

Manifest Destiny and Its Legacy

1841 – 1848

Territorial Expansion in 1840s

- **Dominated US diplomacy and politics**
- **Settlers in Oregon Country provoked conflict with Britain**
- **Annexation of Texas caused problems with Mexico**
- **Mexican-American War and conflict over California**
 - **Victory led to fight over expansion of slavery**

The Accession of “Tyler Too”

- **1841 – William Henry Harrison became president**
 - **Seen more as figurehead**
 - **Daniel Webster (secretary of state) and Henry Clay (in Senate) led Whig Party**
 - **Harrison finally reigned in Webster and Clay**
- **After only 4 weeks in office, Harrison got pneumonia and died**

The Accession of “Tyler Too”

- **John Tyler**
 - **Virginian aristocrat**
 - **Had left Democratic party because of dictatorial tactics of Jackson**
 - **Part of minority in Whig party that accepted many states’ rights ideas of Democrats**
 - **Opposed Whig party platform**
 - **Whigs were pro-bank, pro-protective tariff, pro-internal improvements**



**President
John Tyler**

John Tyler: A President Without a Party

- **Financial reform first for Whigs**
 - **Whig Congress first passed law ending Van Buren's independent treasury**
 - **Signed by Tyler**
 - **Congress next passed law for a "Fiscal Bank" to establish new Bank of US**

John Tyler: A President Without a Party

- **Tyler vetoed bill for “Fiscal Bank”**
 - **Constitutional and practical grounds**
- **Congress retries; passes bill for “Fiscal Corporation”**
 - **Again vetoed by Tyler**

John Tyler: A President Without a Party

- **Political reaction to bank vetoes**
 - Democrats extremely happy; if not for death of Harrison, they would have been stuck with new Bank of US
 - Whigs extremely angry
 - Tyler burned in effigy, attacked in words, and even threatened with death
 - Congress debated impeachment
 - Tyler's entire cabinet (except Webster) resigned
 - Tyler formally expelled from his party

John Tyler: A President Without a Party

- **The tariff**
 - Whigs passed tariff that was protective (which Tyler opposed) and distributed money from sale of western land to states
 - Tyler opposed distribution of money to states because federal treasury was low on money
 - Whigs rewrote law; tariff rate lowered to 32% (about same as 1832 rate) and distribution of money to states dropped
 - Tyler signed into law because federal government needed money

A War of Words with Britain

- **Anti-British feelings erupted periodically in 1800s**
- **Why Americans were anti-British**
 - **Bitter memories of 2 wars with Britain**
 - **Pro-British Federalists had disappeared**
 - **Aristocratic British looked down on crude Americans**
 - **Travelers and magazine writers attacked American backwardness**
 - **British writers attacked US because of lack of copyright in US (until 1891 for foreign writers)**

A War of Words with Britain

- **British loaned money to US economy**
 - **Owing money to British made them unpopular in US**
 - **Panic of 1837 led to some states defaulting on loans**
 - **British attacked US for not paying back loans**

A War of Words with Britain

- **1837 – short rebellion in Canada**
 - Had no real chance of success
 - Americans (although US government was neutral) sent money and guns to rebels
 - **Caroline – US ship transporting supplies to Canada set on fire by British**
 - US protested without success
- **1840 – a Canadian (McLeod) arrested for Caroline attack in US**
 - Britain threatened war if he was executed
 - Came up with an alibi and released

A War of Words with Britain

- **1841 – British in Bahamas offered 130 escaped slaves asylum**
 - **British had abolished slavery in 1834**
 - **South feared that escaped slaves would run to British Caribbean as well as Canada**

