The Story So Far

- Module1 : Prehistoric America to the early Republic (20,000 BC – 1792) ✓
- Module 2: From Republic to Continental Superpower (1792-1850) ✓
- Module3: From Continental to World Power (1848-1900)
- Module 4: The reluctant giant (1900-1941)
- Module 5: Master of the World (1941-1989)
- Module 6: America and the multi polar world (1989-2024)

Module 3: from Continental to World Power

Talk	Title	Time Period	Date of Talk
16	Competing destinies	1848-1854	March 4th
17	The Union falls apart	1854-1861	March 18th
18	Civil War	1861-1865	April 3rd
19	Reconstruction & the New South	1865-1900	April 15th
20	Conquest of the West	1865-1890	April 29th
21	Triumph of capital	1865-1894	May 6th
22	A world power emerges	1890-1904	May 20th

American History

Talk 16: The competition of destinies 1848-1854

Overview

- Crisis of 1850
- US mid century
- The Kingdom of Zion
- South rises to dominance
- Crisis of 1856

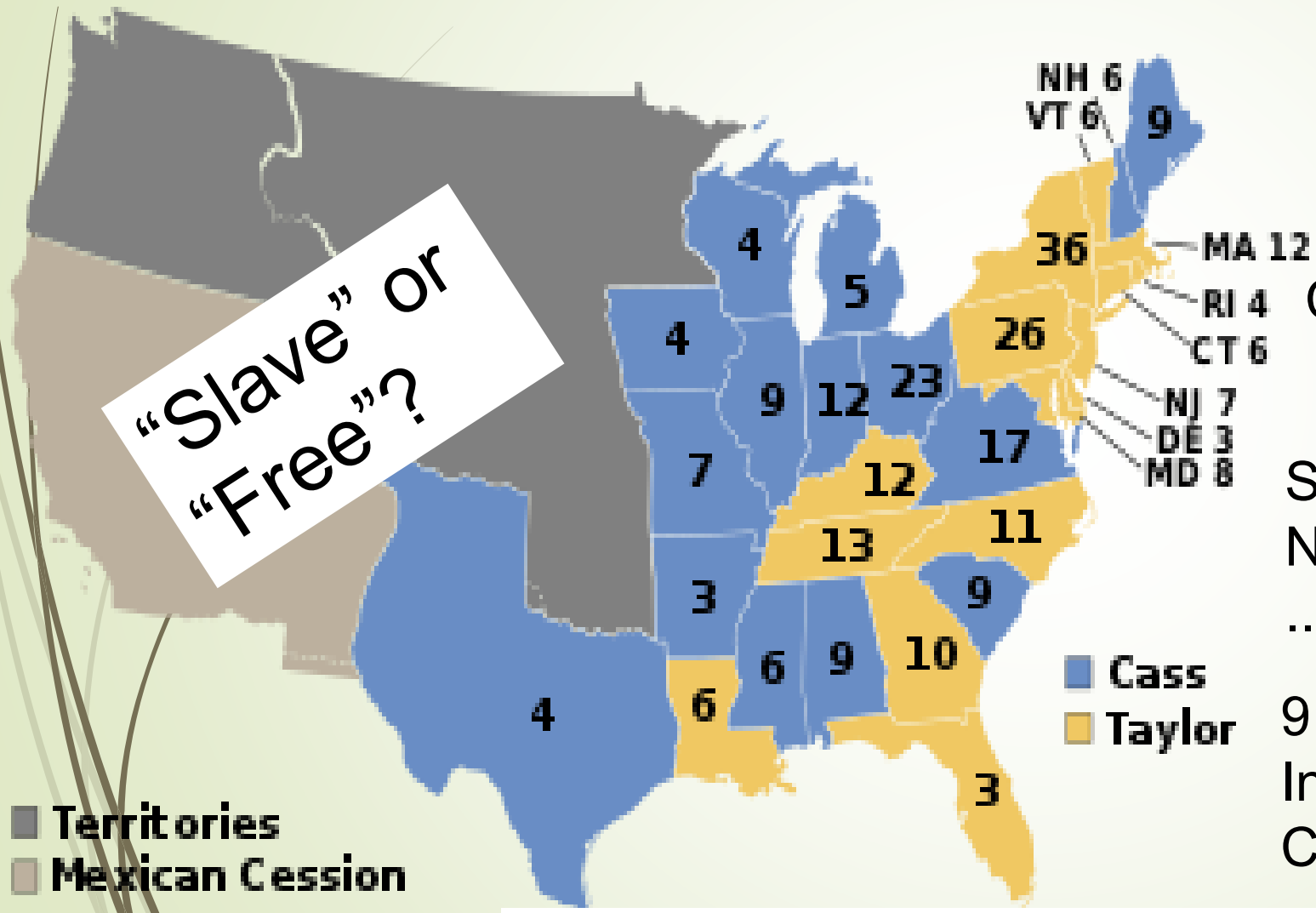
Crisis of 1850

Election of 1848: the candidates

- Democrats (low tariff and pro slavery) on track to victory
  - Euphoria from victory over Mexico
  - Economy booming
  - Polk retires after 1 term…replaced by slave owning Northerner as candidate
- Whigs (high tariff, anti slavery)
  - Ignore slavery issue…too divisive
  - Choose Mexican war hero and southern slave owner Zachary Taylor as candidate
  - Balance ticket with northerner Millard Fillmore…indifferent to slavery
- New “Free Soil” party emerges: no slavery in territories won from Mexico

Dems & Whigs ignore slavery issue: competition of ‘personalities’

1848 Election results



War hero prevails

Whigs win 47% vote, Dems 43%
Free Soil wins 10% of vote
....no regional split

Crisis **after** election as California seeks admission as "Free State"

South rejects…fear loss of power
Northern states demand admission
..block vote for new Speaker

9 Southern States hold Convention
In Nashville…threaten to secede if
California admitted as free

Mexico will poison us"…Walt Whitman

The Great Debate

Congress in chaos
…62 votes to chose a Speaker
…loaded pistols placed on desks
…Southern Senator Jefferson Davis challenges Northerner to duel

Henry Clay “Great Compromiser” propo
A deal to balance slave/free

Most famous debates in American History:

John C Calhoun.. South
Daniel Webster…North
Henry Clay. North

Last hurrah for children of Revolution.. Common experience
And trust from 30 years of debate.

