

Mexican American War

1846-1848



Mexico and Texas

- Mexico declared independence from Spain in 1810, recognized in 1821
- 1822, Stephen Austin founded colony of several hundred Americans in East Texas
 - 1825 – 1,800 colonists
 - 1835 – 30,000
- As numbers increased, Americans demanded more political control
 - Wanted slavery to be guaranteed under Mex. Law
 - Wanted same rights that they had in United States



- Stephen Austin is known as the “Father of Texas”

Texas War for Independence

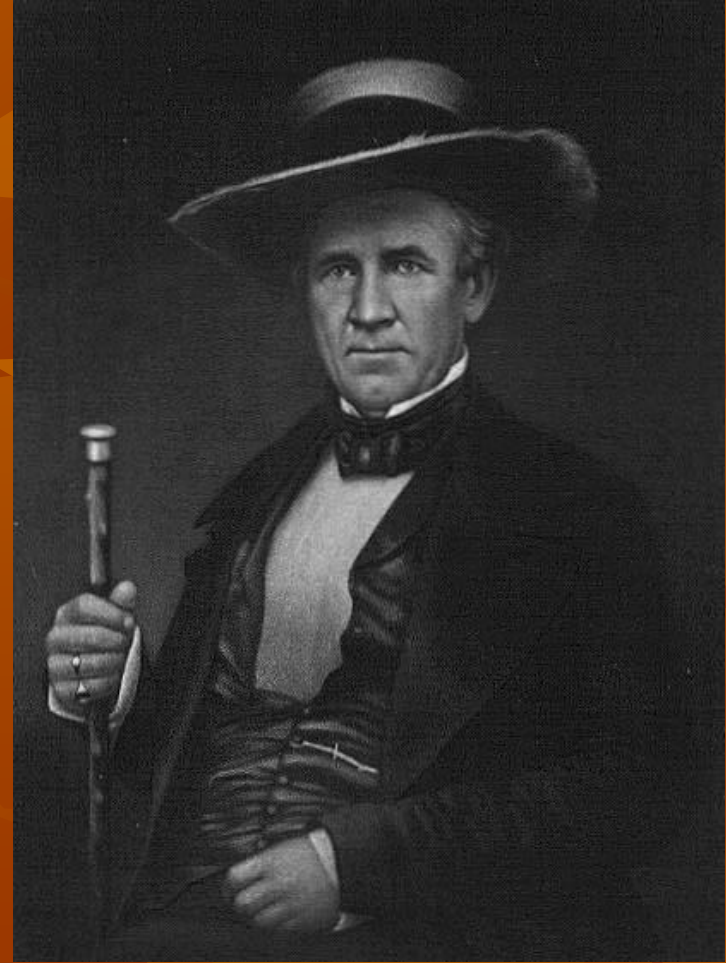
- General Santa Ana declared himself dictator of Mexico, stripped Texas of right to self-govt.
- 1835 - Texans united for independence, clashed w/ Mexican troops
- Santa Ana led army across Rio Grande to subdue rebellion
- Feb. 1836, reached the Alamo, walled mission in San Antonio
- Many died, 300 prisoners later executed

Republic of Texas

- March 1836 – Rebels formally declare the independent Republic of Texas
- April 1836 – Texans led by Sam Houston ambushed Mexican troops at San Jacinto River
- Captured Santa Ana, forced him to sign treaty recognizing the Republic of Texas (Battle of San Jacinto)
- Sam Houston elected 1st president of Texas

- Sam Houston

Led American colonists against the Mexican Gov't his father had worked with.



