

## BOUNDARIES (OREGON TREATY)

*Treaty signed at Washington June 15, 1846*  
*Senate advice and consent to ratification June 18, 1846*  
*Ratified by the President of the United States June 19, 1846*  
*Ratified by the United Kingdom July 14, 1846*  
*Ratifications exchanged at London July 17, 1846*  
*Entered into force July 17, 1846*  
*Proclaimed by the President of the United States August 5, 1846*

9 Stat. 869; Treaty Series 120 <sup>1</sup>

The United States of America and her Majesty the Queen of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland, deeming it to be desirable for the future welfare of both countries that the state of doubt and uncertainty which has hitherto prevailed respecting the sovereignty and government of the territory on the northwest coast of America, lying westward of the Rocky or Stony mountains, should be finally terminated by an amicable compromise of the rights mutually asserted by the two parties over the said territory, have respectively named plenipotentiaries to treat and agree concerning the terms of such settlement—that is to say: the President of the United States of America has, on his part, furnished with full powers James Buchanan, Secretary of State of the United States, and her Majesty, the Queen of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland, has, on her part, appointed the Right Honorable Richard Pakenham, a member of her Majesty's most honorable Privy Council, and her Majesty's Envoy Extraordinary and Minister Plenipotentiary to the United States; who, after having communicated to each other their respective full powers, found in good and due form, have agreed upon and concluded the following articles:

### ARTICLE I <sup>2</sup>

From the point on the forty-ninth parrallel of north latitude, where the boundary laid down in existing treaties and conventions between the United States and Great Britain terminates, the line of boundary between the territories of the United States and those of her Britannic Majesty shall be continued westward along the said forty-ninth parallel of north latitude to the

<sup>1</sup> For a detailed study of this treaty, see 5 Miller 3.

<sup>2</sup> For a declaration signed Feb. 24, 1870, approving the maps prepared by commissioners appointed to survey the boundary, see TS 129, *post*, p. 157.

middle of the channel which separates the continent from Vancouver's Island, and thence southerly through the middle of the said channel, and of Fuca's straits to the Pacific Ocean: *Provided, however,* That the navigation of the whole of the said channel and straits south of the forty-ninth parallel of north latitude remain free and open to both parties.

#### ARTICLE II

From the point at which the forty-ninth parallel of north latitude shall be found to intersect the great northern branch of the Columbia river, the navigation of the said branch shall be free and open to the Hudson's Bay Company, and to all British subjects trading with the same, to the point where the said branch meets the main stream of the Columbia, and thence down the said main stream to the ocean, with free access into and through the said river or rivers, it being understood that all the usual portages along the line thus described shall in like manner be free and open. In navigating the said river or rivers, British subjects, with their goods and produce, shall be treated on the same footing as citizens of the United States; it being, however, always understood that nothing in this article shall be construed as preventing, or intended to prevent the Government of the United States from making any regulations respecting the navigation of the said river or rivers not inconsistent with the present treaty.

#### ARTICLE III

In the future appropriation of the territory south of the forty-ninth parallel of north latitude, as provided in the first article of this treaty, the possessory rights of the Hudson's Bay Company, and of all British subjects who may be already in the occupation of land or other property lawfully acquired within the said territory, shall be respected.<sup>2</sup>

#### ARTICLE IV

The farms, lands, and other property of every description belonging to the Puget's Sound Agricultural Company on the north side of the Columbia river, shall be confirmed to the said company. In case, however, the situation of those farms and lands should be considered by the United States to be of public and political importance, and the United States' Government should signify a desire to obtain possession of the whole, or of any part thereof, the property so required shall be transferred to the said Government, at a proper valuation, to be agreed upon between the parties.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>2</sup> For settlement of claims, see treaty signed at Washington July 1, 1863 (TS 128), *post*, p. 154.

ARTICLE V

The present treaty shall be ratified by the President of the United States, by and with the advice and consent of the Senate thereof, and by her Britannic Majesty; and the ratifications shall be exchanged at London, at the expiration of six months from the date hereof, or sooner, if possible.

In witness whereof, the respective plenipotentiaries have signed the same, and have affixed thereto the seals of their arms.

