

## A. Borders

### 1. French Influence

#### a) French and Indian War 1754

- (i) Half a century of conflict between Britain and France over North America culminated in the French and Indian War. When the war began, there were more than about 2 million British colonists in America and about 65,000 French in Canada.
- (ii) Unlike the three previous Anglo-French wars, which were outgrowths of European conflicts, this one began with colonial initiatives.
- (iii) Fur traders from Pennsylvania and Virginia were eager to trade with Indians in the Ohio River Valley. Leading Virginia planters, who were interested in developing the region, had formed the Ohio Company, and with support of London merchants, had received a royal grant of 200,000 acres in the Ohio River valley in 1749.
- (iv) The French, determined to secure the territory against encroaching British and American traders and land speculators, built a chain of forts along Pennsylvania's Allegheny River. The British ministry ordered colonial governors to repel the French advance, "by force" if necessary.
- (v) In 1753, Virginia's Governor Robert Dinwiddie, an investor in the Ohio Company, sent George Washington, a 21-year old major in the Virginia militia, to Pennsylvania to demand a French withdrawal from the forts. The French refused.
- (vi) In the spring of 1754, Washington returned to Pennsylvania with about 160 men. The French defeated Washington at Fort Necessity, the first battle of the French and Indian War.
- (vii) Meanwhile, representatives of seven colonies met in Albany, New York, with representatives of the Iroquois Confederacy. The goal of the Albany Congress was to solidify friendship with the Iroquois in light of the approaching war with France and to discuss the possibility of an inter-colonial union.

- (viii) Benjamin Franklin presented a "plan of union" at the conference which would establish a Grand Council which would be able to levy taxes, raise troops, and regulate trade with the Indians. The delegates at the congress approved the plan, but the colonies refused to ratify it, since it threatened their power of taxation.
- (ix) Following the surrender of Fort Necessity, Britain ordered 60-year-old Major General Edward Braddock and a combined force of 3,000 redcoats and colonial militia to attack the French stronghold of Fort Duquesne at the site of present-day Pittsburgh.
- (x) French and Indian forces ambushed the expedition eight miles from the fort, killing Braddock and leaving two-thirds of his soldiers, dead or wounded.
- (xi) In 1756, William Pitt became the king's new chief minister. Viewing America as the place "where England and Europe are to be fought for," Pitt let Prussia bear the brunt of the Seven Years' War in Europe, while concentrating British military resources in America.
- (xii) He united the previously divided colonies by guaranteeing payment for military services and supplies. He also installed younger and more capable officers.
- (xiii) Pitt's strategy worked. In 1758, the British, with colonial forces assisting, seized Louisburg, a French fortress guarding the mouth of the St. Lawrence River.
- (xiv) In 1759, British forces sailed up the river, laid siege to the city of Québec for three months and defeated French forces in September. The next year, Montreal also surrendered to the British, ending the fighting in America.
- (xv) The war came to an official end in 1763, with the signing of the Treaty of Paris.
- (xvi) The treaty gave Britain all French land in Canada except for two tiny fishing islands south of Newfoundland.

- (xvii) To the south, the treaty gave Britain all of France's holdings east of the Mississippi river, which now became the boundary between the British colonies and Louisiana, which Spain received from France before ceding Florida to Britain.
- (xviii) In effect, triumphant Britain chose to keep Canada rather than the conquered Caribbean slave colonies Guadeloupe and Martinique, which were returned to France.

b) Revolutionary War political and military leadership

- (i) After years of spiraling tensions in Britain's American colonies, the American Revolutionary War began in 1775.
- (ii) The revolutionary colonists faced a war against one of the world's major powers, one with an empire that spanned the globe.
- (iii) Once the Congress had declared independence in 1776, they sent a party including Benjamin Franklin to negotiate with Britain's rival: France.
- (iv) France initially sent agents to observe the war, organized secret supplies, and began preparations for war against Britain in support of the rebels.
- (v) France might seem an odd choice for the revolutionaries to deal with. The nation was ruled by an absolutist monarch who was not sympathetic to claims of 'no taxation without representation', even if the plight of the colonists and their perceived fight against a domineering empire excited idealistic Frenchmen like the Marquis de Lafayette.
- (vi) Franklin's actions helped prompt a wave of sympathy across France for the revolutionary cause, and a fashion for all things American took hold.
- (vii) Franklin used this to help in negotiations with French Foreign Minister Vergennes, who was initially keen on a full alliance, especially after the British were forced to abandon their base in Boston.
- (viii) Then news arrived of defeats suffered by Washington and his Continental Army in New York.