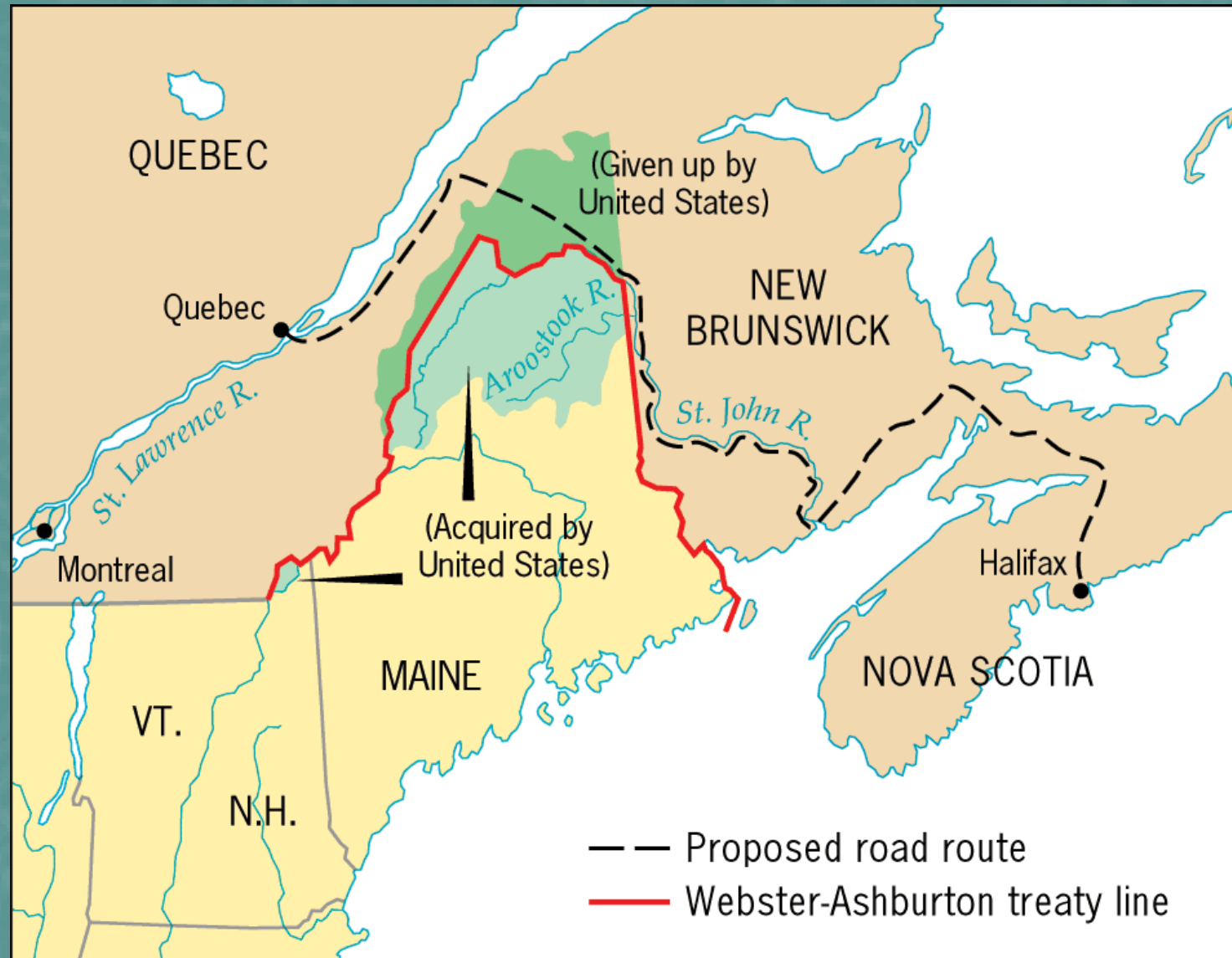
Manipulating the Maine Maps

- **British want to build a road from Halifax to Quebec**
 - **Would go through land disputed by British and US (1783 Treaty of Paris had been unclear)**
 - **“Aroostook War” (1838 – 1839)**
 - **Settlers on both sides clashed in Aroostook Valley**

Manipulating the Maine Maps

- **1842 – Britain sent Lord Ashburton to make peace (working with Webster)**
 - **US and Britain split (approximately) the disputed area**
 - **Britain got the land needed to build its road**
 - **US got land to west (Minnesota), settling the US-Canada border there**

Maine Boundary Settlement, 1842



The Lone Star of Texas Shines Alone

- **1836 – 1844 – Texas's hostile relations with Mexico**
 - **Mexico refused to recognize Texas' independence**
 - **Planned to reconquer Texas**
 - **Threatened war if US annexed Texas**