Annexation of Texas

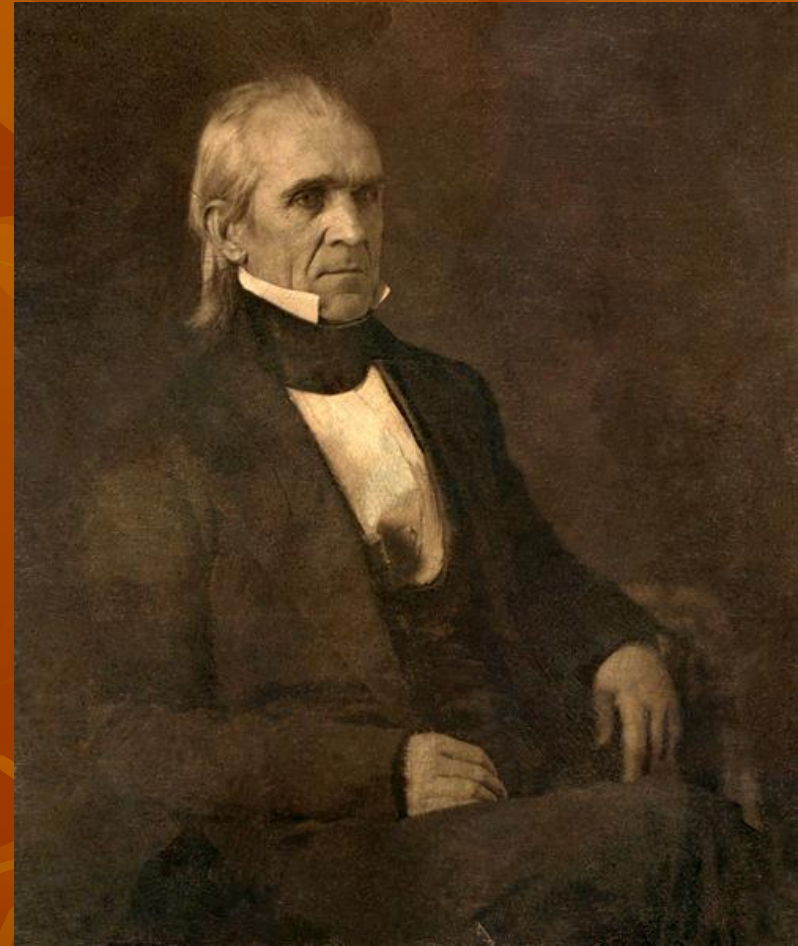
- Most Southerners/Democrats supported Texas' annexation, Northerners/Whigs were opposed
- 1843 – Santa Ana warned that annexation of Texas would be “equivalent to a declaration of war against the Mexican Republic.”
- 1845, Republic of Texas voted to be annexed by the United States Congress approved
- Texas became 28th state under James K. Polk