- (ix) With Britain seemingly on the rise, Vergennes wavered, hesitating over a full alliance and afraid of pushing the colonies back to Britain, but he sent a secret loan and other aid anyway.
- (x) In December 1777 news reached France of the British surrender at Saratoga, a victory which convinced the French to make a full alliance with the revolutionaries and to enter the war with troops.
- (xi) On February 6th, 1778 Franklin and two other American commissioners signed the Treaty of Alliance and a Treaty of Amity and Commerce with France.
- (xii) This contained a clause banning either Congress or France making a separate peace with Britain and a commitment to keep fighting until US independence was recognized.
- (xiii) Now fully committed to the war, France supplied arms, munitions, supplies, and uniforms. French troops and naval power were also sent to America, reinforcing and protecting Washington's Continental Army.
- (xiv) The decision to send troops was taken carefully, as few in France had any idea how US citizens would react to a foreign army, and the numbers of soldiers were carefully chosen to balance being effective, with not being large enough to anger Americans.
- (xv) The commanders were carefully selected, men who could work effectively with both themselves and US commanders; however, the leader of the French army, Count Rochambeau, didn't speak English.
- (xvi) While the troops selected weren't, as once believed, the very cream of the French army, they were, as one historian has commented, for "1780...probably the most sophisticated military instrument ever dispatched to the New World."
- (xvii) Overall the US and French forces co-operated well – although they were often kept separated – and certainly when compared to the incessant problems experienced in the British high command.

- (xviii) French forces attempted to buy everything they couldn't ship in from locals rather than requisition it, and they spent an estimated \$4 million worth of precious metal in doing so, further endearing themselves to locals.
- (xix) Arguably the key French contribution came during the Yorktown campaign. French forces under Rochambeau landed at Rhode Island in 1780, which they fortified before linking up with Washington in 1781.
- (xx) Later that year the Franco-American army marched 700 miles south to besiege Cornwallis' British army at Yorktown while the French navy cut the British off from desperately needed naval supplies, reinforcements, and complete evacuation to New York.
- (xxi) Cornwallis was forced to surrender to Washington and Rochambeau, and this proved the last major engagement of the war, as Britain opened peace discussions soon after rather than continue a global war.
- (xxii) America wasn't the only theatre in a war which, with France's entrance, had turned global.
- (xxiii) Despite British attempts to divide France and Congress during peace negotiations, the allies remained firm – aided by a further French loan – and peace was reached in the Treaty of Paris in 1783 between Britain, France, and the United States.
- (xxiv) Britain would win several wars in which it started badly and had to regroup, but they quit the American Revolutionary War rather than fight another global war with France.

c) Louisiana Purchase

- (i) In 1800, Spain secretly ceded the Louisiana territory--the area stretching from Canada to the Gulf Coast and from the Mississippi River to the Rocky Mountains--to France, which closed the port of New Orleans to American farmers.
- (ii) Westerners, left without a port from which to export their goods, exploded with anger. Many demanded war.

- (iii) The prospect of French control of the Mississippi River alarmed Jefferson. Jefferson feared the establishment of a French colonial empire in North America blocking American expansion.
- (iv) The president sent negotiators to France, with instructions to purchase New Orleans and as much of the Gulf Coast as they could for \$2 million.
- (v) Circumstances played into American hands when France failed to suppress a slave rebellion in Haiti. One hundred thousand slaves, inspired by the French Revolution, had revolted, destroying 1,200 coffee plantations and 200 sugar plantations.
- (vi) In 1800, France sent troops to crush the insurrection and re-conquer Haiti, but they met a determined resistance led by a former slave named Toussaint Louverture. Then, French forces were wiped out by mosquitoes carrying yellow fever.
- (vii) "Damn sugar, damn coffee, damn colonies," Napoleon, the French leader, exclaimed. Without Haiti, Napoleon had little interest in keeping Louisiana.
- (viii) France offered to sell not just New Orleans but all of Louisiana Province. The American negotiators agreed on a price of \$15 million, or about 4 cents an acre. In a single stroke, Jefferson doubled the size of the country.
- (ix) To gather information about the geography, natural resources, wildlife, and peoples of Louisiana, President Jefferson dispatched an expedition led by his private secretary Meriwether Lewis and William Clark, a Virginia-born military officer.
- (x) For 2 years Lewis and Clark led some 30 soldiers and 10 civilians up the Missouri River as far as present-day central North Dakota and then west to the Pacific.

## 2. War and Diplomacy

### a) Revolutionary War

- (i) Americans faced seemingly impossible obstacles. When the guns fired at Lexington and Concord in 1775, there was not yet even a Continental Army.