The Lone Star of Texas Shines Alone

- **Texas entered into negotiations with Britain and France for protection**
 - **1839 – 1840 – treaties with France, Holland, Belgium signed**
 - **French also wanted to divide and militarize America by working with Texas**

The Lone Star of Texas Shines Alone

- **British reasons for dealing with Texas**
 - **Wanted to stop advance of US in southwest and weaken US**
 - **US threatened British possessions in New World**
 - **Texas would give British excuse to move into New World and challenge Monroe Doctrine**
 - **British abolitionists wanted to use Texas as base to attack slavery in rest of South**
 - **Texas important for free trade (while US had protective tariff)**
 - **Texas would be grow a lot of cotton that British factories depended on, especially if supply from US was ever cut off**

The Belated Texas Nuptials

- **1844 – Texas became important issue, including in presidential election**
 - **US feared British involvement in Texas**
 - **Pro-expansionist Democrat Polk won presidential election**

The Belated Texas Nuptials

- **Tyler gets Texas annexed by US**
 - Believes Polk's victory gives him "mandate"
 - Annexation opposed by "conscience Whigs" because of expansion of slavery
 - Tyler gets Congress to annex Texas by joint resolution (requiring simple majority – 50% + 1) instead of treaty (requiring 2/3 vote in Senate)
 - Early 1845 – Texas annexed by US

The Belated Texas Nuptials

- **Mexican reaction to annexation**
 - **Believed US had taken Texas from Mexico**
- **Reality of Texas annexation**
 - **Had been independent for 9 years**
 - **US had to stop foreign powers (especially Britain) from gaining foothold in Texas**

Oregon Fever Populates Oregon

- **Oregon Country**
 - From Rockies to Pacific Ocean, northern California to 54° 40' line (southern border of Alaska today)
 - 4 nations claimed all or part of Oregon
 - Spain, Russia, Britain, US
 - 1819 – Spain gave up its claim to US in Florida Treaty of 1819
 - 1824 – 1825 – Russia moved north of 54° 40' line with treaties with US and Britain

Oregon Fever Populates Oregon

- **British claims to Oregon**
 - **Strongest north of Columbia River**
 - **Discovery, exploration, treaty rights, and actual occupation supported British rights**
 - **Hudson's Bay Company traded furs with Indians**

Oregon Fever Populates Oregon

- **US claims to Oregon**
 - **1792 – Robert Gray discovered Columbia River**
 - **1804 – 1806 – Lewis and Clark expedition explored Oregon**
 - **1830s – Christian settlers moved to Oregon to convert Indians and settle land**

Oregon Fever Populates Oregon

- **Treaty of 1818**
 - **US and Britain had agreed on 49th parallel as northern border of Louisiana Purchase**
 - **US and Britain would share Oregon Country**
 - **US had wanted to extend 49th parallel across continent, but British wanted area around Columbia River**

U.S.-British Boundary Settlement, 1818



Oregon Fever Populates Oregon

- **1840s – Oregon Fever led thousands of Americans to settle Oregon**
 - **1846 – 5,000 Americans south of Columbia River**
 - **British only had about 700 north of Columbia**
- **Area in dispute**
 - **49th parallel to Columbia River to Pacific Ocean**
 - **British saw need for peaceful solution**

The Oregon Controversy, 1846



A Mandate (?) for Manifest Destiny

- **Election of 1844**
 - **Whigs nominated Henry Clay**
 - **Nationally popular senator from Kentucky**
 - **Democrats nominated James K. Polk**
 - **“dark horse” (surprise) candidate**
 - **Had been speaker of the House and governor of Tennessee**

A Mandate (?) for Manifest Destiny

- **Manifest Destiny**
 - US believed God had destined US to expand from Atlantic to Pacific Oceans
 - Combination of “empire” and “liberty”
 - US would control land and spread democracy over continent
 - Heavily influenced the election of 1844

