

The

Mexican War

(1846-1848)



- ➔ Memorial to the “Invasión Norte Americana de 1847” in Veracruz, Mexico

Why did the war start?



President Polk: General Taylor, move the troops to the edge of the Rio Grande river. Then wait and see...

- Mexican movements
- U.S. move
- ★ Mexican victory
- ★ U.S. victory
- U.S. naval

Oh, look. "American blood has been shed on American soil." Congress, let's go to war!

How do people perceive this?

⇒ Mexico views this as...

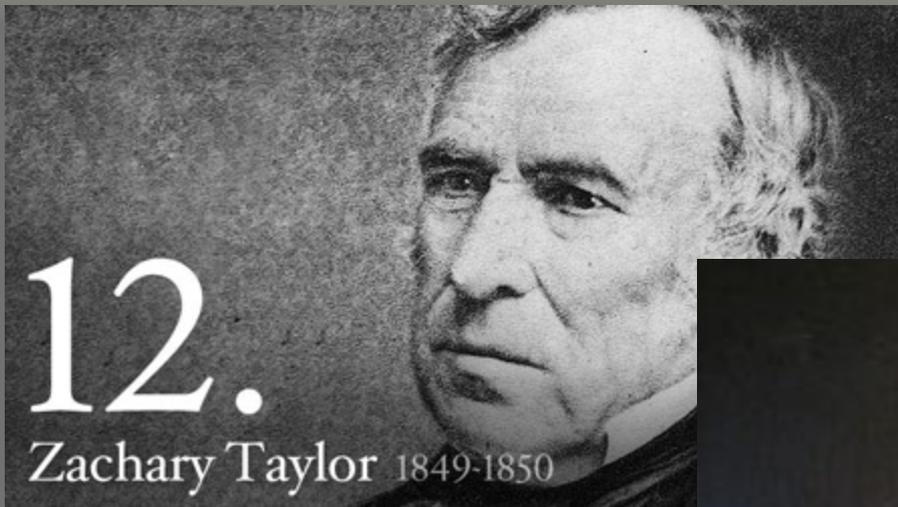
- An invasion of their territory

⇒ Anti-war protesters in the United States view this as...

- An excuse to expand slavery
- An “unjust war”
- A cause for *Civil Disobedience*?

Key Events of the War

➔ The US military is led by:



The Siege of Veracruz

- ➔ Veracruz was considered the strongest fort in the Western Hemisphere
- ➔ First large scale amphibious assault by the U.S. military
- ➔ Lasted 20 days and ended with the U.S. capture of the city
- ➔ More US soldiers died from yellow fever than battle

El Batallon de San Patricio



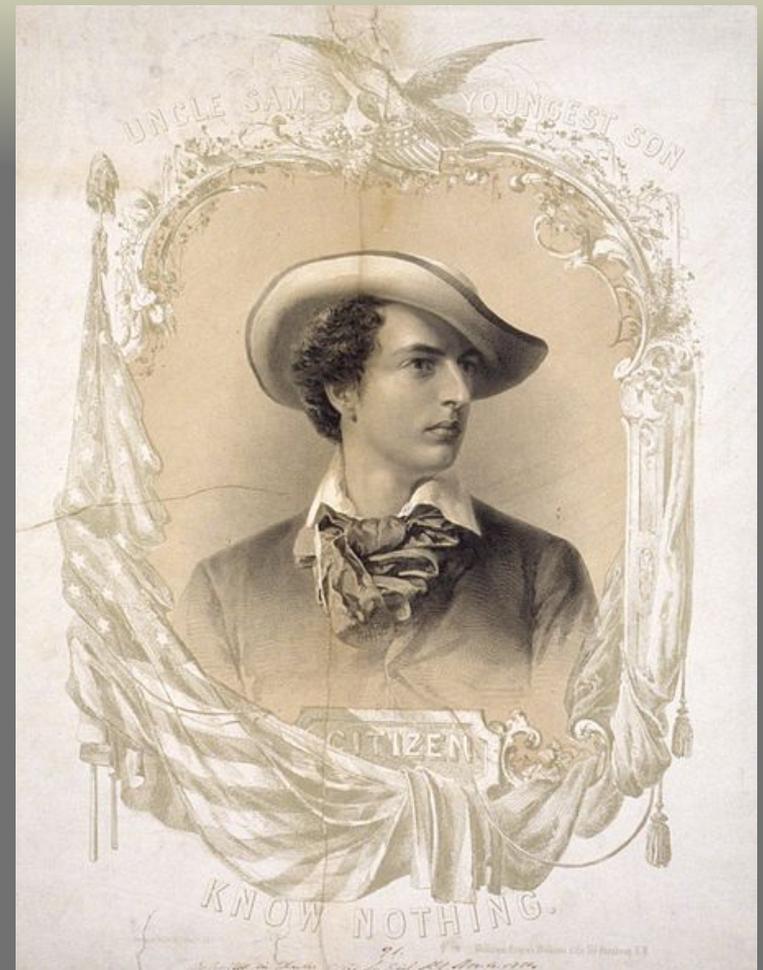
- ➔ One of the big problems the U.S. army faced was desertions
- ➔ A battalion of foreign fighters, mostly Irish, was created

“We live in peace and friendship with nations you come from. Why do you want to fight against us? Come to us! We will welcome you as friends with open arms, take care of your needs, we offer you more than the Yankees can provide, due to their brazenness, we (sic) have been forced into this war. Join us and fight with us for our rights and for our sacred religion against this infidel enemy.”