- (ii) Those battles were fought by local militias. Few Americans had any military experience, and there was no method of training, supplying, or paying an army.
- (iii) Moreover, a majority of Americans opposed the war in 1775. Many historians believe only about a third of all Americans supported a war against the British at that time.
- (iv) Further, the Colonies had a poor track record of working together.
- (v) The Battle of Bunker Hill was not a military victory for the colonial forces, but it served as an important morale booster. The colonists inflicted heavy casualties on the larger, more powerful British forces.
- (vi) The early stages of war, in 1775, can be best described as British military victories and American moral triumphs. The British routed the minutemen at Lexington, but the relentless colonists unleashed brutal sniper fire on the British returning to Boston from Concord.
- (vii) In June 1775, the colonists failed to prevail at Bunker Hill, but inflicted heavy casualties on a vastly superior military force. A year later, in 1776, while the British occupied New York, Washington led his army to two surprise victories at Trenton and Princeton that uplifted the morale of the patriots.
- (viii) Regardless, by 1777 the British occupied Philadelphia, the seat of the Continental Congress, and sent that body into hiding.
- (ix) The British also controlled New York City and pretty much had their way in the waters along the Eastern Seaboard.
- (x) In fact, there was no Continental Navy to speak of at this time. Meanwhile, the British began mounting a southward attack from Canada into upstate New York. This threatened to cut New England off from the rest of the Colonies.
- (xi) The Battle of Saratoga, in northern New York, served as a critical turning point. The British attempt to capture the Hudson River Valley ended with their surrender to General Horatio Gates in October.

- (xii) Washington, having lost Philadelphia, led his troops to Valley Forge to spend the winter. None of the world's powers had come to the aid of the patriot cause yet.
- (xiii) In early 1778, the French agreed to recognize American independence and formed a permanent alliance with the new nation. Military help and sizable stores of much-needed gunpowder soon arrived. The tide was beginning to turn.
- (xiv) The British grew increasingly frustrated. The loss at Saratoga was humiliating. Capturing the enemy's capital, Philadelphia, did not bring them much advantage.
- (xv) As long as the American Continental Army and state militias remained in the field, the British had to keep on fighting. And no matter how much damage the British did to American cities or private property, the Americans refused to surrender. This was a new type of war.
- (xvi) Having failed in the north, the British turned their attention to the south. They hoped to inspire Loyalist support among dissatisfied Americans. A hope that was never realized. Fighting continued. The threat of French naval participation kept the British uneasy.
- (xvii) In October 1781, the war virtually came to an end when General Cornwallis was surrounded and forced to surrender the British position at Yorktown, Virginia.
- (xviii) Two years later, the Treaty of Paris made it official: America was independent and had its own borders.

b) Political and military leadership

(i) John Adams

(1) *Prominent Boston lawyer who first became famous for defending the British soldiers accused of murdering 5 civilians at the Boston massacre. Adams was a delegate from Massachusetts in the Continental Congresses, where he rejected proposals for reconciliation with Britain. He served as vice president to George Washington and was president of the United States from 1797 to 1801*

(ii) Sam Adams



(1) *Political activist. He organized the first committee of correspondence of Boston which communicated with other similar organizations across the colonies and was a delegate to both Continental Congress in 1774 & 1775.*

(iii) Benjamin Franklin

(1) *Famous printer and patriot. Creator of the “Join of Die” political cartoon for the Albany Congress. He also helped draft the Declaration of Independence. In addition, he was a delegate for the Second Continental Congress and a member of the delegations sent to France for war assistance.*

(2) *Benjamin Franklin had a number of roles in his effort to strengthen the American intellectual brand, developing a long and bountiful career within a number of professions that touched upon the realms of publishing, diplomacy and science. Though Franklin didn't participate in militaristic affairs, he was instrumental in the United States gaining the support of King Louis XVI of France in the form of a military alliance signed in 1778. Franklin also promoted the end of the Revolutionary War, for he was responsible for negotiating the Treaty of Paris of 1783 which signaled the end of the conflict.*

(iv) Patrick Henry

(1) *Radical revolutionary colonist who gave the famed “Give me liberty or give me death” speech. Was forthright with his advocating of revolution and rebellion against an unjust crown.*

(v) Thomas Jefferson

(1) *Future President, he was the main drafter for the Declaration of Independence which showed justification for independence from Britain. He, in addition, worked to garner outside support for the cause of the Revolutionary War.*

(vi) Thomas Paine

(1) *Radical philosopher who supported republicanism and civic virtue. Was also a vocal leader for calls of rebellion? He wrote the pamphlet "Common Sense" which convinced thousands to rebel against the "Royal Brute."*

(vii) George Washington

(1) *Militia leader who made a name for himself during the French and Indian War. Was named General of the Continental Army during the Revolution against the British. Was an inspirational leader for his troops and later his country as he was named first President of the United States.*

(viii) Ethan Allen

(1) *Ethan Allen was credited with commanding the Green Mountain Boys in the victory at Fort Ticonderoga, a battle which later became known as the United States' first success during the Revolutionary War. Due to the group's ability to infiltrate and surround Great Britain's troops, the fight was easily won and remains Allen's most notable victory. Further, and in tandem with Benedict Arnold, Allen and his men went on to topple several poorly fortified British holdouts.*