Manifest Destiny



A Mandate (?) for Manifest Destiny

- **Democratic campaign**
 - **Strongly in favor of annexation of Texas and Oregon**
 - **Condemned Clay as “corrupt bargainer” and slave owner**
 - **Even thought Polk also owned slaves**

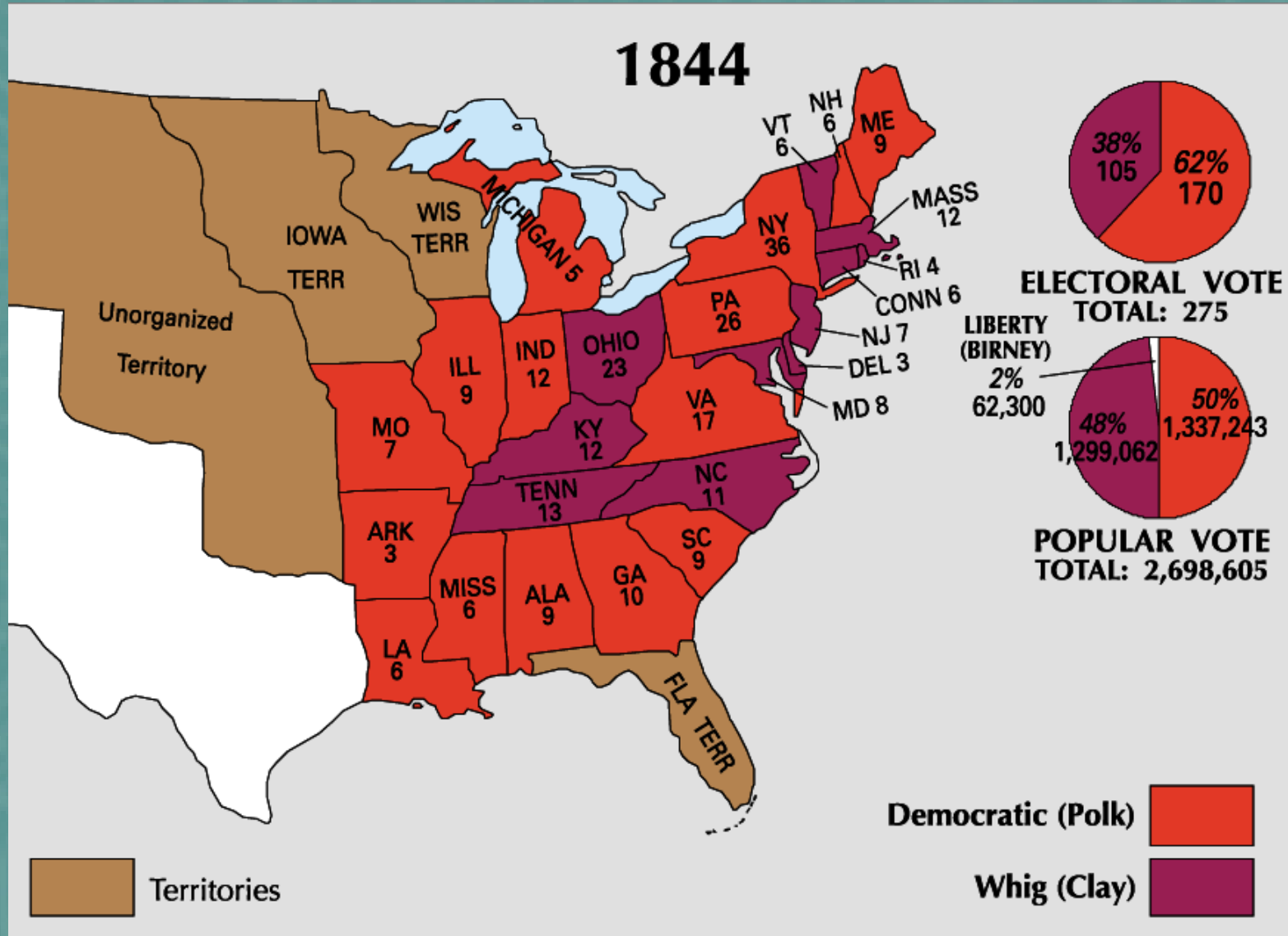
A Mandate (?) for Manifest Destiny

- **Whig campaign**
 - **Campaigned for annexation of Oregon**
 - **“Polk, Slavery and Texas, or Clay, Union and Liberty”**
 - **Spread lie that slaves had been branded with Polk’s initials**
 - **On Texas, Clay tried to please North and South**
 - **Claimed he was in favor of annexing Texas (for South), while also being in favor of postponing annexation (for North)**

