficulty entering high school in America. And she graduated Salutatorian of her class. She received her A.B. degree from the University of Kentucky in 1920 and her M.A. in Zoology in 1921. Her Doctorat de l'Universite de Besancon was conferred in 1939. She graduated with highest distinction from Kentucky and from Besancon, a notable achievement for an American.

Lou Emma Wilson lived with her daughter in Lexington until her death in 1963. She was a true lady, kindhearted, warm, and sensible. She imparted these values to her daughter and must have been proud to see Dr. Server recognized as a distinguished teacher and scholar.

Alberta Server retired from the University of Kentucky after teaching forty-five years. She is a member of many learned and professional societies including Phi Beta Kappa, the American Association of Teachers of Spanish and Portuguese, the South Atlantic Modern Language Association, the National League of Pen Women, the Kentucky Historical Society, and the American Association of University Women. Her publications appear in BOOKS ABROAD, HISTPANIA (organ of the AATSP), FRENCH REVIEW, and REVIE DE DEUX MONDES. Her book, SOBRE EL TAPETE VERDE is a treatise on the game of bridge. For thirteen years she edited KENTUCKY FOREIGN LANGUAGE QUARTERLY.

Dr. Server is a distinguished Kentuckian and educator, and she will be long remembered, as will her mother, through the Lou Emma Wilson Mexicana Fund, which we see represented in this splendid exhibit.

J.E. Keller
Professor of Spanish
CATALOG

1

24 p., map, 25 col. Plates in portfolio
UK Call No: Spec. Coll 913.728:C286

2

*Relacion de las ceremonias y ritos y poblacion y gobierno de los Indios de la provincial de michoacan (1541)* (Catalog Record only)
Madrid, Aguilar, 1956.
Xxxiii, 296 p., illus.
Facsimile reproduction.

4 v. in 2, plates, maps, genealogical tables.

UK Call No: Spec Coll 972:C5784s

First edition of this monumental work. The author was born in Veracruz and educated in Puebla and Tepotzotlan, where he entered the Society of Jesus. He taught in Mexico and Spain, and, when the Jesuits were expelled from the Spanish dominions in 1737, he settled in Bologna, Italy. There he finished his great history of Mexico and translated it into Italian. Clavijero’s judicious use of original sources, some now lost, and his sympathy for the Mexican natives make his a unique history for its time, and one of the most important histories of Mexico.
Gregorio Garcia (d. 1627). *Origen de los Indios de el Nuevo Mundo*... 
Madrid, F. Martinez Abad, 1729. 
16, 336 (i.e. 330), [80] p., illus 

Garcia was a Spanish Dominican who served the Order in Mexico and Peru. His work on the origins of the American Indians – of which our copy is from the second edition of 1729 (the first edition appeared in 1607) – was widely read in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. Garcia believed that the Indians were descendents of ancient Hebrew immigrants, a notion still held by the Latter Day Saints.

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Alexander, Freiherr von Humboldt (1796-1859). *Researches, concerning the institutions and monuments of the ancient inhabitants of America, with descriptions and views of some of the most striking scenes in the Cordilleras!* 
2 v., 20 plates. 
UK Call No: 972:H883

Von Humboldt was a German naturalist and traveler, an “amateur” whose researchers on four continents contributed to the sciences of geology, ethnology, meteorology, and physics. His collected works ran to 30 volumes. The first edition of the *Researches*, reporting on a voyage undertaken during the years 1799-1804, appeared in French in 1810.
Girolamo Porro (b. 1550). *Descrittione della Gran Citta*... [plan of Mexico City].
Venice, S. Galignani & G. Porro, 1572.
UK Call No: 917.25:P821

A very fine, rare plan of Mexico City (called “Temistitan Messico”) as it probably appeared to the Conquistadores. The city itself is centered in a large lake, surrounded by many smaller islands, and shows numerous buildings. Detached from Porro’s *L’isole piu famose del mondo* ..., hand-colored.

