Chapter 17- Manifest Destiny and its Legacy 1841-1848

1. The Accession of “Tyler Too”
2. John Tyler took the presidency four weeks into President Harrison term because President Harrison died.
* People were upset because Tyler was a “Democrat in Whigs clothing”.
1. John Tyler: A President without a Party
2. Tyler was against Fiscal Banks, much to the Democrats’ relief but the Whigs disliked him.
* His entire cabinet resigned with the exception of his secretary of state who was in the midst of negotiations with Europe.
1. A War of Words with Britain
2. The British were hated during the 19th century and The US soon started the “third war with England” only this time it was fought with ink and books and no guns were fired.
3. There was a small rebellion in Canada where a steamer called the Caroline was attacked.
4. Manipulating the Maine Maps
5. In 1842 the British wanted to build a road westwards from the seaport of Halifax to Quebec.
* It ran through a disputed territory and small scale lumberman clash – The Aroostook War began.
1. The London foreign office sent a nonprofessional diplomat- Lord Ashburton to settle the dispute.
* The US got 7,000 square miles of the 12,000 square mile area and Britain got the land they wanted for the train.
1. The Lone Star of Texas Shines Alone
2. Mexico refused to recognize Texas’ independence- they saw Texas as a province in revolt that they could take back.
* They threatened American with war if America protected Texas
1. Texas opened treaties with Britain and France
* Britain wanted a free Texas so it could watch over America and make sure America didn’t become too powerful.
1. The Belated Texas Nuptials
2. Texas became an issue in the presidential campaign of 1844.
* Democrats were pro-expansionists
* Tyler signed a resolution that made Texas the 28th state and the Mexicans were thoroughly upset.
1. Oregon Fever Populates Oregon
2. Oregon country was huge claimed by Spain, Russia, Britain and the US.
* Spain and Russia eventually dropped out of their claims because of treaties they had made.
1. Britain had a strong hold of the land north of the Colombia River because they actually occupied it and explored it.
2. Americans had explored and occupied the territory south of the Colombia River.
3. A scheme for peaceful joint occupation was adopted; American and British pioneers lived peacefully side by side.
4. A lot of Americans migrated over to Oregon; the British had less population but didn’t want to give up its claims.
5. A Mandate (?) for Manifest Destiny
6. In the election of 1844, the Whig party chose Henry Clay; the Democrats chose James K. Polk.
* Polk Beat Clay in the election. Clay straddled the issue of whether or not to annex Texas.
1. In the 1840’s and 1850’s Americans felt that God had destined Americans to spread themselves over the whole continent.
2. Polk to Purposeful
3. Polk – the Young Hickory- was not as impressive as the Old Hickory and took life seriously, developed a successful four point program.
* He lowered tariffs, restored the treasury, acquired California and settled the Oregon dispute.
1. England finally compromised to split the area along the line of 49 degrees without there being war.
2. Misunderstandings with Mexico
3. Polk was eager to buy California from Mexico but after the Texas annexation diplomatic relations with Mexico were severed.
4. There were rumors about the British wanting to buy or seize Mexico so Polk sent an envoy to offer up to $25 million for California but the Mexicans wouldn’t hear of it.
5. American Blood on American (?) Soil
6. Everyone was anxiously waiting for war between Mexico and the US
* Polk almost declared war first but on April 25th 1846 Mexican troops killed Americans on disputed “American Soil”.
1. Polk sent war message to the congress and they voted for war, the patriotic country agreed that something had to be done.
2. Abraham Lincoln was so concerned with what place the war actually started that he was known as “Spotty Lincoln”.
3. Polk had provoked the war in efforts to gain California, Mexico also wanted to fight with America.
* Both sides believed that the other was the aggressor, the Yankees had polluted the Mexican’s lands and the Mexicans had killed the first Americans.
1. Mastering of Mexico
2. Polk wanted California- not war, but he got war and hoped to pull out quickly.
* Previously exiled Santa Anna said that he would sell out his country if they helped him get back to Mexico, he lied and rallied the Mexican troops to fight.
1. American operations in the Southwest and California were completely successful. Captain John C. Fremont helped collaborate in the war.
* General Zachary Taylor- “Old Rough and Ready” became the hero of Buenavista when he and his 5,000 troops attacked 20,000 Mexicans troops and won.
1. General Winifred Scott battled up to Mexico City.
2. Fighting Mexico for Peace
3. Polk wanted to end the war soon, sent Nicholas P. Trist to arrange and armistice as $10,000
4. Trist wasn’t a good negotiator but he managed to sign the treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo.
* The treaty terms: confirmed American title to Texas and got the area from Oregon to California, which was bout ½ of Mexico and added 1/3 more land to America for $15 million.
1. Some Southerners wanted all of Mexico and some wanted none of it, the government couldn’t please everyone.
2. Profit and Loss in Mexico
3. Mexican War was comparably small as wars go but the gains were big.
* They gained more land than in the Louisiana Purchase.
1. The Mexican war proved to be field experience for most of the future officers in the civil war.