Crisis averted: "Compromise of 1850"

California admitted as "free",
No slavery north of Missouri Compromise line of 1820

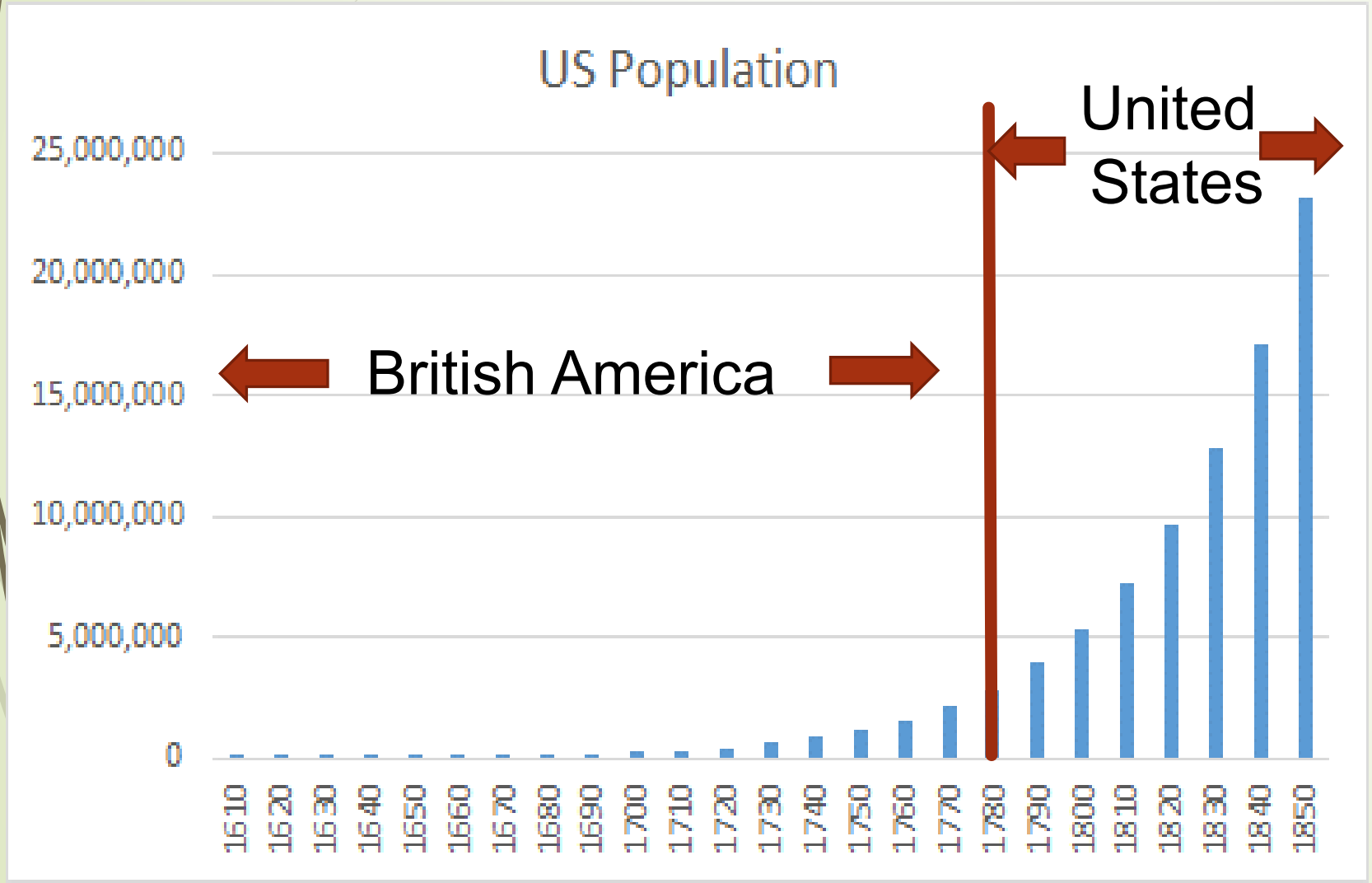
New Mexico territory created out of Texas, Mormon territory to become Utah… both exempted from Missouri compromise and allowed to choose "slave or free"
…state sovereignty

Fugitive Slave Law
….each state required to return escaped slaves to masters

Slavery issue "shelved"
…for now

US in 1850: a snap shot

US Population 1850



Population at 23 million rising 50% every decade

Tenfold increase since Independence. Natural Growth…Irish immigration takes off 1845

Native Indian population has collapsed 5 million in 1600, less than 500,000 By 1850

Slave population 3.5 million (2 million in 1830)…..free blacks 400,000, 90% in north

