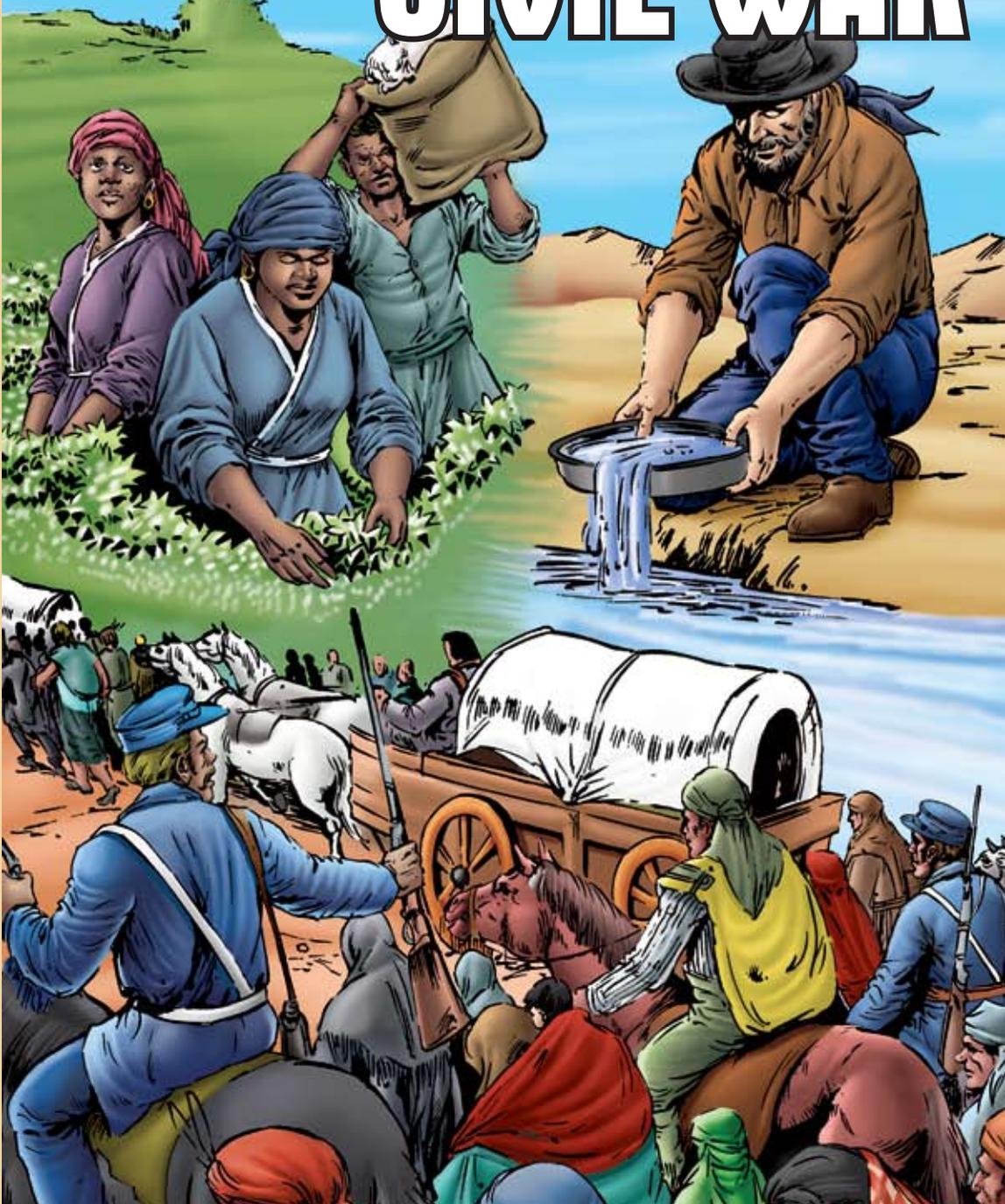




# BEFORE THE CIVIL WAR

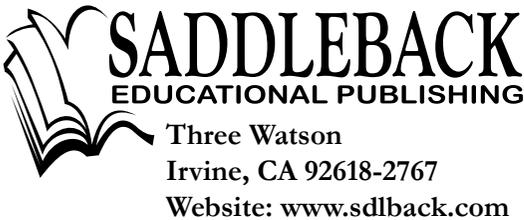


# *Before the Civil War*

*1830–1860*



# Saddleback's *Graphic American History*



*Copyright © 2009 by Saddleback Educational Publishing  
All rights reserved. No part of this book may be reproduced in any form  
or by any means, electronic or mechanical, including photocopying,  
recording, or by any information storage and retrieval system, without the  
written permission of the publisher.*

