



The Mexican-American War

The War for Westward Expansion

Spain, Mexico, and Texas

- REMINDER: Spain colonized present day Mexico and the west coast of the United States in the 1500s
- In 1821 Mexico won their independence from Spain
- REMINDER: Mexico during the early 1800's included present day Texas, New Mexico, Arizona, and southern California





Texas

- In 1820 the Spanish governor of Texas gave Moses Austin a land grant in Texas to establish a SMALL American colony
- When Moses Austin died his grandson, Stephen Austin, led 300 Americans into Texas to start their colony
- When Mexico won their independence from Spain, they agreed to let Austin and his men stay if they became Mexican citizens and converted to Roman Catholic
- Soon thousands of Americans flooded into Texas

Conflict

- The Americans migrating to Texas were Protestant instead of Catholic
- They also brought African slaves to start cotton plantations in Texas
- This violated Mexican law because Mexico had already abolished slavery
- Mexico tried to enforce laws on the Americans with little success
- In 1833 Antonio López de Santa Anna became president of Mexico and soon declared himself dictator of Mexico



Texas Independence

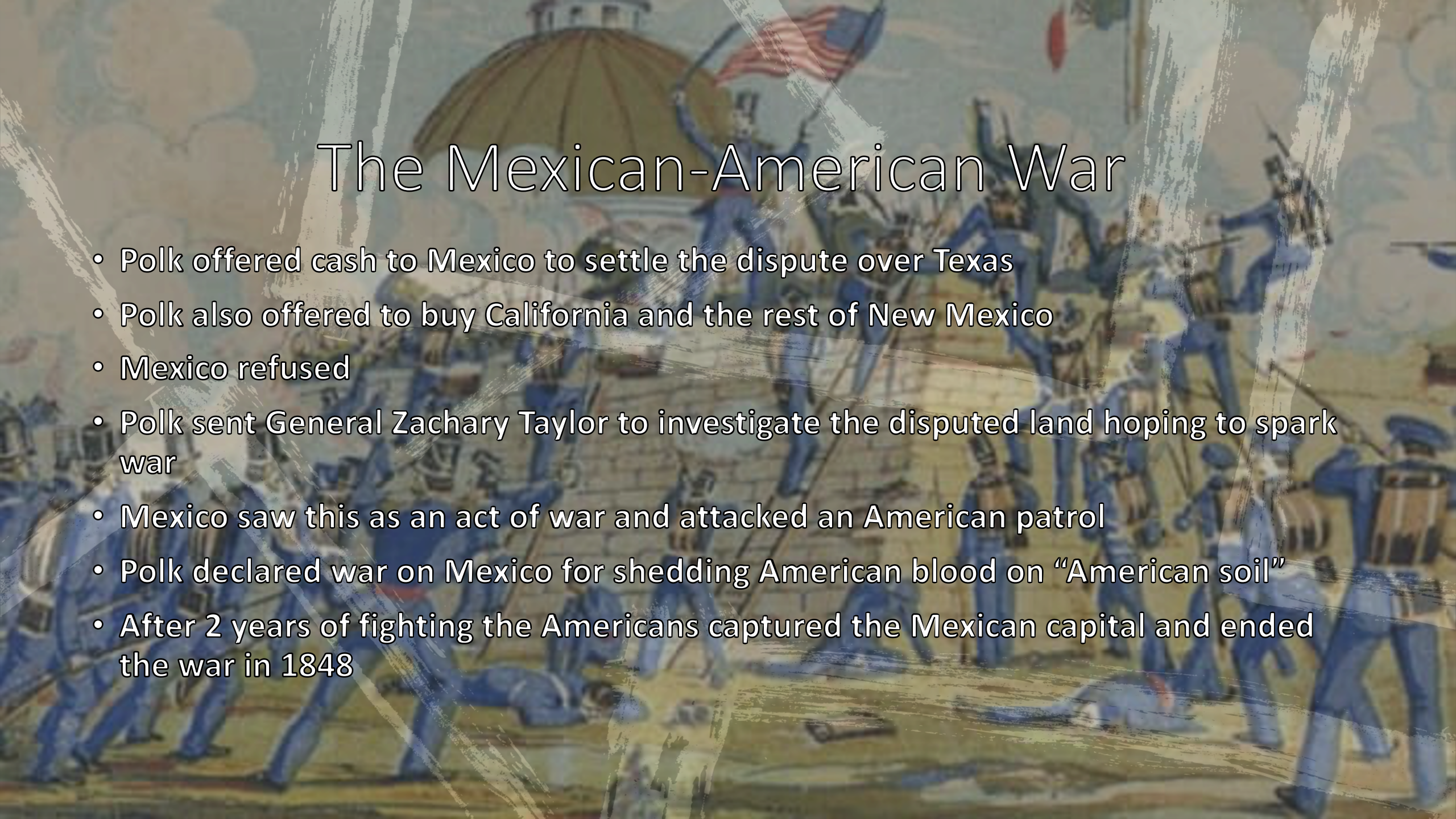
- Texans, led by Austin, revolted against Mexico
- In 1836 they declared their independence from Mexico
- Texas was now an independent country called the Republic of Texas
- Santa Anna responded with a siege of an American fort called the Alamo
- Everyone was killed which angered Americans
- Sam Houston led an American army to attack and capture Santa Anna
- They forced Santa Anna to sign a treaty recognizing Texan independence



Annexation of Texas

- Sam Houston became president of the Republic of Texas
- He pushed for Texas to be annexed by the United States
- Annex: to add on
- John Tyler added Texas as a state in 1845
- Mexico was angered by the annexation because they never formally recognized Texas as independent





The Mexican-American War

- Polk offered cash to Mexico to settle the dispute over Texas
- Polk also offered to buy California and the rest of New Mexico
- Mexico refused
- Polk sent General Zachary Taylor to investigate the disputed land hoping to spark war
- Mexico saw this as an act of war and attacked an American patrol
- Polk declared war on Mexico for shedding American blood on “American soil”
- After 2 years of fighting the Americans captured the Mexican capital and ended the war in 1848