Still mostly British and Protestant

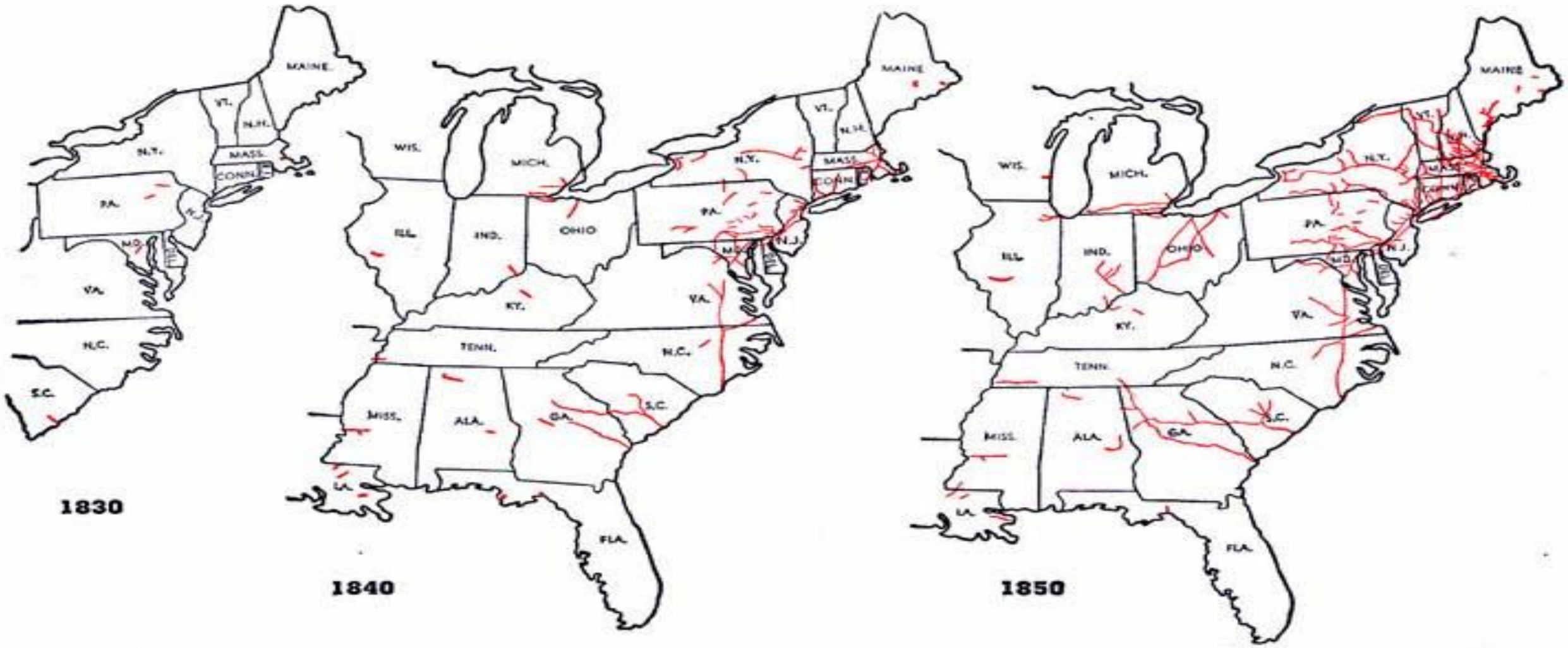
	1790	1850
English	55%	50%
Scottish	8%	6%
Scots Irish (Protestant)	10%	8%
Catholic Irish	1%	5%
German	5%	8%
Free blacks	2%	2%
Black Slaves	17%	15%
Other (Dutch, Swedish, Mexican, other)	2%	6%
Total	100%	100%

90% Protestant with 75 denominations….less than 2% Anglican (Church of England)…most Methodist, Baptist, Presbyterian, Quaker, Unitarians