ISBN-10: 1-59905-361-6

ISBN-13: 978-1-59905-361-5

eBook: 978-1-60291-689-0

While American settlers in Oregon celebrated the treaty making that territory American, the rest of the United States was concerned with a large tract of land far to the south.

Tom Tyler was a boy who lived in Tennessee.

Say, Dad,  
what does  
G.T.T. mean?

Stands for "Gone  
to Texas." You  
fixin' to go?

Course not. But when I went  
to the Byes' cabin, everybody  
was gone and they'd written  
G.T.T. on the door! Why?

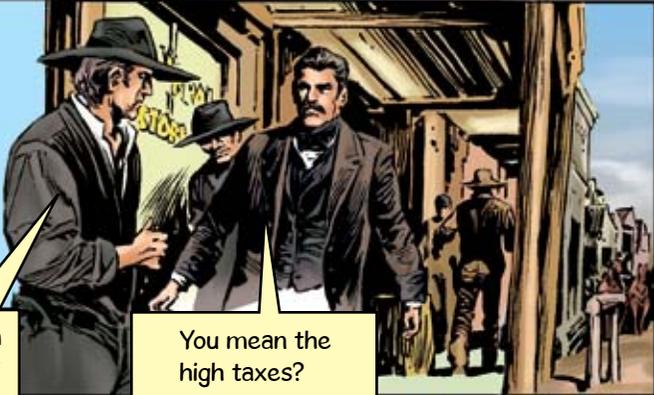
Well, Texas is a big tract of land  
next to the United States that  
belongs to Mexico. A lot of land, not  
many people.

Some people take off for Texas  
when they get in trouble with the  
law. Others, like the Byes, think they  
can get good land there cheap, and  
make more money.

Would you  
like to go?

I reckon I wouldn't like the rules.  
You have to become a Mexican  
citizen and join the Catholic church.

By 1827, about 12,000 Americans had gone to Texas. They did not pay much attention to the Mexican rules. Soon they were quarrelling with the government.



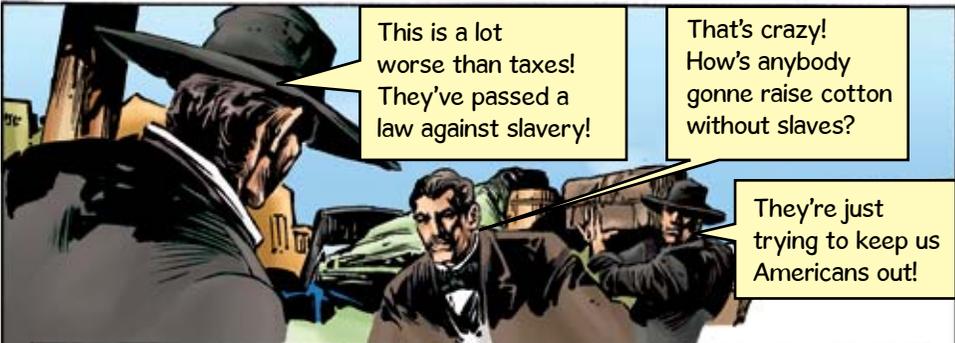
You heard the latest from the Mexican government?

You mean the high taxes?

This is a lot worse than taxes! They've passed a law against slavery!

That's crazy! How's anybody gonna raise cotton without slaves?

They're just trying to keep us Americans out!



Stephen Austin had brought the first group of American settlers to Texas. Now the Americans talked of revolt. Austin conferred with Sam Houston, a newcomer from Tennessee.

According to Santa Anna's\* latest decrees, we can't gather in groups of more than 10 people. We can't criticize the government. We can't worship as Protestants! Americans won't stand for it!

