MAIN IDEA

Analyzing Motives

B Why did the Mormons move farther west in their search for a new home?

declared, "This is the place." Soon they had coaxed settlements and farms from the bleak landscape by irrigating their fields. Salt Lake City blossomed out of the land the Mormons called Deseret. B

SETTING BOUNDARIES In the early 1840s, Great Britain still claimed areas near the Canadian border in parts of what are now Maine and Minnesota. The Webster-Ashburton Treaty of 1842 settled these territorial disputes in the East and the Midwest, but the two nations merely continued the "joint occupation" of the Oregon Territory that they had first established in 1818. In 1846 the two countries agreed to extend the mainland boundary along the 49th parallel westward from the Rocky Mountains to Puget Sound, establishing the current boundary between the United States and Canada. Unfortunately, establishing the boundary in the Southwest with Mexico would not be so peaceful.

Texan Independence

After 300 years of Spanish rule, only a few thousand Mexican settlers had migrated to what is now Texas. After 1820, that changed as Texas became an important region in Mexico and then an independent republic.

MEXICAN INDEPENDENCE AND TEXAN LAND GRANTS The mission system used by Spain declined after Mexico had won independence from Spain in 1821. After freeing the missions from Spanish control, the Mexican government offered the surrounding lands to government officials and ranchers. To make the land more secure and stable, the Mexican government also encouraged Americans to settle in Texas.

MAIN IDEA

Developing Historical Perspective

C Why did many Americans initially settle in Texas?

Many Americans rushed at the chance to buy inexpensive land in Texas. The population of Anglo, or English-speaking, settlers from the United States soon surpassed the population of Tejanos, or Mexican settlers, who lived in Texas. Among the more prominent leaders of these American settlers was **Stephen F. Austin.** C

Austin's father, Moses Austin, had received a land grant from Spain to establish a colony between the Brazos and Colorado rivers but died before he was able to carry out his plans. Stephen obtained permission, first from Spain and then from Mexico after it had won its independence, to carry out his father's project. In 1821 he established a colony where "no drunkard, no gambler, no profane swearer, and no idler" would be allowed.

The main settlement of the colony was named San Felipe de Austin, in Stephen's honor. By 1825, Austin had issued 297 land grants to the group that later became known as Texas's Old Three Hundred. Each family received either 177 very inexpensive acres of farmland, or 4,428 acres for stock grazing, as well as a 10-year exemption from paying taxes. "I am convinced," Austin said, "that I could take on fifteen hundred families as easily as three hundred if permitted to do so." By 1830, there were more than 20,000 Americans in Texas.

THE TEXAS REVOLUTION Despite peaceful cooperation between Anglos and Tejanos, differences over cultural issues intensified between Anglos and the Mexican government. The overwhelmingly Protestant Anglo settlers spoke English instead of Spanish. Furthermore, many of the settlers were Southerners, who had brought slaves with them to Texas. Mexico, which had abolished slavery in 1829, insisted in vain that the Texans free their slaves.

Meanwhile, Mexican politics had become increasingly unstable. Austin had traveled to Mexico City late in 1833 to present petitions to Mexican president Antonio López de Santa Anna for greater self-government for Texas. While Austin was on his way home, Santa Anna had Austin imprisoned for inciting revolution. After Santa Anna suspended local powers in Texas and other

Mexican states, several rebellions broke out, including one that would be known as the **Texas Revolution**.

When Austin returned to Texas in 1835, he was convinced that war was its "only resource." Determined to force Texas to obey Mexican law, Santa Anna marched his army toward San Antonio. At the same time, Austin and his followers issued a call for Texans to arm themselves. D

MAIN IDEA

Analyzing Issues

D What disagreement led to the Texas Revolution?

"REMEMBER THE ALAMO!" In San Antonio, the commander of the Anglo troops, Lieutenant Colonel William Travis, moved his men into **the Alamo,** a mission and fort in what is now San Antonio. Travis believed that maintaining control of the Alamo would prevent Santa Anna's movement farther north.

From February 23, 1836, Santa Anna and his troops attacked the rebels holed up in the Alamo. On March 2, 1836, as the battle for the Alamo raged, Texans declared their independence from Mexico and quickly ratified a constitution based on that of the United States. The 13-day siege finally ended on March 6, 1836, when Mexican troops scaled the Alamo's walls. All 187 U.S. defenders and hundreds of Mexicans died.

Later in March, Santa Anna's troops executed 300 rebels at Goliad. The Alamo and the Goliad executions whipped the Texan rebels into a fury. Six weeks after the defeat at the Alamo, the rebels' commander in chief, **Sam Houston,** and 900

War for Texas Independence, 1835–1836

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Henry Arthur McArdle conveys the brutality of the fighting in *Dawn at the Alamo,* painted between 1876 and 1883.

