

# **Panama Canal**

# *The Panama Canal*

- People had dreamed of connecting the Atlantic and Pacific Oceans.
- A canal would cut the journey from San Francisco to New York City by 8,000 miles.



# The Panama Canal

- When Teddy Roosevelt became president in 1901, he was eager to build a canal.
- Panama, however, belonged to Columbia.
- The U.S. offered Columbia \$15 million plus another \$250 thousand a year to rent a strip across Panama.
- Columbian officials refused the offer.



# *The Panama Canal*

- President Roosevelt was enraged.
- He knew that many Panamanians wanted the canal, and also that they wanted to break away from Columbian rule.
- Roosevelt made it clear that the U.S. would support rebels in Panama in an attempt to overthrow the government of Columbia.
- On November 3, 1903, Panama declared itself an independent nation.



# *The Panama Canal*

- In November 1903, Americans forces **stopped** Colombian forces from crushing Panama's revolt.
- The U.S. recognized Panama as a **new nation** at once.



# *The Panama Canal*

- In return, Panama quickly agreed to let the U.S. build a canal on terms similar to those offered to Colombia.
- Many Latin American nations, however, were angered by the way President Roosevelt handled the affair.



# *The Panama Canal*

- Building the Panama Canal turned out to be *more difficult* than winning the right to build it.
- The canal builders faced great *hazards*.



# *The Panama Canal*

- Engineers working on the canal faced two challenges:
  - 1. *cutting through miles of rock to build the canal*, and
  - 2. *mosquitoes* – which carried two of the worst tropical diseases: Malaria and Yellow Fever.





# *The Panama Canal*

- More than 40,000 workers struggled to dig the canal.
- In 1914, the first ocean-going steamship traveled through the Panama Canal.



# ***The Panama Canal***

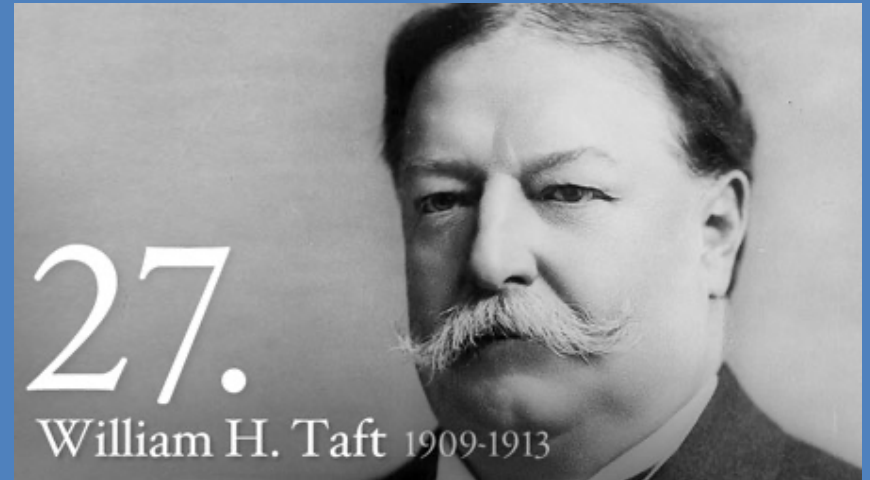
- The new waterway *helped the trade* of many nations.
- The Panama Canal involved the U.S. more than ever in Latin America.
- Many Latin American nations, however, remained bitter about the way in which the United States had gained control of the canal.

# ***The Panama Canal***

- Trip from New York – San Francisco =
  - 14,000 miles around Cape Horn (South America)
  - 6,000 miles using The Panama Canal
- The Panama Canal is 48 miles long.
- Passage through the canal takes 9 hours.
- 27,500 workers are estimated to have died during the construction.
- Each year, more than 14,000 ships pass through the canal - 40/day average.
- Toll is charged by length of ship.

# *William Howard Taft*

- In 1908,  
*William Howard Taft*  
was elected President.
- He favored the  
continuance of a strong  
American role in Latin  
America.



# ***Troubles With Mexico***

# *Troubles with Mexico*

- From 1877 to 1911, Mexico welcomed American investment.
- By 1912, the U.S. had invested about \$1 Billion there.



# *Troubles with Mexico*

- In 1910, Mexicans rebelled against their ruler.
- Despite America's large investment in Mexico, President Woodrow Wilson at first stayed neutral.
- President Wilson had trouble sticking to his policy, however.



# *Troubles with Mexico*

- In 1916, a rebel leader led a raid into a town in New Mexico.

*(Poncho Villa)*

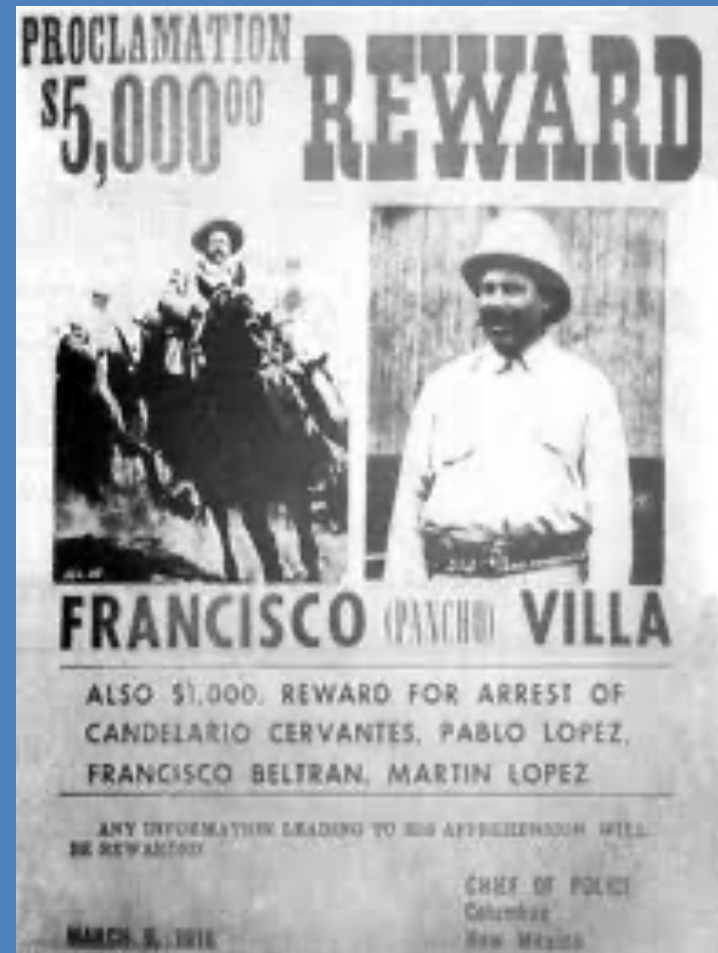
- During the raid, 17 Americans were killed.





# *Troubles with Mexico*

- President Wilson sent a group of **6,000** American soldiers into Mexico to put an end to the rebellion.
- Many Mexicans protested the American invasion of Mexico.



## *Troubles with Mexico*

- In the end, President Wilson withdrew the American troops.
- Still, the episode *harmed* relations with Mexico for years to come!