Hernando Cortes (1485-1547). *Cartas de Relacion de la Conquista de la Nueva Espana* .... [Codex Vindobonesis S. N. 1600] Graz, Austria, Akademische Druck – U. Verlagsanstalt, 1960. 2 v. UK Call No: 090.8:C6483:v.2

Facsimile reproduction of documents relating to the Spanish conquest of America during the decade following 1519. Included among the documents (the originals of which are in the Austrian National Library at Vienna) are Cortes' letters to Charles V, letters of the first Conquistadores of Central America, and an account of Pizarro’s first explorations in Peru.

Includes a narrative with historical documents confirming the importance of the Mercedarians (members of the Order of Our Lady of Mercy) as explorers and colonizers in New Spain. According to this history, the first monks to introduce Christianity to the New World (Mexico and Peru) were Mercedarians.


A comprehensive history of the conquest of Central America (chiefly Guatemala and Yucatan). The author was a member of the Royal Council and of the Council of the Indies.

First edition of a manuscript, *Idea compendiosa del Reyno de Nueva Espana*, in the National Library at Madrid. The author, a native of Cadiz, was educated in France, traveled widely in the New World, and lived a prosperous life in his native country. His parents, like his wife, were of Irish descent. Like many of their forebears, they left Ireland to escape English rule and round a comfortable home in Spain. The “Wild Geese,” as they were called, took comfort in the belief that Ireland had been settled 3,000 years BC by Iberians.
Madrid, Privately printed, 1927.
Xxxviii, 167 p.
UK Call No: Spec. Coll 972.02:T599

After the Inquisition was established in Mexico (1571), hapless adventurers from Protestant countries ventured into New Spain at their own risk. A number of seamen such as Tomson, cast ashore by shipwreck, were examined and condemned by the Inquisition. The present volume is an account of one trial. Tomson was found guilty (he was Lutheran) and was duly excommunicated from the Catholic Church. He was ordered to be “publicly divested of his shoes and hose and cape, and be made to stand with a wax candle in his hand, attired in a San Benito having two crosses... there to listen to the sermon which in the said Holy Church may be preached on the said Sunday....” Later, he was consigned to the galleys and imprisoned in Seville.

Alejandro Prieto. *Historia, geografia y estadistica del estado de Tamaulipas*....
Mexico, Escalerillas, 1873.
4, 361, 2 p., plates, maps, tables.
UK Call No: Spec. Coll 972.1:P933

Early History of the Mexican State.


Memories of the 18th Century Mexican emperor.

15


UK Call No: Spec. Coll 923.172: C279
Lefevre, Eugene. *Documents officiels recueillis dans la secretairerie privee de Maximilien.*
Bruxelles & Londres, Parent et Fils, 1869.
2 v. in l.
UK Call No: Spec. Coll 972.07:L521

Subtitled “History of the French intervention in Mexico”.

Paris, A. Faure, 1867
2 v.
UK Call No: Spec. Coll 972.07:N692

Paris, A. Eymery, 1824.
11 p., maps, plates.
UK Call No: Spec. Coll 917.2:B876a

Includes plans of Mexico City, ancient and contemporary, and views of Mexico, and six colored plates of Mexicans in costume.

John Jay Williams (1818-1904). *Maps Illustrating the Isthmus of Tehuantepec.*
New York, Appleton, 1852.
UK Call No: Spec. Coll 917.27:W673

Eight contemporary maps.
Albert M. Gilliam. *Travels over the table lands and Cordilleras of Mexico during the years 1843 and 44....*  
Philadelphia, J. W. Moore, 1846  
Xv, [17]-455 p., plates, maps.  
UK Call No: Spec. Coll 917.2:G414t

Travel diary of a former U.S. Consul to California, including notes on the principal cities and mining districts of that republic, and biographies of Iturbide and Santa Anna.

Memories of a British naval officer.