I am going to Mexico City, Sam. Surely I can work out a compromise that will satisfy both sides.



\* Ruler of Mexico

Later, shocking news arrived from Mexico City.

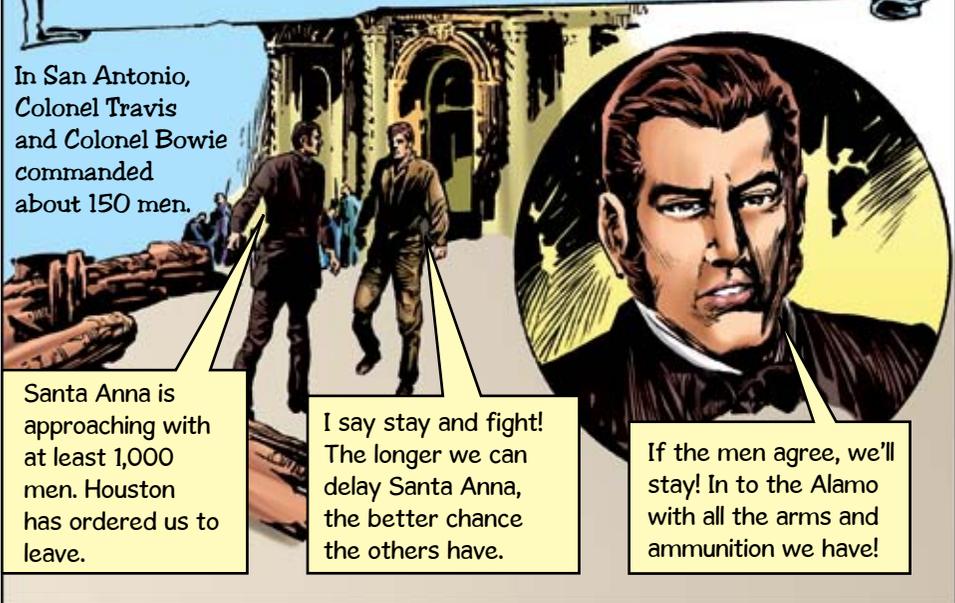
Austin, the peacemaker, has been thrown into prison! And they're sending Mexican troops to San Antonio!

An armed clash between Texas and Mexico has become inevitable! When the rights of peaceful men are curtailed by arms, they must defend their liberties!



Santa Anna led a strong Mexican army into Texas. Texas declared its independence and set up a provisional government. Sam Houston was elected commander in chief of the Texas army.

In San Antonio, Colonel Travis and Colonel Bowie commanded about 150 men.