(ix) Benedict Arnold

(1) *Before defecting to the British army, Benedict Arnold had a humble upbringing in which he began serving in the militia at an early age. Shortly after joining the militia, Arnold established himself as one of George Washington's most trusted generals. As a general, Arnold quickly recognized how valuable New York was to the Patriots' cause and assembled a unit of men and marched on Fort Ticonderoga. With the help of Ethan Allen and the Green Mountain Boys, Fort Ticonderoga soon fell under American control.*

(2) *Arnold would go on to become the most notorious traitors in American history when he later served against the Patriots as a member of the British army.*

(x) Elijah Clarke

(1) *At the start of the Revolutionary War, Clarke provided support to the Patriots, taking the helm of a Georgian partisan militant force that fended off the British, as well as the aggressive Creek and Cherokee Native Americans. Clarke and his group of fighters defeated a loyalist militia in February 1779, and later participated in a guerilla campaign against British forces in the South Carolina backcountry. After being wounded in the Battle of Musgrove's Mill, Clarke settled into a position serving Georgia's legislature in 1781, but still lead militia in battles against Native Americans who were unhappy with the theft of their tribal lands. Clarke's actions during the Revolutionary War has earned him consideration as one of its essential heroes who fought through numerous battle wounds and a number of diseases, including smallpox.*

(xi) Alexander Hamilton

(1) *Hamilton immediately began an extremely notable career in the colonial military, then later as a politician. After being positioned as a captain of artillery in 1776, Hamilton went on to fight in the Battle of Long Island and the retreat from New York City. Upon being welcomed to Washington's staff in 1777, he commanded another battery of artillery during the Battle of Yorktown. Following the Revolution, Hamilton became a member of the Continental Congress. He wrote the famed *The Federalist Papers*, became the first Secretary of the United States Treasury, and he helped establish the first national bank, the United States Mint.*

(xii) Paul Revere

(1) *Paul Revere is known by most as the man who alerted the colonial militia of the approaching British forces, which otherwise would have gone unnoticed. Yet, Revere made additional contributions to the Patriots' campaign for independence. As a prominently wealthy silversmith in Boston, Revere was responsible for organizing an intelligence and alarm system that made it easier to keep tabs on the British forces. The most notable instance being when he alerted colonial troops of the British approach leading up to the Battles of Lexington and Concord, allowing the Patriots to survive the attack.*

c) Military events and consequences 1775 – 1783

(i) “The Shot Heard Round the World”

(1) *January 1775, actions of First Continental Congress led British government to use force to control colonies*

(2) *April, British troops moved to seize arms the Patriots had stored at Concord*

(3) *Group of Minute Men met British at Lexington; exchange of gunfire left eight Americans dead*

(4) *British moved on to Concord and destroyed provisions stored there*

(5) *Colonies rallied quickly to support Massachusetts*

(ii) The Second Continental Congress

(1) *Met in Philadelphia on May 10*

(2) *More radical than First Congress*

(3) *Organized forces gathering around Boston into a Continental Army and appointed George Washington commander in chief*

(iii) The Battle of Bunker Hill

(1) *Patriots set up defenses on Bunker Hill and Breed's Hill*

- (2) *Two assaults by Redcoats failed to dislodge colonists from Breed's Hill; British carried hill on third try*
  - (3) *Battle cost British more than twice the number of colonial casualties*
  - (4) *George III proclaimed the colonies to be "in open rebellion"*
  - (5) *Continental Congress appeased moderates by offering one last plea to king and then adopted "Declaration of the Causes and Necessity of Taking up Arms"*
  - (6) *Congress also proceeded to order an attack on Canada and set up committees to seek foreign aid and to buy munitions abroad*
- (iv) The Great Declaration
- (1) *Two events in January 1776 pushed the colonies toward final break: British decision to use Hessian mercenaries and publication of Thomas Paine's Common Sense*
  - (2) *Paine called for complete independence and attacked idea of monarchy*
  - (3) *Richard Henry Lee of Virginia introduced a resolution declaring independence from England on June 7, 1776*
  - (4) *Congress did not act at once; it appointed committee to draft justification for Lee's resolution*
  - (5) *Congress adopted justification, written largely by Thomas Jefferson, on July 4*
  - (6) *First part of Jefferson's Declaration described theory on which Americans based revolt and creation of a republican government*
  - (7) *Second part consisted of indictment of George III's treatment of colonies*
- (v) 1776: The Balance of Forces

- (1) *Americans had several advantages in fight for independence: familiar terrain; England had to bring forces across Atlantic; England's highly professional army was ill-directed; and public opinion in England was divided*
- (2) *Britain, however, possessed superior resources: much larger population, large stocks of war materials, industrial capacity, mastery of the seas, a trained and experienced army, and a highly centralized government*
- (3) *Moreover, Congress had to create new political institutions during a war*