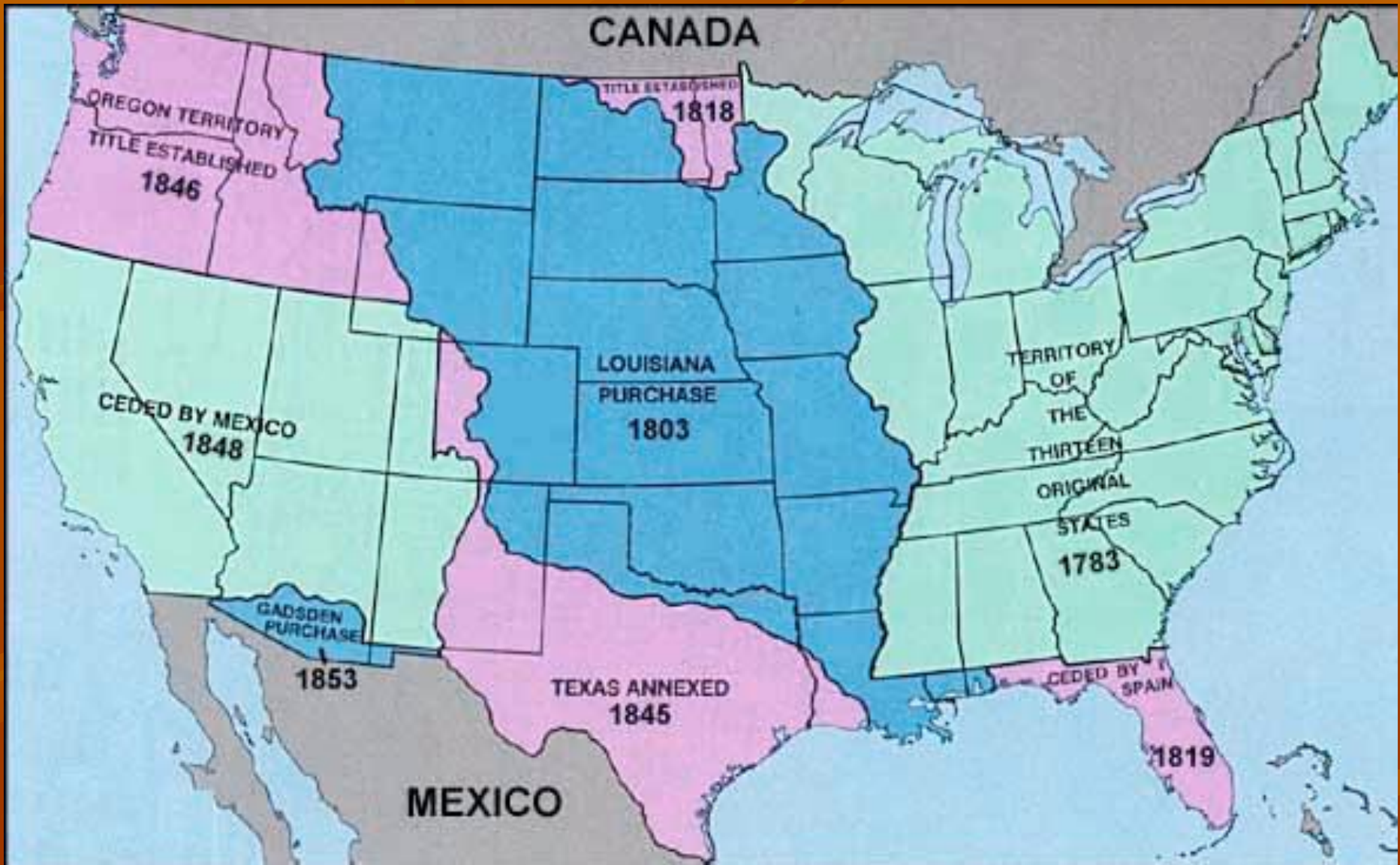
War with Mexico

- Began over dispute of southern boundary of Texas
 - U.S. claimed Rio Grande as southern border
 - Mexico claimed Nueces River as border
- Polk wanted more than just Texas
 - Elected on platform of Manifest Destiny
 - Wanted to acquire entire western Mexican territory

James Polk (1845-1849)

- Polk won the Democratic Party nomination for president in 1844 because of his support for expansion.
 - Party's platform stated: "the re-occupation of Oregon and the re-annexation of Texas at the earliest practical period are great American measures."





1836 - 1845

UNITED STATES

Arkansas R.

Disputed
Territory

TEXAS

Rio
Grande

Washington

S. Antonio

Nueces R.

MEXICO



Failed Diplomacy

- Polk sent a representative to Mexico City in November, 1845
 - Offered to buy New Mexico and California
 - Mex. Govt. refused to meet him
- Polk then ordered over 3,000 troops under General Zachary Taylor into disputed territory
- Mexican troops engaged in skirmish with American troops
- Polk expressed outrage at loss of “American blood on American soil.”

War is Declared on Mexico

- Polk asked Congress to declare war
- War declared in May of 1846
- American troops took offensive
- Expedition under Captain John Fremont moved into California
 - Group of American settlers had already proclaimed an independent Republic of California
- By Jan. of 1847, U.S. had California and N.M.

War in Mexico

- Generals Taylor and Scott invaded Mexico, captured the port city of Veracruz, marched army of 10,000 toward Mexico City
- Captured Mexico City in September, 1848
- Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo ended war
 - Mexico gave up claim to Texas
 - Recognized Rio Grande as border with U.S.
 - Gave up New Mexico and California
 - United States paid Mexico \$15 million