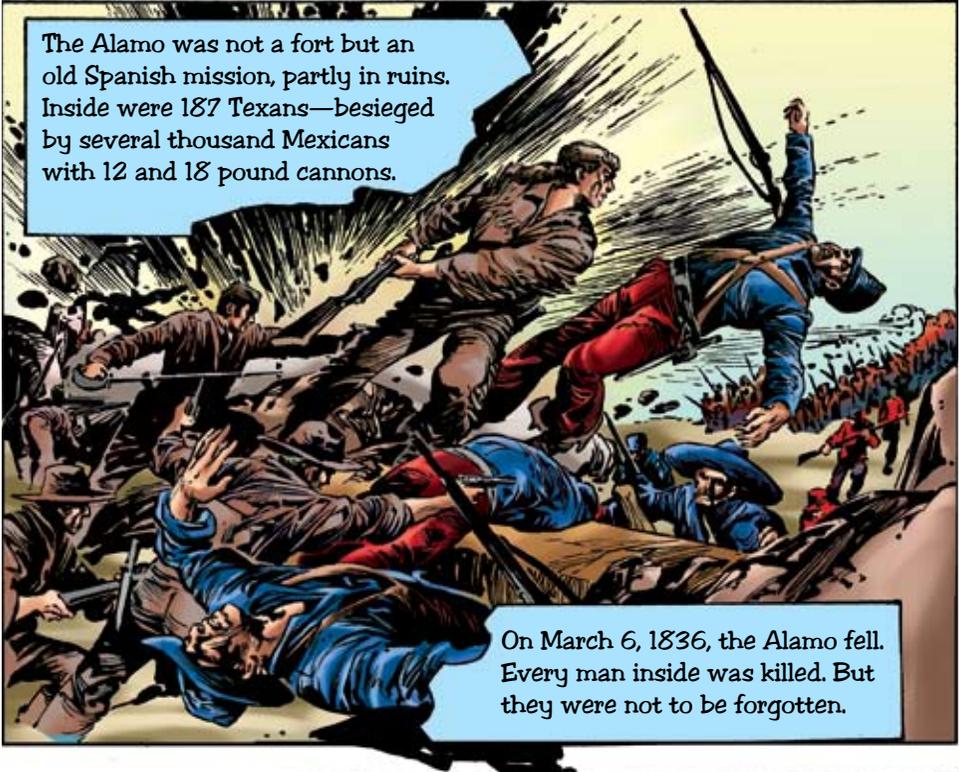


Santa Anna is approaching with at least 1,000 men. Houston has ordered us to leave.

I say stay and fight! The longer we can delay Santa Anna, the better chance the others have.

If the men agree, we'll stay! In to the Alamo with all the arms and ammunition we have!

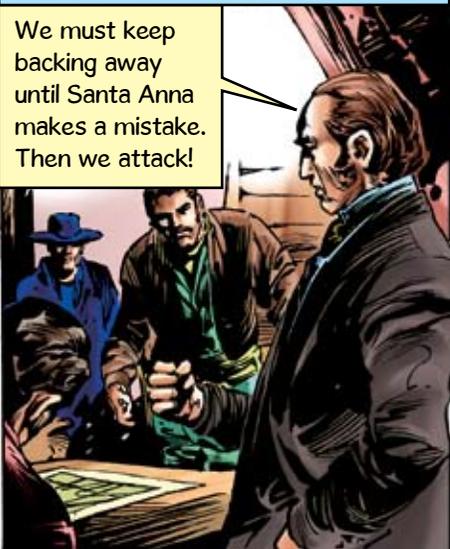
The Alamo was not a fort but an old Spanish mission, partly in ruins. Inside were 187 Texans—besieged by several thousand Mexicans with 12 and 18 pound cannons.



On March 6, 1836, the Alamo fell. Every man inside was killed. But they were not to be forgotten.

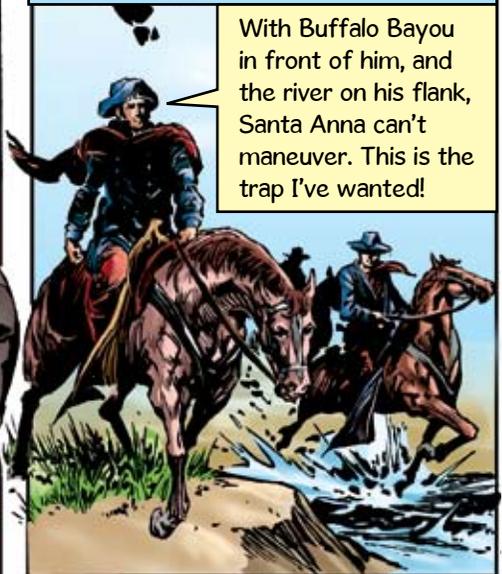
Houston, with only a small, poorly equipped army, worked out a strategy.

We must keep backing away until Santa Anna makes a mistake. Then we attack!