A Mandate (?) for Manifest Destiny

- **The results of the election of 1844**
 - **Polk slipped by Clay in close election**
 - 170 to 105 electoral votes
 - 1.338 million to 1.300 popular votes
 - **Clay alienated many abolitionists in North with position on Texas**
 - Clay would have won election, but lost New York by 5,000 votes
 - Small antislavery Liberty party won 16,000 votes in New York (most would have gone to Clay)

The Election of 1844



A Mandate (?) for Manifest Destiny

- **Democratic mandate**
 - **Believed they had mandate for expansionist policy**
 - **Unclear that they did**
 - **Close election**
 - **Many difficult issues (not just US expansion) debated**

Polk the Purposeful

- **President Polk**
 - Took life seriously
 - Refused to delegate authority
 - Hard-working but not brilliant
 - Developed 4-point program for US; achieved in his 1 term
 - Lower tariff
 - Restoration of independent treasury
 - Settlement of Oregon problem (with Britain)
 - Acquisition of California

Polk the Purposeful

- **Lower tariff**
 - **Robert Walker (treasury secretary) got Congress to lower tariffs from 32% to 25%**
 - **Opposed by New England and middle states**
 - **Supported strongly by South**
 - **Walker Tariff of 1846 passed**
 - **Generated much money for government because of boom in economy and heavy imports**

Polk the Purposeful

- **Restoration of independent treasury**
 - Van Buren's had been dropped by Whigs in 1841
 - Opposed by pro-Bank of US Whigs
 - Passed in 1846

Polk the Purposeful

- **Settlement of Oregon problem (with Britain)**
 - South and North had agreed to annex both Texas and Oregon
 - Texas annexed in 1845
 - Sectionalism led South to not push for annexation of Oregon
 - North wanted 54° 40' line
 - 1845 – Polk asked for 49° line but was rejected by Britain

What, You Young Yankee-Noodle, Strike Your Own Father?



Polk the Purposeful

- **Early 1846 – Britain changed its mind; proposed border at 49°**
 - **Decided that issue was not worth a war; since many more Americans were there, US would probably be able to seize area anyway**
- **1846 – Senate approved treaty with Britain**
 - **Antislavery northerners attacked compromise**
 - **Why all of Texas, but only part of Oregon?**
 - **What US got was much better than possible war with Britain**

Misunderstandings with Mexico

- **California**
 - **Expansionists (including Polk) wanted California**
 - **Fertile land, San Francisco Bay**
 - **Mixed population in 1845**
 - **13,000 Mexicans**
 - **75,000 Indians**
 - **Under 1,000 Americans**

Misunderstandings with Mexico

- **Polk wanted to buy California, but couldn't because of poor relations with Mexico**
 - **Default of \$3 million that Mexico owed to US citizens**
 - **Diplomatic relations cut off by Mexico after US annexed Texas**
 - **Dispute over boundary of Texas (northern Nueces River or southern Rio Grande River)**
 - **Polk kept US troops out of disputed area to avoid war**

Misunderstandings with Mexico

- **1845 – false rumors in Washington that Britain was about to take California**
 - **Would be violation of Monroe Doctrine what would force war**
- **Late 1845 – Polk sent John Slidell to negotiate with Mexico**
 - **Authorized to buy California and other land for up to \$25 million**
 - **Slidell not allowed to make proposal in Mexico**

American Blood on American (?) Soil

- **January 13, 1846 – Polk tries to provoke a war**
 - Sent 4,000 troops under General Zachary Taylor to Texas
 - No war occurred
- **May 9, 1846 – Polk proposed declaration of war to his cabinet**
 - Based on unpaid money by Mexico and rejection of Slidell in Mexico
 - Cabinet concerned that these “reasons” weren’t good enough; needed Mexican troops to fire to justify war