GEOGRAPHY SKILLBUILDER

1. **Place** What geographical feature marked the northern border of the Republic of Texas?
2. **Region** What does the map show as a major disagreement left unresolved by the war?

KEY PLAYERS



SAM HOUSTON
1793–1863

Sam Houston ran away from home in Tennessee at about age 15 and lived for three years with the Cherokee. He later fought in the U.S. Army, studied law, was elected to Congress, and became governor of Tennessee.

In his memoirs Houston told of listening in vain for the signal guns indicating that the Alamo still stood. "I listened with an acuteness of sense which no man can understand whose hearing has not been sharpened by the teachings of the dwellers of the forest."

The Republic of Texas chose Houston to be its first president. When Texas became a state, he was elected to the U.S. Senate.



SANTA ANNA
1785–1876

Antonio López de Santa Anna reportedly once said, "If I were God, I would wish to be more." Santa Anna began his career fighting for Spain in the war over Mexican independence. Later, he switched sides to fight for Mexico.

Declaring himself the "Napoleon of the West," Santa Anna took control of the government after Mexico won independence in 1821. He spent the next 35 years alternately serving as president, leading troops into battle, and living in exile. Santa Anna served as president of Mexico 11 times.

Santa Anna was a complex man with much charm. He sacrificed his considerable wealth to return again and again to the battlefield and died in poverty, almost forgotten.

soldiers surprised a group of Mexicans near the San Jacinto River. With shouts of "Remember the Alamo!" the Texans killed 630 of Santa Anna's soldiers in 18 minutes and captured Santa Anna himself, who allegedly attempted to escape by dressing in a private's uniform. The victorious Texans set Santa Anna free only after he signed the Treaty of Velasco, which granted independence to Texas. In September 1836, Sam Houston was elected president of the new Republic of Texas.

MAIN IDEA

Contrasting

E How would you contrast the Northern and Southern positions on the annexation of Texas?

TEXAS MOVES TOWARD THE UNION Most Texans hoped that the United States would annex their republic, but U.S. opinion divided along sectional lines. Southerners wanted Texas in order to extend slavery, which already had been established there. Northerners feared that the annexation of more slave territory would tip the uneasy balance in the Senate in favor of slave states—and prompt war with Mexico. E

The 1844 U.S. presidential campaign focused on westward expansion. The winner, **James K. Polk,** a slaveholder, firmly favored the annexation of Texas.

The War with Mexico

In March 1845, angered by U.S.-Texas negotiation on annexation, the Mexican government recalled its ambassador from Washington. On December 29, 1845, Texas entered the Union. Events moved quickly toward war.

POLK URGES WAR President Polk believed that war with Mexico would bring not only Texas into the Union, but also New Mexico and California. Hence, the president supported Texan claims in disputes with Mexico over the Texas–Mexico border. While Texas insisted that its southern border extended to the Rio Grande, Mexico maintained that Texas's border stopped at the Nueces River, 100–150 miles northeast of the Rio Grande.

Despite the fact that Mexico had ceased formal diplomatic relations with the U.S., Polk hoped to negotiate secretly the boundary dispute, as well as the sale of California and New Mexico. He dispatched John Slidell, a congressman from Louisiana, to negotiate both matters. The Mexican government refused to receive Slidell. When Polk heard this news, he ordered U.S. troops into Mexican territory.



GEOGRAPHY SKILLBUILDER

1. **Location** From which locations in Texas did U.S. forces come to Buena Vista?
2. **Region** In which country were most of the battles fought?

THE WAR BEGINS In 1845, John C. Frémont led an American military exploration party into California, violating Mexico's territorial rights. In response, Mexican troops crossed the Rio Grande. In a skirmish near Matamoros, Mexican soldiers killed 11 U.S. soldiers. Polk immediately called for war and Congress approved. F

In 1846, Polk ordered Colonel Stephen Kearny and his troops to march from Fort Leavenworth, Kansas, to Santa Fe, New Mexico. They were met there by a New Mexican contingent that included upper-class Mexicans who wanted to join the United States. New Mexico fell to the United States without a shot.

MAIN IDEA

Analyzing Issues

F What border dispute affected the war with Mexico?

THE REPUBLIC OF CALIFORNIA In California, a group of American settlers seized the town of Sonoma in June 1846. Hoisting a flag that featured a grizzly bear, the rebels proudly declared their independence from Mexico and proclaimed the nation of the **Republic of California.** Kearny arrived from New Mexico and joined forces with Frémont and an American naval expedition. The Mexican troops quickly gave way, leaving U.S. forces in control of California.

AMERICA WINS THE WAR Meanwhile, American troops in Mexico, led by U.S. generals Zachary Taylor and Winfield Scott, scored one military victory after another. After about a year of fighting, Mexico conceded defeat. On February 2, 1848, the United States and Mexico signed the **Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo.** Mexico agreed to the Rio Grande as the border between Texas and Mexico and ceded the New Mexico and California territories to the United States. The United