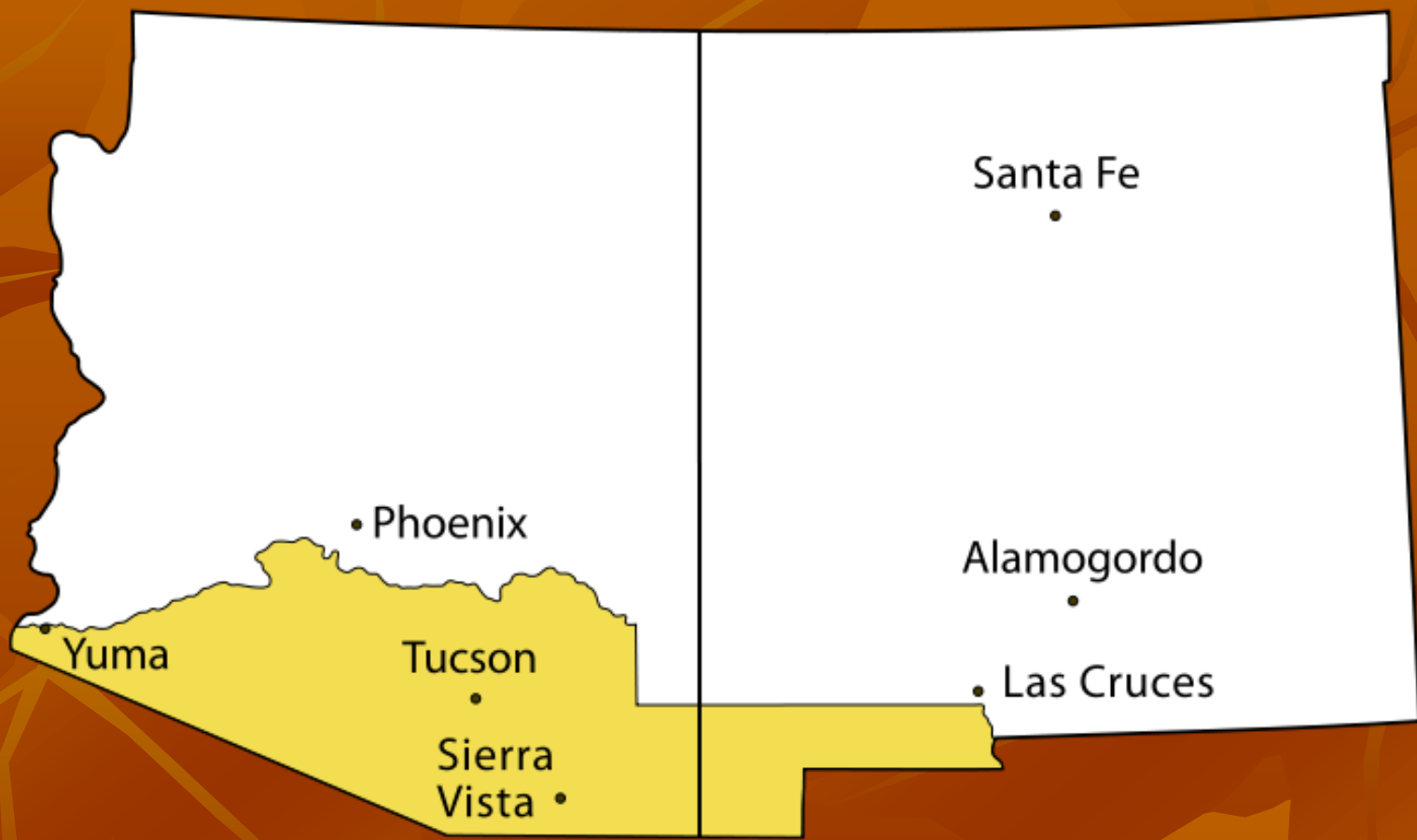


Gadsden Purchase

- U.S. considered a southern route for a transcontinental railroad
- 1853, Mexico sold 30,000 square miles of southern New Mexico and Arizona to U.S. for \$10 million.

National Elevation Data Set Shaded Relief of Arizona





Yuma

• Phoenix

Tucson

Sierra
Vista •

Santa Fe

Alamogordo

• Las Cruces

U.S. TERRITORIAL ACQUISITIONS



Acquisition of Territory

- 1763 – French and Indian War
- 1783 – Revolutionary War (Treaty of Paris)
- 1803 – Louisiana Purchase
- 1812 – Concrete Northeast Border (Treaty of Ghent)
- 1818 – Treaty of 1818, 49th Parallel to “Stony Mtns”)
- 1819/21 – Adams-Onis Treaty
- 1845 – Texas as 38th state
- 1846 – Oregon Treaty
- 1848 – Mexican Cession
- 1853 – Gadsden Purchase

U.S. TERRITORIAL ACQUISITIONS



Ceded to Great Britain 1818

British Cession 1818

Spanish Cession 1819

Louisiana Purchase 1803 (from France)

Mexican Cession 1848

Gadsden Purchase 1853 (from Mexico)

Texas Annexation 1845 (former Republic of Texas)

Spanish Cession 1819

West Florida (Spanish Cession) 1819

East Florida (Spanish Cession) 1819

Albers equal area projection



Puerto Rico Ceded by Spain 1898

Virgin Islands Purchased from Denmark 1917

Hawaii Annexation 1898 (former Republic of Hawaii)

Alaska Purchase 1867 (from Russia)



Frederick Jackson Turner



- Turn of the century American historian
- “The Significance of the Frontier in American History” (1893)
- Claimed the frontier had played a key role in shaping the American character (“rugged individualism”)
- Frontier life created Americans that were socially mobile, ready for adventure, bent on individual self-improvement, and committed to democracy
- The West was a sort of “pressure valve”