(vi) Loyalists

- (1) *America was far from united*
- (2) *Loyalists, or Tories, constituted a significant segment of colonial population*

(vii) Early British Victories

- (1) *General Howe defeated an inexperienced American army at Battle of Long Island and again Manhattan Island*
- (2) *Washington surprised Hessian mercenaries by crossing Delaware River on Christmas night, 1776, and attacking at daybreak*
- (3) *Second victory at Princeton on January 3, 1777, further bolstered American morale*

(viii) Saratoga and the French Alliance

- (1) *British planned elaborate three-pronged attack to crush colonial resistance*
- (2) *Howe defeated Washington at the Battle of Brandywine and moved unopposed into Philadelphia*
- (3) *Howe's adventures doomed the British campaign*
- (4) *American forces dealt General Burgoyne a devastating defeat at Saratoga*
- (5) *France had been giving aid to the Americans,*

- (6) *United States and France negotiated a commercial treaty and a treaty of alliance*
- (7) *Recognizing danger of that alliance, Lord North proposed giving in on all issues that had roused colonies to opposition*
- (8) *Parliament delayed until after Congress ratified treaties with France*
- (9) *War broke out between France and Britain*
- (10) *Washington settled army at Valley Forge for winter; army's supply system collapsed, and men endured a winter of incredible hardship*

(ix) The War Moves South

- (1) *May 1778, British replaced General Howe with General Clinton*
- (2) *Washington and Clinton fought at Monmouth Court House; Americans held the field and could claim victory*
- (3) *British focused their attention on South*
- (4) *Hoped sea power and supposed presence of a large number of Tories would bring them victory*
- (5) *British took Savannah and Charleston*
- (6) *American forces won victories at King's Mountain, Cowpens, and Guilford Court House*
- (7) *Cornwallis withdrew to Wilmington, North Carolina, where he could rely on the British fleet for support*

(x) Victory at Yorktown

- (1) *Clinton ordered Cornwallis to establish a base at Yorktown*
- (2) *French fleet cut off Cornwallis's supply and escape routes*
- (3) *Cornwallis asked for terms on October 17, 1781*

(xi) The Peace of Paris

- (1) *Despite promise to France not to make a separate treaty, American negotiators successfully played off competing European interests and obtained a highly favorable treaty with Britain*
- (2) *Britain recognized American independence, established generous boundaries, withdrew its troops from American soil, and granted fishing rights*
- (3) *Britain preferred a weak English-speaking nation control Mississippi Valley*

d) War of 1812

- (i) The United States was woefully unprepared for war. The army consisted of fewer than 7,000 soldiers, few trained officers, and a navy with just 6 warships. In contrast, Britain had nearly 400 warships.
- (ii) The American strategy called for a three-pronged invasion of Canada and heavy harassment of British shipping. The attack on Canada, however, was a disastrous failure.
- (iii) At Detroit, 2,000 American troops surrendered to a much smaller British and Indian force. An attack across the Niagara River, near Buffalo, resulted in 900 American prisoners of war. Along Lake Champlain, a third army retreated into American territory after failing to cut undefended British supply lines.
- (iv) In 1813 America suffered new failures, including the defeat and capture of the American army in the swamps west of Lake Erie. Only a series of unexpected victories at the end of the year raised American spirits.
- (v) On September 10, 1813, America won a major naval victory at the Battle of Lake Erie near Put-In-Bay at the western end of Lake Erie.
- (vi) There, Master-Commandant Oliver Hazard Perry, who had built a fleet at Presque Isle (Erie, Pennsylvania) successfully engaged six British ships. Though Perry's flagship, the *Lawrence*, was disabled in the fighting, he went on to capture the British fleet. He reported his victory with the stirring words, "We have met the enemy and they are ours."



- (vii) The Battle of Lake Erie was America's first major victory of the war. It forced the British to abandon Detroit and retreat toward Niagara.
- (viii) On October 5, 1813, Major General William Henry Harrison overtook the retreating British army and their Indian allies at the Thames River. He won a decisive victory in which the Indian leader Tecumseh was killed, thereby ending the fighting strength of the northwestern Indians.
- (ix) In the spring of 1814, Britain defeated Napoleon in Europe, freeing 18,000 veteran British troops to participate in an invasion of the United States.
- (x) The British planned to invade the United States at three points: upstate New York across the Niagara River and Lake Champlain, the Chesapeake Bay, and New Orleans.
- (xi) The London Times expressed the confident English mood: Oh, may no false liberality, no mistaken lenity, no weak and cowardly policy interpose to save the United States from the blow! Strike! Chastise the savages, for such they are.... Our demands may be couched in a single word--Submission!'
- (xii) At Niagara, however, American forces, outnumbered more than three to one, halted Britain's invasion from the north.
- (xiii) Britain then landed 4,000 soldiers on the Chesapeake Bay coast and marched on Washington, D.C., where untrained soldiers lacking uniforms and standard equipment were protecting the capital. The result was chaos.
- (xiv) President Madison narrowly escaped capture by British forces. On August 24, 1814, the British humiliated the nation by capturing and burning Washington, D.C. President Madison and his wife Dolly were forced to flee the capital--carrying with them many of the nation's treasures, including the Declaration of Independence and Gilbert Stuart's portrait of George Washington.
- (xv) The British arrived so soon after the president fled that the officers dined on a White House meal that had been prepared for 40 invited guests.