A Pre-Industrial Society

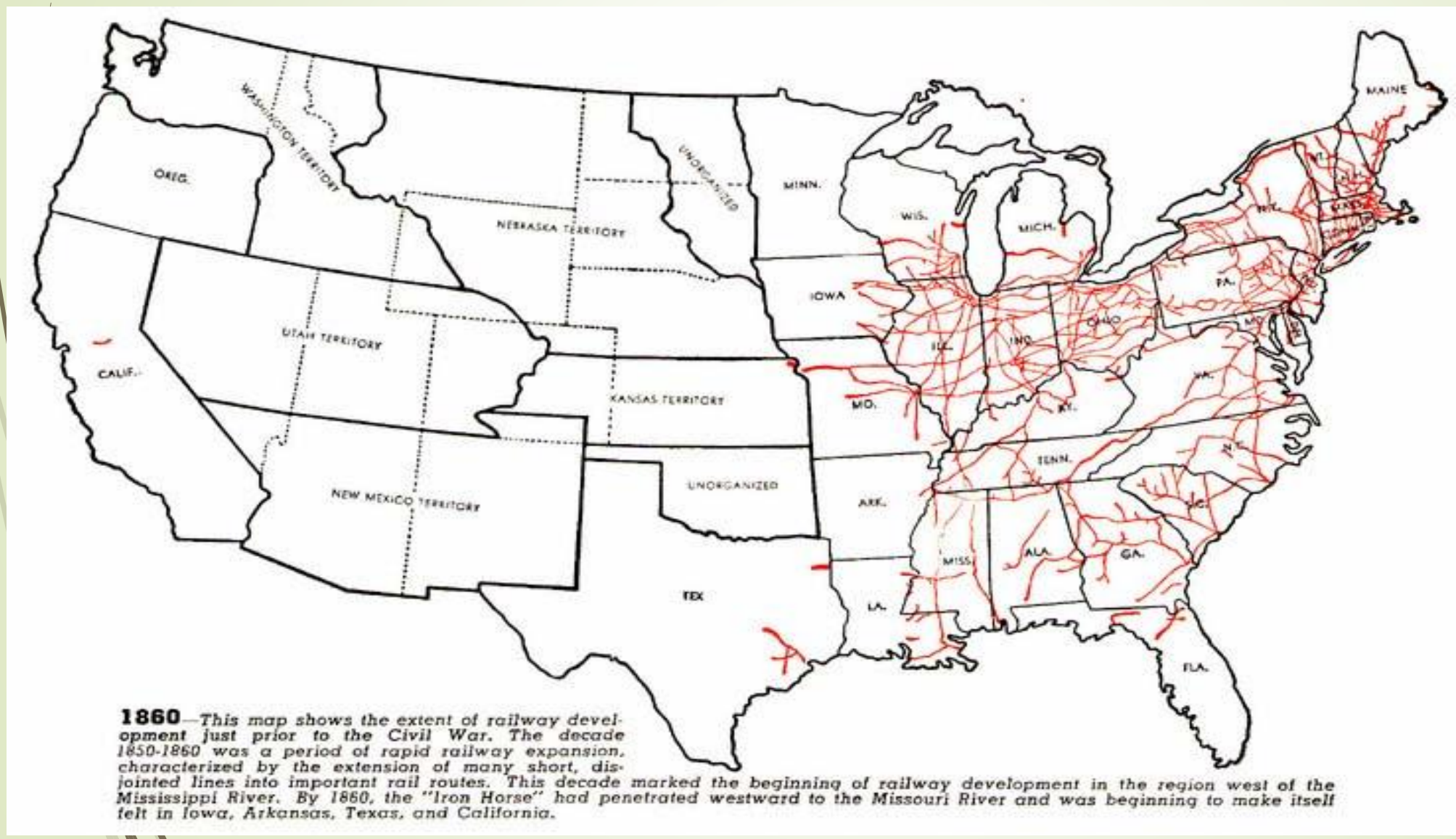
- 85% population in small towns and isolated communities (vs 97% 1790)
  - 60% ‘free’ workforce farmers
  - 20% domestic servants
  - 10% manufacturing
- Major cities emerging…mostly in the North
  - New York grows from 200,000 1830 to 515,000 by 1850
  - Baltimore 170,000, Boston 136,000, Philadelphia 120,000
- North industrialising rapidly into diverse industries
- South an expanding two crop economy: “cotton and tobacco” …..sustained by slave labour

Expansion of railroads



The early stages of railway development in America are shown by this set of maps. During the decade 1830-1840, the total length of completed railroad lines increased from 23 to 2,808 miles, and during the next ten years, more than 6,200 miles of railroad were opened, bringing the total network up to 9,021 miles in 1850. The most intensive growth during this period was in the Atlantic and Seaboard states. In 1850, a trip from Boston or New York to Chicago was made by rail and lake steamers or by stagecoaches, and required several days. One could travel all the way from Boston to Wilmington, North Carolina, by rail, with several changes of cars and a few ferry trips en route. During the first twenty years of railway development, covered by these maps, the population of the United States nearly doubled.

North & East integrated, South fragmented



1860—*This map shows the extent of railway development just prior to the Civil War. The decade 1850-1860 was a period of rapid railway expansion, characterized by the extension of many short, disjointed lines into important rail routes. This decade marked the beginning of railway development in the region west of the Mississippi River. By 1860, the "Iron Horse" had penetrated westward to the Missouri River and was beginning to make itself felt in Iowa, Arkansas, Texas, and California.*