Mexicans routinely passed out pamphlets directed at the American immigrant soldiers printed in German, English and French.

Nativism: anti-immigrant feeling

- ➔ The Know-Nothing party campaigned on an anti-immigrant platform
- ➔ Why would these feelings be common during this time?
- ➔ What do the Irish and the Mexicans have in common?



The Capture of Mexico City



“Old Fuss and Feathers”

At Chapultepec Castle

- ➔ The Niños Heroes saved the flag from Chapultepec Castle, which was a military academy
- ➔ The Mexican army, however, was forced to surrender



Treaty of Guadalupe-Hidalgo, 1848

The Treaty was basically forced on Mexico!

- Mexico gave up claims to Texas above the Rio Grande River.
- Mexico gave the U. S. California and New Mexico.
- U. S. gave Mexico \$15,000,000 and agreed to pay the claims of American citizens against Mexico (over \$3,500,000).

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The Mexican Cession

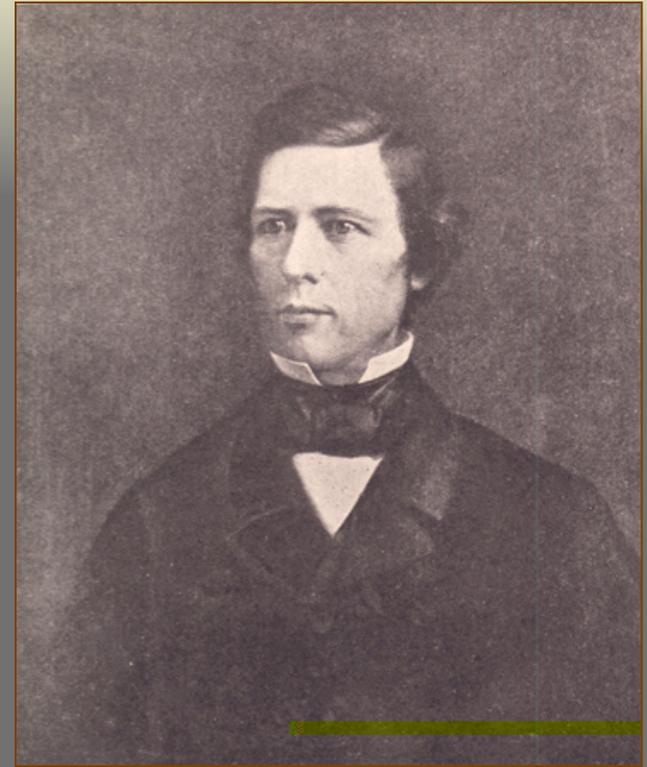


How did those against the war feel?

1. It was a waste: the 17-month war cost \$100,000,000 and 13,000+ American lives (mostly of disease).
2. Slavery was the new fear!
 - * Brought in 1 million sq. mi. of land (incl. TX).
 - * These new territories would upset the balance of power between North and South.
3. Ulysses Grant, a famous Civil War general who served in the Mexican American War said: The Southern rebellion was largely the outgrowth of the Mexican war. Nations, like individuals, are punished for their transgressions. We got our punishment in the most [bloody] and expensive war of modern times.

Wilmot Proviso, 1846

Provided, territory from that, as an express and fundamental condition to the acquisition of any of the Republic of Mexico by the United States, by virtue of any treaty which may be negotiated between them, and to the use by the Executive of the moneys herein appropriated, neither slavery nor involuntary servitude shall ever exist in any part of said territory, except for crime, whereof the party shall first be duly convicted.



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Final thoughts on the Mex-Am War

“We love to indulge in thoughts of the future extent and power of this Republic—because with its increase is the increase of human happiness and liberty. . . . What has miserable, inefficient Mexico—with her superstition, her burlesque upon freedom, her actual tyranny by the few over the many—what has she to do with the great mission of peopling the New World with a noble race? Be it ours, to achieve that mission!” —*Walt Whitman, Editorial, Brooklyn Daily Eagle, July 7, 1846*

"This war was an aggressive war in which we attacked a neighbor and however much we won from the war, we do not like to look at the way in which we won it." —*David Pletcher, American Historian, 1998*