American Blood on American (?) Soil

- **Night of May 9 – news arrived in Washington that Mexican troops had fired on US troops**
 - **April 25, 1846 – Mexicans troops had crossed Rio Grande and fired on Taylor's troops; 16 killed and wounded**



General Zachary Taylor in Mexico

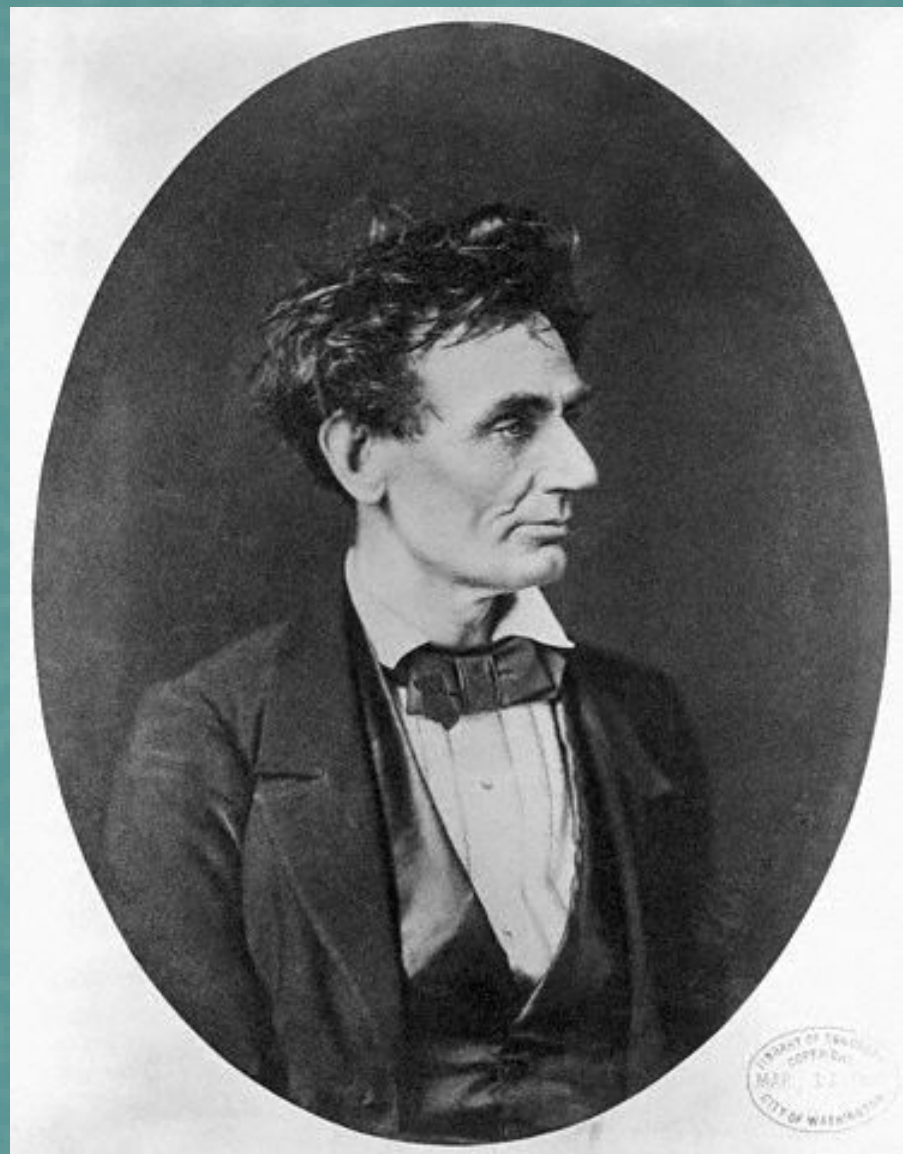
American Blood on American (?) Soil

- **Polk sends war message to Congress**
 - Claimed Mexico had forced war on US
 - Mexico had shed “American blood upon the American soil”
- **Congress overwhelmingly voted for war**
 - Even antislavery North supported war (although some later turned against Polk because of it)