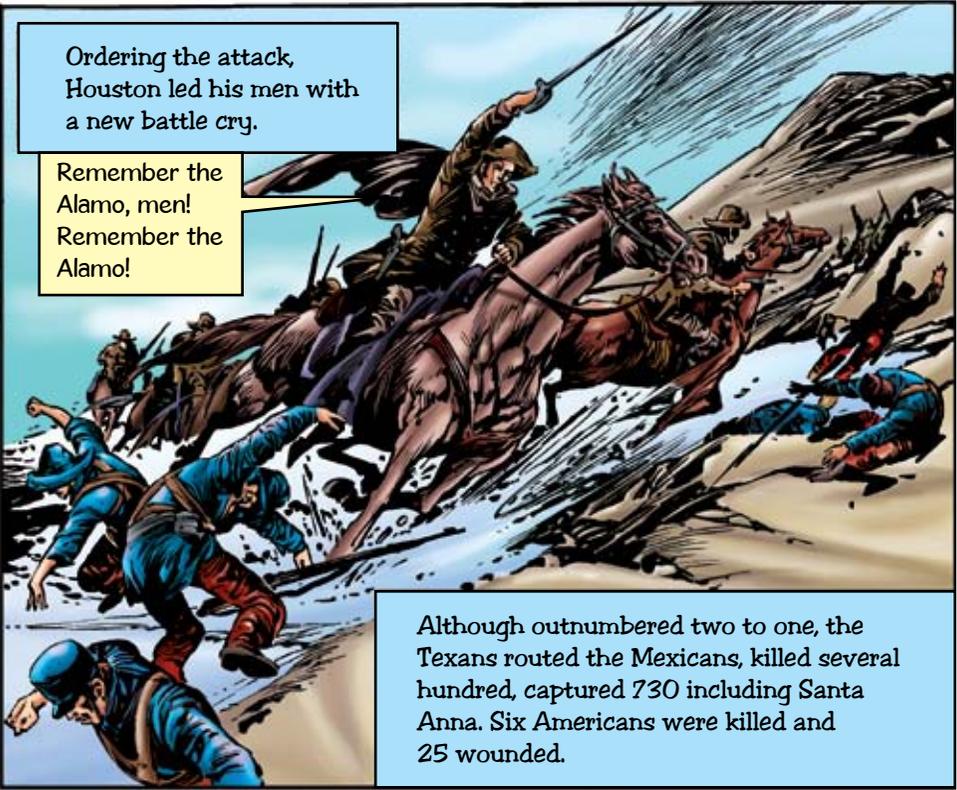
His chance came on April 21, at the San Jacinto River.

With Buffalo Bayou in front of him, and the river on his flank, Santa Anna can't maneuver. This is the trap I've wanted!



Ordering the attack,  
Houston led his men with  
a new battle cry.

Remember the  
Alamo, men!  
Remember the  
Alamo!



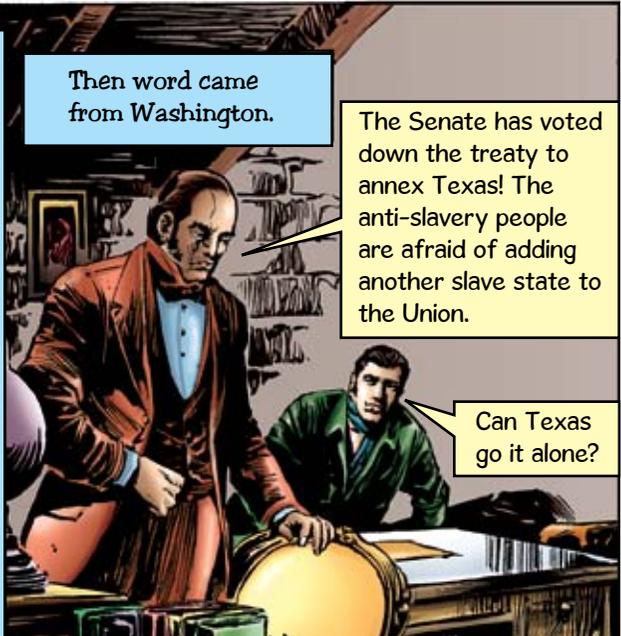
Although outnumbered two to one, the  
Texans routed the Mexicans, killed several  
hundred, captured 730 including Santa  
Anna. Six Americans were killed and  
25 wounded.

As a prisoner, Santa  
Anna promised  
to recognize the  
independence of  
Texas. It became the  
Lone Star Republic.  
On October 22, 1836,  
Sam Houston became  
its first president.  
France, England, and  
the United States  
recognized the new  
republic. Texas applied  
for admission to the  
United States.

Then word came  
from Washington.

The Senate has voted  
down the treaty to  
annex Texas! The  
anti-slavery people  
are afraid of adding  
another slave state to  
the Union.

Can Texas  
go it alone?