- (xvi) Britain's next objective was Baltimore. To reach the city, British warships had to pass the guns of Fort McHenry, manned by 1,000 American soldiers. Waving atop the fort was the largest garrison flag ever designed--30 feet by 42 feet.
- (xvii) On September 13, 1814, British warships began a 25-hour bombardment of Fort McHenry. British vessels anchored two miles off shore--close enough so that their guns could hit the fort, but too far for American shells to reach them.
- (xviii) All through the night British cannons bombarded Fort McHenry, firing between 1,500 and 1,800 cannon balls at the fort. In the light of the "rockets' red glare, the bombs bursting in air," Francis Scott Key, a young lawyer detained on a British ship, saw the American flag waving over the fort.
- (xix) At dawn on September 14, he saw the flag still waving. The Americans had repulsed the British attack, with only 4 soldiers killed and 24 wounded.
- (xx) Key was so moved by the American victory that he wrote a poem entitled "The Star-Spangled Banner" on the back of an old envelope. The song was destined to become the young nation's national anthem.
- (xxi) The country still faced grave threats in the South. On January 8, 1815, the British fleet and a battle-tested 10,000-man army finally attacked New Orleans. To defend the city, Jackson assembled a ragtag army, including French pirates, Choctaw Indians, western militia, and freed slaves.
- (xxii) Although British forces outnumbered Americans by more than 2 to 1, American artillery and sharpshooters stopped the invasion. American losses totaled only 8 dead and 13 wounded, while British casualties were 2,036.
- (xxiii) Ironically, American and British negotiators in Ghent, Belgium, had signed the peace treaty ending the War of 1812 two weeks earlier.

(xxiv) Britain, convinced that the American war was so difficult and costly that nothing would be gained from further fighting, agreed to return to the conditions that existed before the war. Left unmentioned in the peace treaty were the issues over which Americans had fought the war--impressment and British interference with American trade.

e) Settlement of border with Canada

(i) Today, the 4,000-mile United States-Canadian border is one of the most peaceful international boundaries in the world. During the decades before the Civil War, however, the border between the United States and British America was the scene of constant tensions.

(ii) One source of contention was the eastern boundary. In 1837, many Americans viewed an insurrection in eastern Canada as an opportunity to annex the country.

(iii) Americans who lived near the Canadian border aided the rebels, and in one incident several hundred western New Yorkers crossed into Canada and attacked a band of British soldiers. Subsequently, Canadian officials crossed the U.S. border, killed a Canadian rebel, and burned an American ship, the *Caroline*, which had supplied the rebels.

(iv) When Americans demanded an apology and reparations, Canadian officials refused. Almost immediately, another dispute erupted over the Maine boundary, as American and Canadian lumberjacks and farmers battled for possession of northern Maine and western New Brunswick.

(v) The Webster-Ashburton Treaty of 1842 settled these controversies.

(vi) The treaty awarded the United States seven-twelfths of the disputed territory in Maine and New Brunswick as well as adjusted the Canadian-United States boundary between Lake Superior and Lake of the Woods.

(vii) In addition, Britain expressed regret "that some explanation and apology...was not immediately made" for the burning of the *Caroline* (without explicitly apologizing for the incident).

- (viii) The treaty also settled other disputes between the United States and Britain. Most notably, the United States agreed to station ships off the coast of West Africa to apprehend illegal slave trading vessels carrying the American flag.
  - (ix) The Webster-Ashburton Treaty left one major border controversy unresolved: the Canadian-American boundary in the Pacific Northwest.
- f) Treaty of 1846
- (i) The Treaty of 1846 agreement set the boundary between the United States and Canada at the 49th parallel west of the Rocky Mountains, veering around Vancouver Island and then proceeding through the Strait of San Juan de Fuca.
  - (ii) The Oregon Treaty settled the dispute between the United States and Great Britain over the area in Oregon located between the Columbia River and the 49th parallel.
  - (iii) In 1818, both countries had agreed to a joint occupation of Oregon, and this agreement had been renewed by treaty in 1827.
  - (iv) Elected in 1844 on an expansionist platform that included the acquisition of the entire Oregon Territory, which extended to 54 degrees, 40 minutes to the north, President James K. Polk had to satisfy the demands of his countrymen for the region.
  - (v) After a compromise proposal was rejected in July 1845, Polk acquired congressional authority in December to abrogate the 1827 treaty.
  - (vi) On 15 June 1846, the Senate ratified a treaty that established the boundary at the 49th parallel.
  - (vii) Deteriorating relations with Mexico and favorable public opinion made the compromise acceptable to the United States, while Britain was likewise interested in a peaceful solution because it had more pressing domestic and foreign issues to consider.