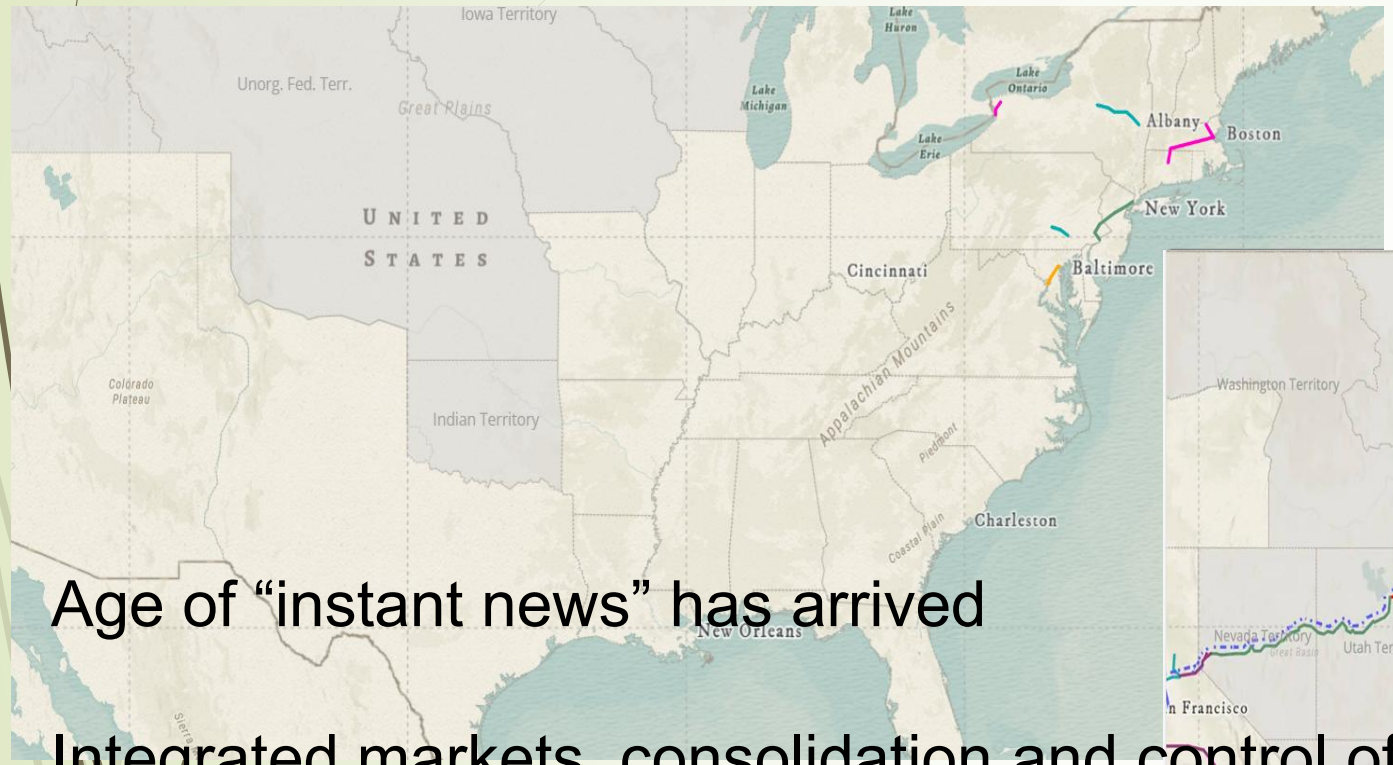
34,000 miles
Of track by 1860

21,000 miles
North East

South more
Dependent on
River traffic

Expansion of Telegraph

Telegraph 1845



Telegraph 1855

Age of “instant news” has arrived

Integrated markets, consolidation and control of industry

90% of expansion in North and East

The 1850's 'look'….breakdown of barriers

- Introduction of machine made clothes……spread of sewing machines
- Men….top hats, trousers, jackets…..worn by all classes
- Women…dome shape skirts, introduction of synthetic dyes

For men…Top hats and jackets

Dome skirts, bonnets, and colour

Caged Crinoline…..mass production for all classes
…advantages…cheap, reduction in petticoats
… disadvantages fire, cost, …..and getting caught in machinery

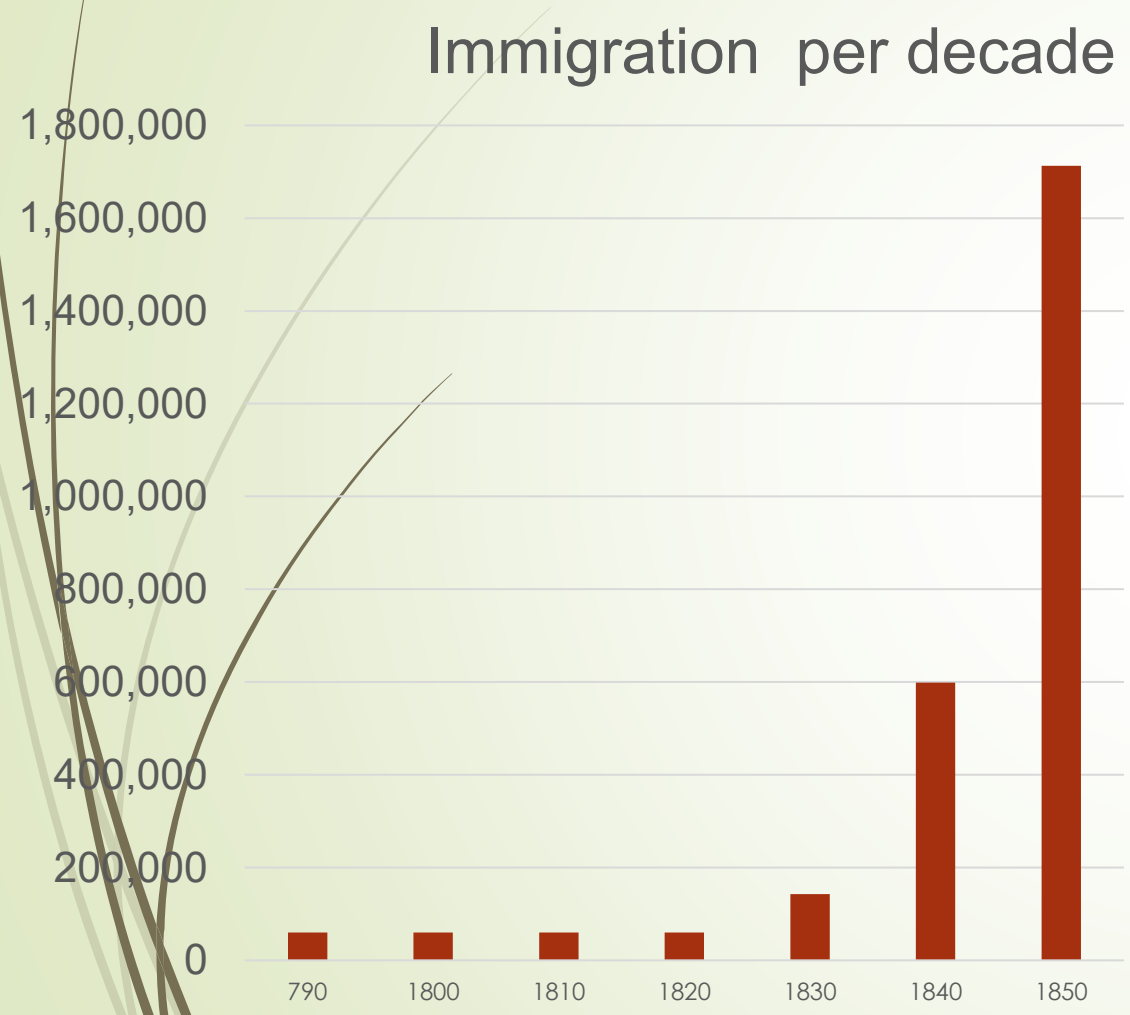
Children….little adults…boys skirts till 4..then loose trousers(sailor suits)….breeches at 14