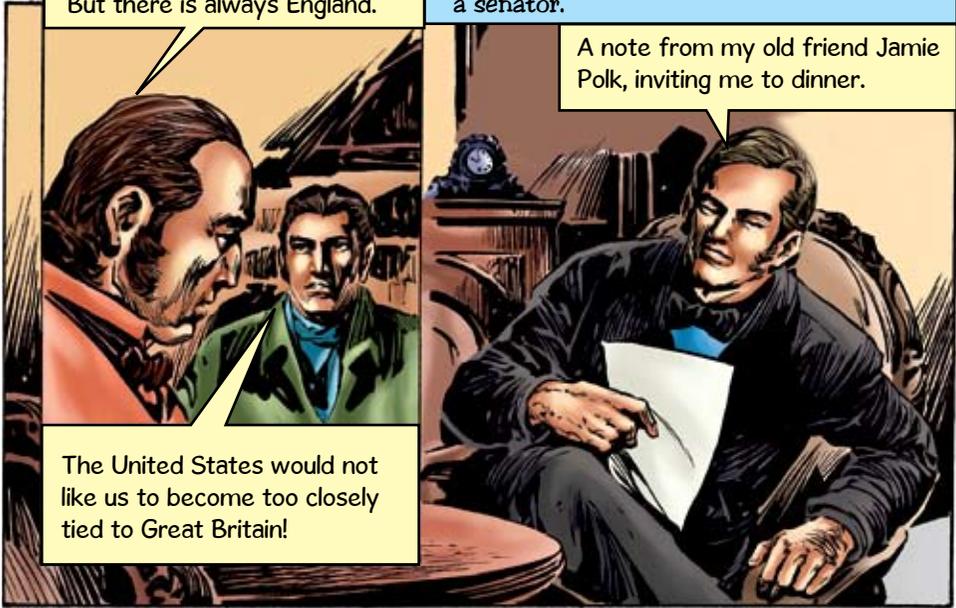


Sana Anna threatens to bring his army back and reconquer us. We have no army or navy. But there is always England.

It was December 1845 before Texas legally became a state in the Union. Then Sam Houston was sent to Washington as a senator.

A note from my old friend Jamie Polk, inviting me to dinner.

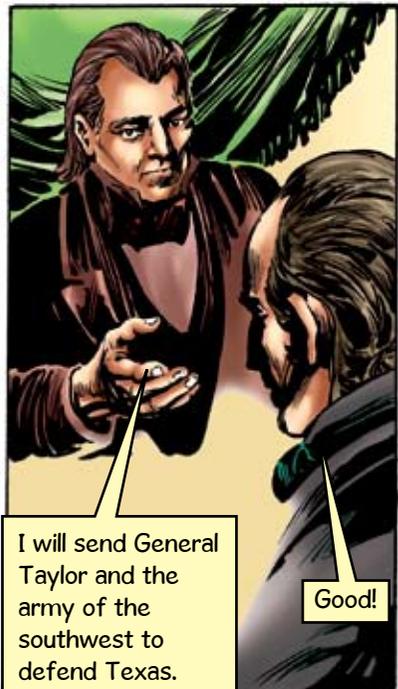
The United States would not like us to become too closely tied to Great Britain!



The new president of the United States, James K. Polk, was a Tennessean. Houston went to the White House.

What's our situation with Mexico, Sam?

Santa Anna has never recognized Texas as an independent state. By annexing us, you've insulted him. He'll go to war!