American Blood on American (?) Soil

- **Evaluating Polk's claims**
 - **Mexicans had killed Americans on soil that they actually saw as theirs (not "American soil")**
 - **Abraham Lincoln introduced "spot" resolutions in Congress**
 - **Called on Polk to specify exact "spot" on map where hostilities occurred**
 - **Northern antislavery Whigs called Polk a liar**

Congressman Abraham Lincoln



American Blood on American (?) Soil

- **Who caused the war?**
 - **Polk wanted the war to take California**
 - Mexico refused to sell it
 - Feared British might take it if US didn't act
 - **Mexico wanted to defeat US**
 - Large standing army that even dreamed of invading US
 - Hoped fight with Britain in Oregon would turn to simultaneous war
 - Did not believe US could successfully invade Mexico
 - **Americans and Mexicans both saw other side as causing the war**

The Mastering of Mexico

- **Santa Anna**
 - Had been in exile in Cuba
 - US allowed him to return to sell out his country
 - Santa Anna betrays US and leads Mexican fight against US

Antonio Lopez de Santa Anna



The Mastering of Mexico

- **August 1846 – General Stephen Kearny takes fort at Santa Fe**
 - **Kearny then marches to California**
- **June 1846 – Captain John C. Frémont works with Americans in California and US Navy to overthrow Mexicans**
 - **Establish independent Bear Flag Republic**

Major Campaigns of the Mexican War



The Mastering of Mexico

- **1846 – 1847 – General Zachary Taylor invades Mexico**
 - February 22-23, 1847 – Taylor (with 5,000) drives back Santa Anna (with 20,000)
- **Early 1847 – General Winfield Scott lands at Vera Cruz and moves north to Mexico City**
 - September 1847 – American victory at Mexico City under Scott

Major Campaigns of the Mexican War



Fighting Mexico for Peace

- **Negotiator Nicholas P. Trist sent with Scott to Mexico city to end war with Mexico**
 - **Makes several mistakes (including failed bribe of Santa Anna)**
 - **Polk tries to recall him, but Trist refuses to go**

Fighting Mexico for Peace

- **February 2, 1848 – Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo signed between Trist and Mexicans**
 - **US given official title to Texas**
 - **Mexican Cession**
 - **Land of present-day Southwest, including California granted to US**
 - **About 1/2 of Mexico at the time**
 - **US would pay \$15 million for the land**
 - **US would pay \$3.25 million that Mexico owed to US citizens**

The Mexican Cession



Fighting Mexico for Peace

- **Polk submitted treaty to Senate**
 - **Opponents in Congress (“Conscience Whigs”) opposed war and expansion of southern land (where slavery would be practiced)**
 - **Threatened to cut off funding for war in 1847**
 - **Expansionists (especially Democratic Southerners) wanted to take all of Mexico**
 - **Congress compromised and approved treaty 38 – 14**

Profit and Loss in Mexico

- **Mexican War was relatively small**
 - 13,000 US soldiers died, most from disease
- **US increased its land by about 1/3**
- **Gave field experience to future generals of Civil War**
 - Including Grant and Lee
- **US military served with success**
 - No defeats, no mistakes
 - Europe (especially Britain) saw US as more powerful

Profit and Loss in Mexico

- **Mexican army fought fiercely, but with poor leadership**
 - **US gained more respect for Mexican fighting ability**
- **Turning point in relations between US and Mexico (and rest of Latin America)**
 - **Mexico angry at “theft” of their land**
 - **Before, US had been seen as friend; now seen as greedy bully**

Profit and Loss in Mexico

- **War aroused slavery issue**
 - **North claimed that war was fought to expand slavery**
 - **Most land gained was south of 36° 30' line**
 - **Most soldiers were from South**
 - **Although real reason is that they were closer to the action**
 - **Wilmot Proviso**
 - **David Wilmot (WIL-maht), representative from Pennsylvania**
 - **1846 – would ban slavery in any territory taken from Mexico**
 - **Passed House, but not Senate; southerners refused to give in**
 - **All but 1 free state legislatures endorsed it**
 - **Slavery issues brought up by Mexican War not settled until Civil War**