America 1850

- Dynamic society expanding, industrialising, confident
- Slavery crisis avoided. South and North in balance…compromising
- Two cultures emerging in parallel and coexisting
  - North…industrializing, ‘democratic’, moving to Mid West
  - South…agrarian, two crop economy (cotton and tobacco), slave based, expanding across south and west
- Arrival of Mass immigration (1845+) ….disturbs equilibrium

Mass immigration

Mass immigration



- Low from independence to 1840
  ……mostly British
- 600,000 arrive during 840's
  …….start of potato famine & Gold Rush
- 1,700,000 during 1850's
  ……mass exodus from Ireland
  ……revolutions across Europe

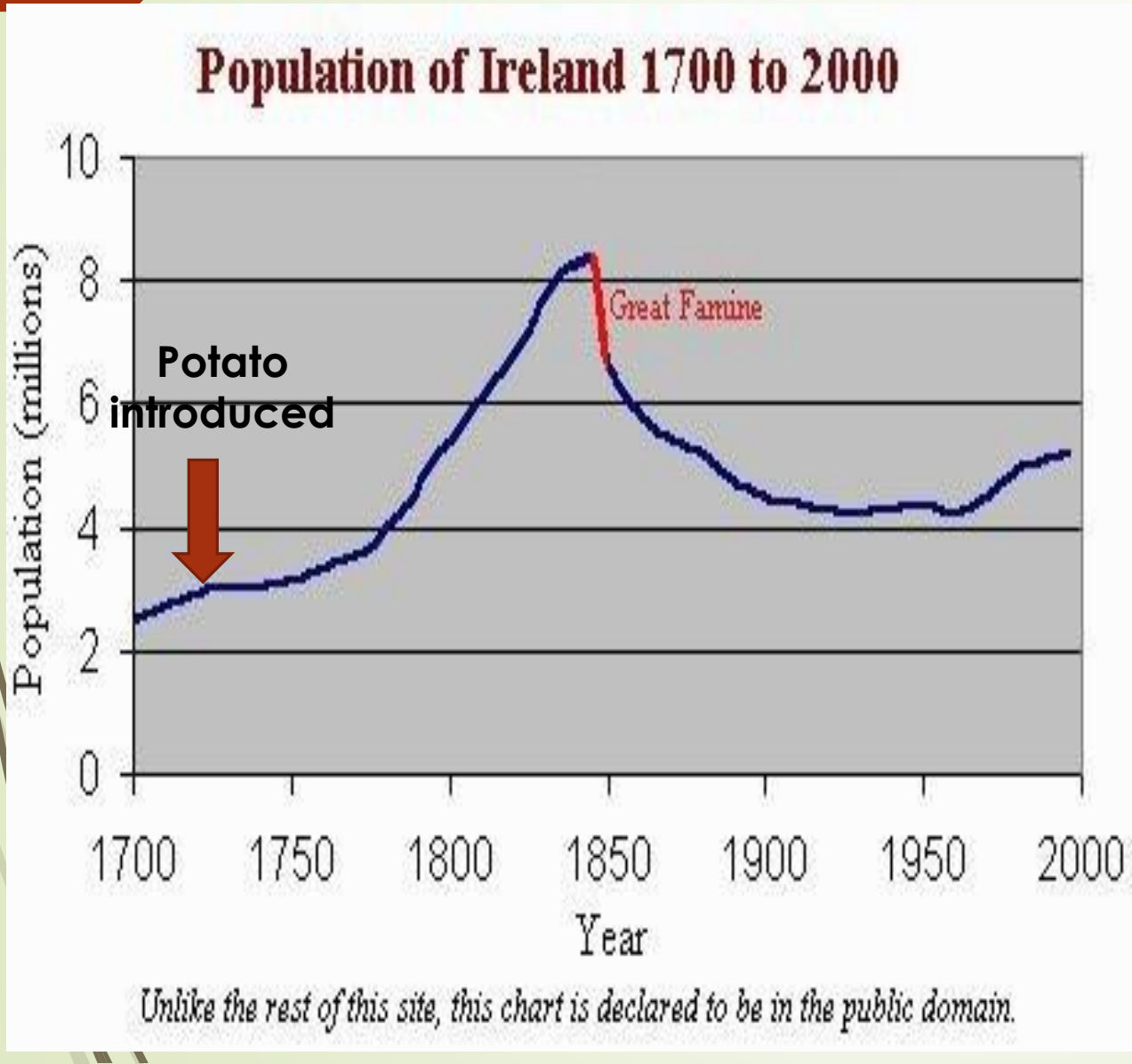
The Irish

Irish Potato famine

Illustrated London News 1847

- Single crop/ absentee Protestant landlords
  - Politicians Protestant "Ascendancy" located in London
  - 40% population relied entirely on potato to survive
- Potato blight arrived 1845 …33% crop destroyed in 1845
- British government reaction slow, partial, bureaucratic …and when corrected….too late
  - Robert Peel Conservatives…relief works, export restrictions, imports from Canada and US (wrong corn)
  - Lord Russel, Liberals take charge and 75% crop fails
  - "Laissez Faire" capitalism….'Irish problems, Irish solution
  - Lord Trevelyan: 'Divine Providence' lifts restriction on exports
  - Public Outrage. Relief resumed/ exports restricted 1847/48
- World Reaction…first global famine relief
  - US sends 118 ships
  - Ottomans, Russians, Indian Kingdoms
  - Even Choctaw Indians from 'Indian Territory"