### 3. Spanish Influence

- a) Acquisition of Florida 1819

- (i) The critical foreign policy issue facing the United States after the War of 1812 was the fate of Spain's crumbling New World empire.
- (ii) Many of Spain's New World colonies had taken advantage of turmoil in Europe during the Napoleonic Wars to fight for their independence.
- (iii) These revolutions aroused intense sympathy in the United States, but many Americans feared that European powers might restore monarchical order in Spain's New World.
- (iv) A source of particular concern was Florida, which was still under Spanish control. Pirates, fugitive slaves, and Native Americans used Florida as a sanctuary and as a jumping off point for raids on settlements in Georgia.
- (v) In December 1817, to end these incursions, Monroe authorized General Andrew Jackson to lead a punitive expedition against the Seminole Indians in Florida.
- (vi) Jackson attacked the Seminoles, destroyed their villages, and overthrew the Spanish governor.
- (vii) Jackson's actions provoked a furor in Washington. Spain protested Jackson's acts and demanded that he be punished. Secretary of War John C. Calhoun and other members of Monroe's cabinet urged the president to reprimand Jackson for acting without specific authorization.
- (viii) In Congress, Henry Clay called for Jackson's censure. Secretary of State Adams, however, saw in Jackson's actions an opportunity to wrest Florida from Spain.
- (ix) Instead of apologizing for Jackson's conduct, Adams declared that the Florida raid was a legitimate act.
- (x) Adams informed the Spanish government that it would either have to police Florida effectively or cede it to the United States. Convinced that American annexation was inevitable, Spain ceded Florida to the United States in the Adams-Onís Treaty of 1819.

- (xi) In return, the United States agreed to honor \$5 million in damage claims by Americans against Spain. Under the treaty, Spain relinquished its claims to Oregon and the United States renounced, at least temporarily, its claims to Texas.

#### 4. Relations with Mexico

##### a) Texas 1845

- (i) Texas had barely won its independence from Mexico when it decided to become a part of the United States. A referendum held soon after the Battle of San Jacinto showed Texans favoring annexation by a vote of 3,277 to 93.
- (ii) The annexation question became one of the most controversial issues in American politics in the late 1830s and early 1840s. The issue was not Texas but slavery.
- (iii) The admission of Texas to the Union would upset the sectional balance of power in the United States Senate, just as the admission of Missouri threatened 15 years earlier.
- (iv) In 1838, John Quincy Adams, now a member of the House of Representatives, staged a 22-day filibuster that successfully blocked annexation. It appeared that Congress had settled the Texas question. Texas would remain an independent republic.
- (v) At this point, pro-slavery Southerners began to popularize a conspiracy theory that would eventually bring Texas into the Union as a slave state.
- (vi) In 1841, John Tyler, who defended slavery as a positive good, succeeded to the presidency on the death of William Henry Harrison. Tyler and his Secretary of State, John C. Calhoun, argued that Great Britain was scheming to annex Texas and transform it into a haven for runaway slaves.
- (vii) In fact, British abolitionists, but not the British government, were working to convince Texas to outlaw slavery in exchange for British foreign aid.

- (viii) Sam Houston played along with this ploy by conducting highly visible negotiations with the British government. If the United States would not annex Texas, Houston warned, Texas would seek the support of "some other friend."
  - (ix) The Texas question was the major political issue in the Presidential campaign of 1844. James Polk, the Democratic candidate, ardently supported annexation.
  - (x) His victory encouraged Tyler to submit a resolution to Congress calling for annexation.
  - (xi) There were not enough votes in the Senate to ratify a treaty by the required two-thirds majority; a Congressional resolution required only a simple majority.
  - (xii) Congress narrowly approved the resolution in 1845, making Texas the 28th state.
- b) War and peace with Mexico 1846 – 1853
- (i) Fifteen years before the United States was plunged into Civil War, it fought a war against Mexico that added half a million square miles of territory to the United States.
  - (ii) Not only was it the first American war fought almost entirely outside the United States, it was also the first American war to be reported, while it happened, by daily newspapers.
  - (iii) It was a controversial war that bitterly divided American public opinion. And it was the war that gave young officers named Ulysses S. Grant, Robert E. Lee, Thomas ("Stonewall") Jackson, William Tecumseh Sherman, and George McClellan their first experience in a major conflict.
  - (iv) The underlying cause of the Mexican War was the movement of American pioneers into lands claimed by Mexico. The immediate reason for the conflict was the annexation of Texas in 1845.
  - (v) Mexico refused to recognize Texan independence and warned the United States that the annexation of Texas would be tantamount to a declaration of war.