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Another account by an officer in the Royal Navy, “with some account of the mines in that country.” Includes a glossary of mining terminology.
Joel Roberts Poinsett (1779-1851). *Notes on Mexico, made in the autumn of 1822. Accompanied by a historical sketch of the revolution,...*  
Philadelphia, Carey and Lea, 1824.  
Vi, 359 p.  
UK Call No: Spec. Coll 917.2:P755n:1824

Poinsett was born in Charleston, S. C., educated in England and the United States, and spent several years in Argentina and Chile. In 1816, he was elected to the House of Representatives and was sent to Mexico on a special mission in 1822-23. In 1825, he resigned his House seat to become the first minister to Mexico, remaining until 1829. Later, he was appointed Secretary of War by President Van Buren. Poinsett’s interests included botany, agriculture, and fine arts. The poinsettia was named in his honor after he brought the flower from Mexico.

*Gazetas de Mexico* [bi-weekly periodical]. V. 2-16, 1786-1809.  
Mexico City, Zuniga y Ontiveros.  
UK Call No: 079.72:G258

The first periodical published in Latin America.
Diario de Mexico [newspaper]. V. 1-13, 1805-1810.
Mexico City, M. Fernandez.
UK Call No: Spec. Coll 079.72:D542

First Daily newspaper in Latin America; it lasted twelve years. Subtitled “diario... politico, economic, literario y mercantil.”

Mexico City, Galvan.
Juan de Palafox y Mendoza, bishop of Osma (1600-1659). *Historia Real Sagrada*....
Puebla, Francisco Robledo, 1643.
42, 242, 14 p.
UK Call No: 220.95:P172

Palafox had a childhood that reads like a novel. The bastard of a nobleman, he was abandoned by his mother and saved by a peasant. At ten, his father acknowledged him and educated him for a life at court where he served in several prominent posts. He abandoned this career to become a priest, rising to the bishopric of Puebla at the age of thirty-nine. In the New World he tried to improve the religious commitment of the colonists and the education of their children. A conflict with the Jesuits developed when he sought to protect the natives from Spanish cruelty and forbade forced religious conversions. The Jesuits took their case to the Pope and succeeded in having Palafox transferred to a provincial bishopric in Old Castile, where he died.

*Historia Real Sagrada* is one of the earliest books from the Puebla press. It is a political treatise based on the first book of Samuel, which is offered as a Christian refutation of the works of Machiavelli and Bodin. It is extremely rare; only three other copies have been recorded.

A rare volume published by the Jesuits. It gives their response to charges made against them by Palafox, a chronicle of one chapter in the famous feud that resulted in Palafox’s removal.
First edition of an extremely rare volume; the only other recorded copy, in the National Library at Madrid, is lacking the final leaf.

Palafox wrote *Varon de deseos* immediately upon his arrival in Puebla in 1640. Overwhelmed with the abuses and cruelties of the Spanish clergy toward the Indians. He sought to improve the colonists’ religious concerns.

A manuscript book probably written by a student of philosophy at a Mexican university. Includes philosophical discourse, proverbs, and geographical notes.

A manuscript book probably written by a student of philosophy at a Mexican university. Includes philosophical discourse, proverbs, and geographical notes.
The story of San Felipe de Jesus, his missions to the Philippines and to Japan, and his death as a martyr. The story is told in primitive but beautifully executed engravings.

32

_estimulos recordativos del alma dormida en la tibieza._
Mexico, 1725.
2, 214 p.
UK Call No: Spec. Coll 861:Es86

A rare and apparently unrecorded book of Spanish religious poetry. No author’s name is given. Includes a primitive woodcut of the crucified Christ between two flower pots.

33

Rafael Landival (1731-1793). _Rusticatio Mexicana._
Bologna, Aquinis, 1782.
Xxviii, 209 p.

Descriptive poems of Mexico and Guatemala.
Feliciano de Sevilla (d. 1722). *El sol increado dios trino y uno*....
Mexico, Zuniga y Ontiveros, 1790.
18, 464, p.
UK Call No: Spec. Coll 231:Se844s

A work by a Capuchin friar from Seville who was a missionary in Mexico. Includes a collection of coplas, cancione, and a romance, “en Metafora del Sol, que discurre por los doce signos del Zodiaco.”

Juan Nuix (1740-1783). *Reflexiones imparciales sobre la humanidad de los espanoles*....
Madrid, J. Ibarra, 1782.
2. 1ii, 315 p.
UK Call No: Spec. Coll 980.5:N911
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