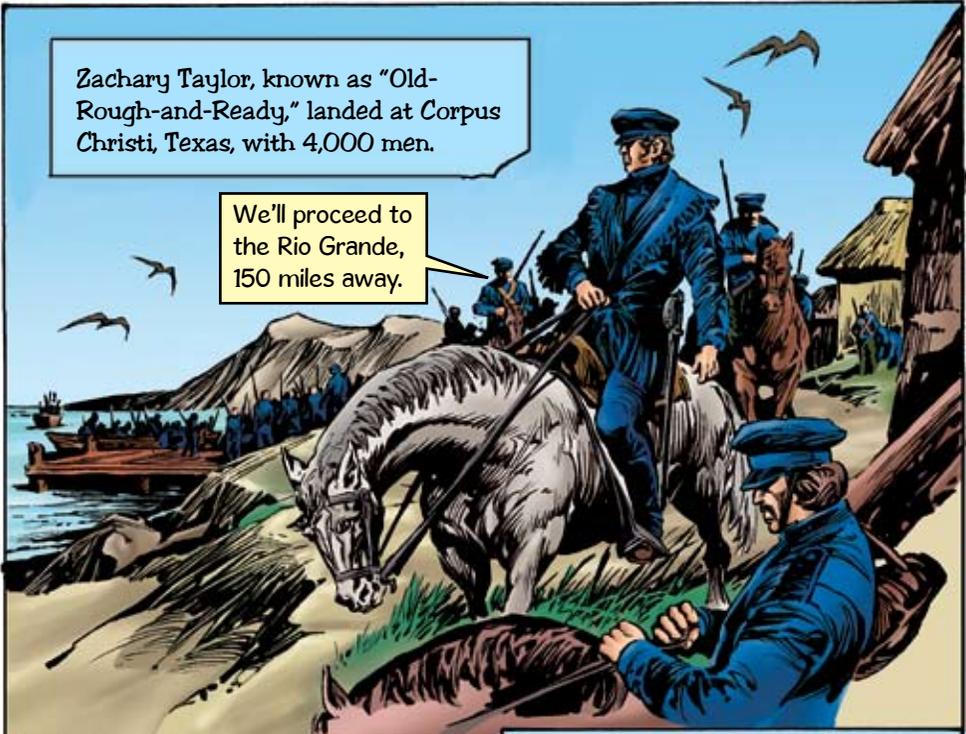


I will send General Taylor and the army of the southwest to defend Texas.

Good!

Zachary Taylor, known as "Old-Rough-and-Ready," landed at Corpus Christi, Texas, with 4,000 men.

We'll proceed to the Rio Grande, 150 miles away.

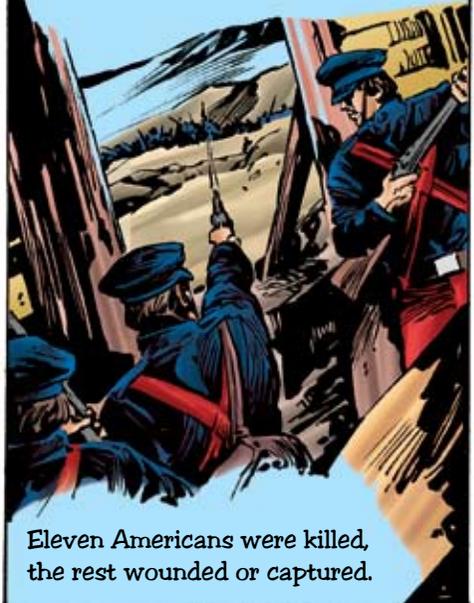


Texas claimed the Rio Grande River as its border. Mexico claimed the land to the Nueces River, farther north.

Send out a scouting party of dragoons.\*



In the territory between the two rivers, the dragoons were surrounded by Mexican troops.



Eleven Americans were killed, the rest wounded or captured.

\* Soldiers with short muskets

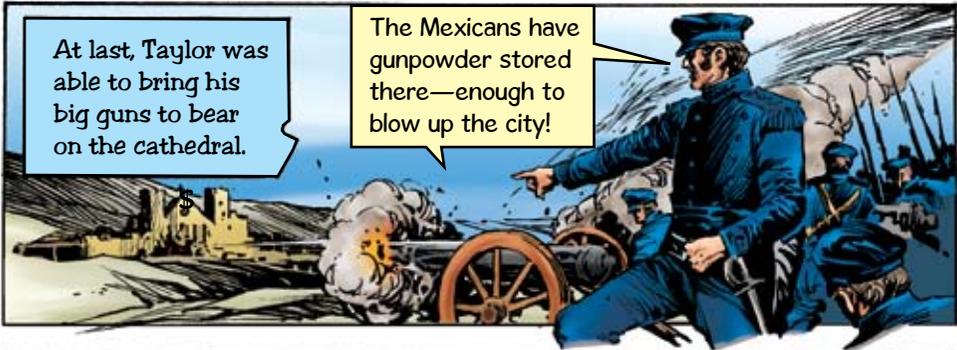
General Taylor dictated a letter to the president.