Irish catastrophe



2 million people left Ireland 1846-1855

1 million starve or die from disease

Young adults men and women leave First, send remittances for families

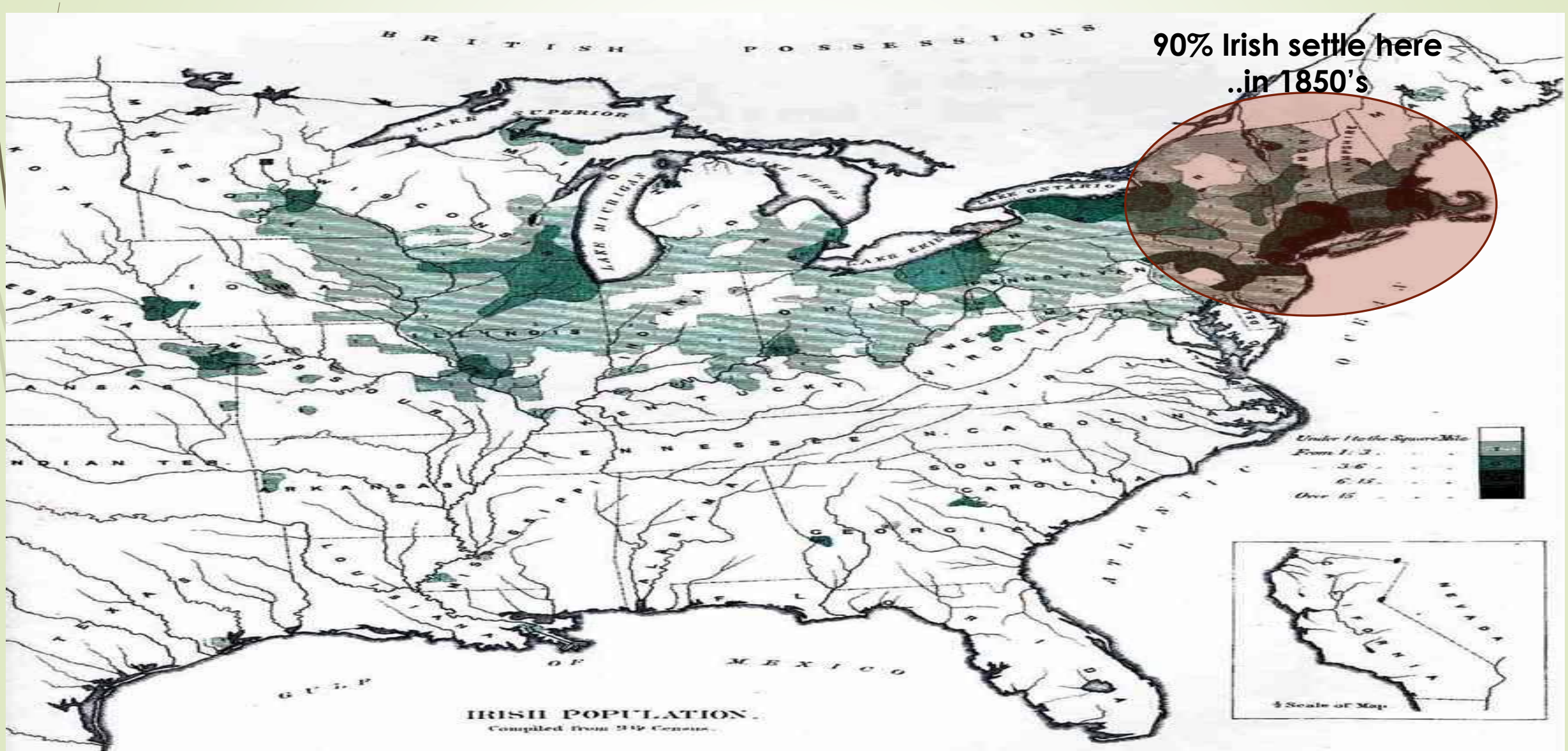
25% emigrants Irish speakers….most Unskilled settle in New York, Boston, Philadelphia

"Although most certainly tired and poor, the Irish did not arrive in America yearning to breathe free; they merely hungered to eat. Largely destitute, many exiles could progress no farther than within walking distance of the city docks where they disembarked." ….www. History.com

90,000 emigrants per year from Britain and Ireland

Transport on "Coffin Ships"…3% die en route

Irish population distribution 1890



Impact of Arrival

- Massive population increase to Northern cities and change in population
  - New York City population rises from 515,000 1850 to 820,000 by 1860 Irish from 5% to 33
  - Boston from 130,00 to 180,000, Irish from 3% to 35% population
  - Native Protestants feel threatened…discriminate vs Irish…esp. 25% Irish speakers

- Established Democrat dominance
  - ‘Boss Tweed” New York Scotch Irish politician industrialises Irish
  - Provides housing and jobs …in exchange for votes (5 years residency)
  - Compete with ‘free blacks
  - Alliance Northern Irish Catholics with Southern Democrats: winning combination

The Germans

Revolutions of 1848

Liberal & Socialist Revolutions spread from Sicily across Europe

East & Central crushed by Autoc Russian Army and Catholic Church within year

France…Military putsch
+ middle class. Napoleon III
…promise of New Empire

Britain: 2m Chartist march on Parliament ..then go home!