- (vi) In early 1845, when Congress voted to annex Texas, Mexico expelled the American ambassador and cut diplomatic relations. But it did not declare war.
- (vii) President Polk told his commanders to prepare for the possibility of war. He ordered American naval vessels to position themselves outside Mexican ports. And he dispatched American forces in the Southwest to Corpus Christi, Texas.
- (viii) In the fall of 1845, the President offered \$5 million if Mexico agreed to recognize the Rio Grande River as the southwestern boundary of Texas. Earlier, the Spanish government had defined the Texas boundary as the Nueces River, 130 miles north and east of the Rio Grande.
- (ix) No Americans lived between the Nueces and the Rio Grande, although many Hispanics lived in the region.
- (x) The United States also offered up to \$5 million for the province of New Mexico--which included Nevada and Utah and parts of four other states--and up to \$25 million for California.
- (xi) Polk also dispatched a young Marine Corps lieutenant, Archibald H. Gillespie, to California, apparently to foment revolt against Mexican authority.
- (xii) The Mexican government, already incensed over the annexation of Texas, refused to accept an American envoy. The failure of the negotiations led Polk to order Brigadier General Zachary Taylor to march 3,000 troops southwest from Corpus Christi, Texas, to "defend the Rio Grande" River.
- (xiii) Late in March of 1846, Taylor and his men set up camp along the Rio Grande, directly across from the Mexican city of Matamoros, on a stretch of land claimed by both Mexico and the United States.
- (xiv) On April 25, 1846, a Mexican cavalry force crossed the Rio Grande and clashed with a small American squadron, forcing the Americans to surrender after the loss of several lives.



- (xv) On May 11, after he received word of the border clash, Polk asked Congress to acknowledge that a state of war already existed "by the act of Mexico herself...notwithstanding all our efforts to avoid it."
- (xvi) "Mexico," the President announced, "has passed the boundary of the United States, has invaded our territory and shed American blood upon the American soil." Congress responded with a declaration of war.
- (xvii) The Mexican War was extremely controversial. Its supporters blamed Mexico for the hostilities because it had severed relations with the United States, threatened war, refused to receive an American emissary or to pay the damage claims of American citizens.
- (xviii) In addition, Mexico had "invaded our territory and shed American blood on American soil."
- (xix) Opponents denounced the war as an immoral land grab by an expansionistic power against a weak neighbor that had been independent barely two decades.
- (xx) The war's critics claimed that Polk deliberately provoked Mexico into war by ordering American troops into disputed territory. A Delaware Senator declared that ordering Taylor to the Rio Grande was "as much an act of aggression on our part as is a man's pointing a pistol at another's breast."
- (xxi) Critics also argued that the war was an expansionist power play dictated by an aggressive Southern slave owners intent on acquiring more slave states.
- (xxii) As Americans waited impatiently for a final peace settlement, they grew increasingly divided over their war aims.
- (xxiii) Ultra-expansionists, who drew support from northeastern cities as well as from the West, wanted the United States to annex all of Mexico.
- (xxiv) Many Southerners, led by John C. Calhoun, called for a unilateral withdrawal to the Rio Grande. They opposed annexation of any of Mexico below the Rio Grande because they did not want to extend American citizenship to Mexicans.

- (xxv) Most Democratic Party leaders, however, wanted to annex at least the one-third of Mexico south and west of the Rio Grande.
- (xxvi) Then suddenly on February 22, 1848, word reached Washington that a peace treaty had been signed. Earlier in February, Nicholas Trist, a Spanish-speaking State Department official, signed the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo, ending the Mexican War.
- (xxvii) Trist had actually been ordered home two months earlier by Polk, but he had continued negotiating anyway, fearing that his recall would be "deadly to the cause of peace."
- (xxviii) According to the treaty, Mexico ceded to the United States only those areas that Polk had originally sought to purchase. Mexico ceded California, Nevada, Utah, New Mexico, and parts of Arizona, Colorado, Kansas, and Wyoming to the United States for \$15 million and the assumption of \$3.25 million in debts owed to Americans by Mexico.
- (xxix) The treaty also settled the Texas border dispute in favor of the United States, placing the Texas-Mexico boundary at the Rio Grande River.
- (xxx) Ultra-expansionists called on Polk to reject the treaty. William Tecumseh Sherman called the treaty "just such a one as Mexico might have imposed on us had she been the conqueror."
- (xxxi) But a war-weary public wanted peace. Polk quickly submitted the treaty to the Senate, which ratified it overwhelmingly. The war was over.