In a military action, American blood was spilled on American soil!

As a result, the United States declared war against Mexico on May 13, 1846.

Taylor moved his forces 400 miles up the Rio Grande, to Camargo.

From Camargo they marched inland to Monterrey, defended by 7,000 Mexican troops under General Ampudia. For three days in the rain, the Americans fought their way house by house, street by street, in a dogged battle.



At last, Taylor was able to bring his big guns to bear on the cathedral.

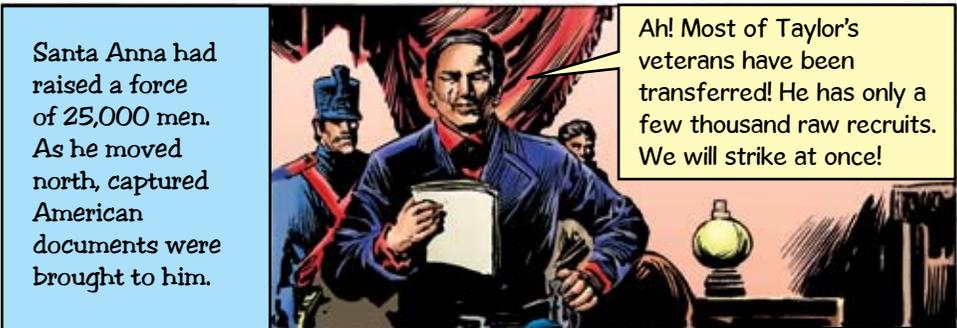
The Mexicans have gunpowder stored there—enough to blow up the city!



Quickly General Ampudia sent out a flag of truce.

They're surrendering!

So the town of Monterrey fell to the Americans.



Santa Anna had raised a force of 25,000 men. As he moved north, captured American documents were brought to him.

Ah! Most of Taylor's veterans have been transferred! He has only a few thousand raw recruits. We will strike at once!



But Taylor, aware of the advance, picked his spot for the battle.

Here, with the river, and the hills on either side, their big cannon and cavalry can't be used to advantage.

It was on February 22, Washington's birthday, that the Mexicans attacked.



Old-Rough-and-Ready sat on his horse in the center of the line.

Give `em hell, boys!



Again and again the Mexicans charged—and the "raw recruits" threw them back.

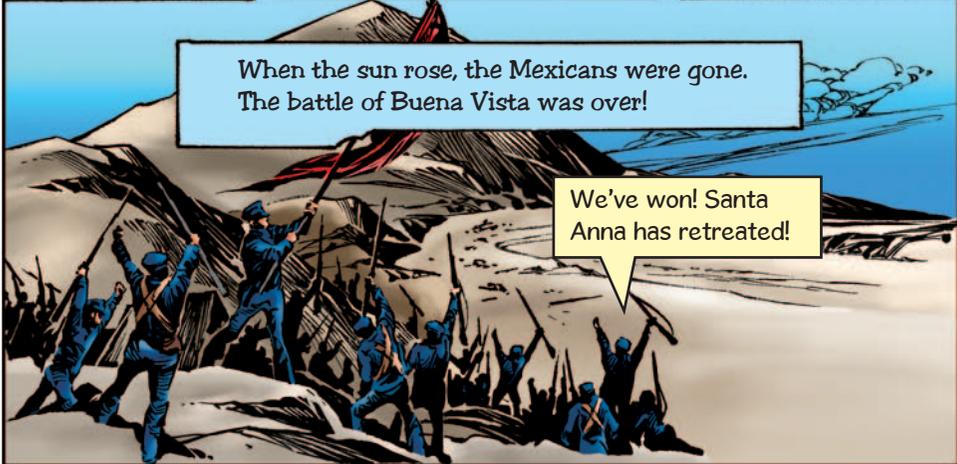
It was pouring rain and very cold. During the nighttime lull, the officers pleaded with Taylor.

General, I beg you—order a retreat! The men can't take much more.



The men can take it, and they will!

When the sun rose, the Mexicans were gone. The battle of Buena Vista was over!



We've won! Santa Anna has retreated!