Done at Washington the fifteenth day of June, in the year of our Lord one thousand eight hundred and forty-six.

JAMES BUCHANAN	[SEAL]
RICHARD PAKENHAM	[SEAL]

## Document 2-4: Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo of 1848

Source: <https://www.history.com/topics/mexican-american-war/treaty-of-guadalupe-hidalgo>

The Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo, signed on February 2, 1848, ended the Mexican-American War in favor of the United States. The war had begun almost two years earlier, in May 1846, over a territorial dispute involving Texas. The treaty added an additional 525,000 square miles to United States territory, including the including the land that makes up all or parts of present-day Arizona, California, Colorado, Nevada, New Mexico, Utah and Wyoming. Mexico also gave up all claims to Texas and recognized the Rio Grande as America's southern boundary.

## Mexican-American War: 1846-48

On May 13, 1846, the U.S. Congress voted in favor of President James Polk's request to declare war on [Mexico](#) in a dispute over [Texas](#). Under the threat of war, the United States had refrained from annexing Texas after the latter won independence from Mexico in 1836. But in 1844, President [John Tyler](#) (1790-1862) restarted negotiations with the Republic of Texas, culminating with a treaty of annexation.

The treaty was defeated by a wide margin in the [U.S. Senate](#) because it would upset the slave state-free state balance between North and South and risked war with Mexico, which had broken off relations with the United States. But shortly before leaving office and with the support of President-elect Polk (1795-1849), Tyler managed to get a congressional resolution passed and then, on March 1, 1845, signed into law. Texas was admitted to the union on December 29 of that year.

While Mexico didn't follow through with its threat to declare war, relations between the two nations remained tense over border disputes, and in July 1845, President Polk ordered troops into disputed lands that lay between the Nueces and Rio Grande rivers. In November, Polk sent the diplomat John Slidell (1793-1871) to Mexico to seek boundary adjustments in return for the U.S. government's settlement of the claims of American citizens against Mexico and also to make an offer to purchase [California](#) and [New Mexico](#). After the mission failed, the U.S. Army under General [Zachary Taylor](#) (1784-1850) advanced to the mouth

of the Rio Grande, the river that the state of Texas claimed as its southern boundary.

Mexico, claiming that the boundary was the Nueces River to the northeast of the Rio Grande, considered the advance of Taylor's army an act of aggression and in April 1846 sent troops across the Rio Grande. Polk, in turn, declared the Mexican advance to be an invasion of U.S. soil, and on May 11, 1846, asked Congress to declare war on Mexico, which it did two days later.

## Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo: February 2, 1848

Following the defeat of the Mexican army and the fall of Mexico City, in September 1847, the Mexican government surrendered and peace negotiations began. The war officially ended with the February 2, 1848, signing in Mexico of the Treaty of Guadalupe [Hidalgo](#). The treaty added an additional 525,000 square miles to United States territory, including the land that makes up all or parts of present-day [Arizona](#), California, [Colorado](#), [Nevada](#), New Mexico, [Utah](#) and [Wyoming](#). Mexico also gave up all claims to Texas and recognized the Rio Grande as America's southern boundary. In return, the United States paid Mexico \$15 million and agreed to settle all claims of U.S. citizens against Mexico.

## Mexican-American War: Aftermath

Although Polk's war was successful, he lost public support after nearly two bloody and costly years of fighting. Additionally, the controversial war reignited the slavery extension debate that would ultimately result in the [American Civil War](#) in the 1860s.

Polk did not seek re-election after his first term, and died at age 53 in June 1849, three months after leaving office. Zachary Taylor, who became a national hero during the [Mexican-American War](#), ran for president in the 1848 election and won. However, 16 months after his inauguration, Taylor became ill and died.

Document 3-1: Guided Questions

Directions: Answer the following questions as you learn about each of the primary treaty documents.

1. What is the Title of this Treaty Document?

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2. When was this Treaty signed?

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3. What countries are involved in this treaty?

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4. What states are included in this document?

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5. Do you think the United States make a fair deal in this treaty? Why or why not?

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6. How do you think this treaty has changed the landscape of the United States?

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7. How much did the United States end up paying for this land? Was it worth it? Why or why not?

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