Mass disillusionment & Oppression across Germany
…future = America

Revolution in Berlin 1848

Anti clerical German Democratic Socialists Seize power across German kingdoms

Aristocrats ally with Peasants and Austrian Army and recover power By end of year

Leaders executed Exiled, or give up On Europe…..

German Emigration 1850's

- Mostly middle class, politicians, journalists, young intellectuals and prosperous farmers seeking economic gain….disillusioned by victory of aristocrats
- Better funded, skilled with higher literacy than Irish
- Includes Socialists and radical politicians…fiercely anti slavery
- Settle in Pennsylvania to integrate with existing communities…then move West
- Most Protestant …..less of a threat to local population

German migrants 1872

Mormon Kingdom

Mormons

Brigham Young (1801-1877)

Born Vermont….apprentice
Carpenter, glazier and painter
…moves west due to Panic of 1819

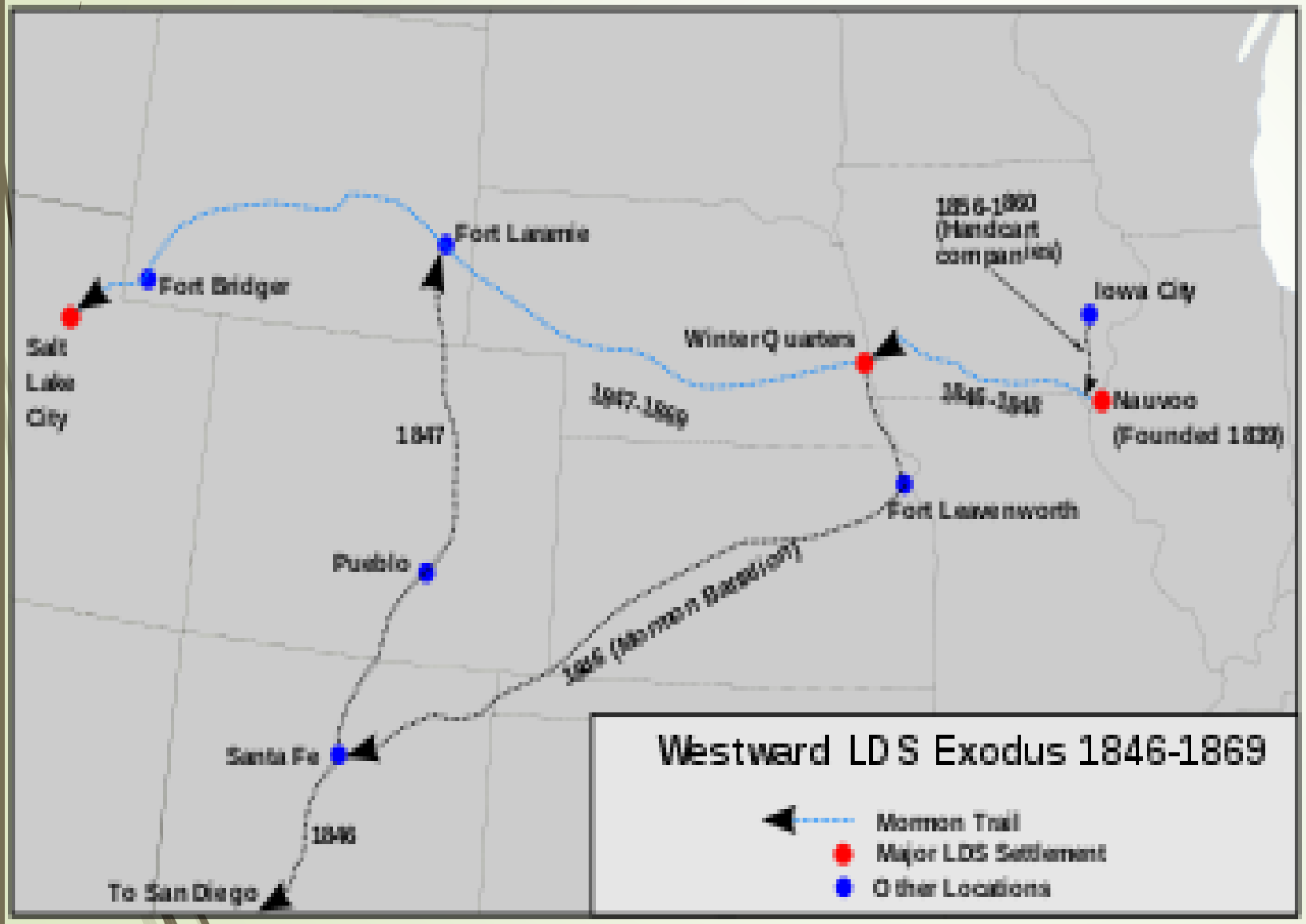
Becomes Methodist…works
for Mormons. Converts 1830
…meets Joseph Smith

Elected to “Quorum of 12
Apostles” ..Mormon government
Joins Smith at Nauvoo advocates
Polygamy

Assumes Leadership of Mormons
After Joseph Smith killed in 1844

Accused of counterfeiting…decides
To move west and find “Promised Land”

Mormon Pioneers



Brigham Young wanted to establish Mormon settlement on land no one wanted

Researched area…Salt Lake ..supplies for 1 year

First wagon train leaves 1847
73 wagons, 140 men, 3 women , 2 children…highly organised
Use of hand carts

Follow Platte River "mile wide Inches deep" West

Despatches "Mormon Battalion" to support Invasion of California

Winter Quarters

Arrival at Great Salt Lake

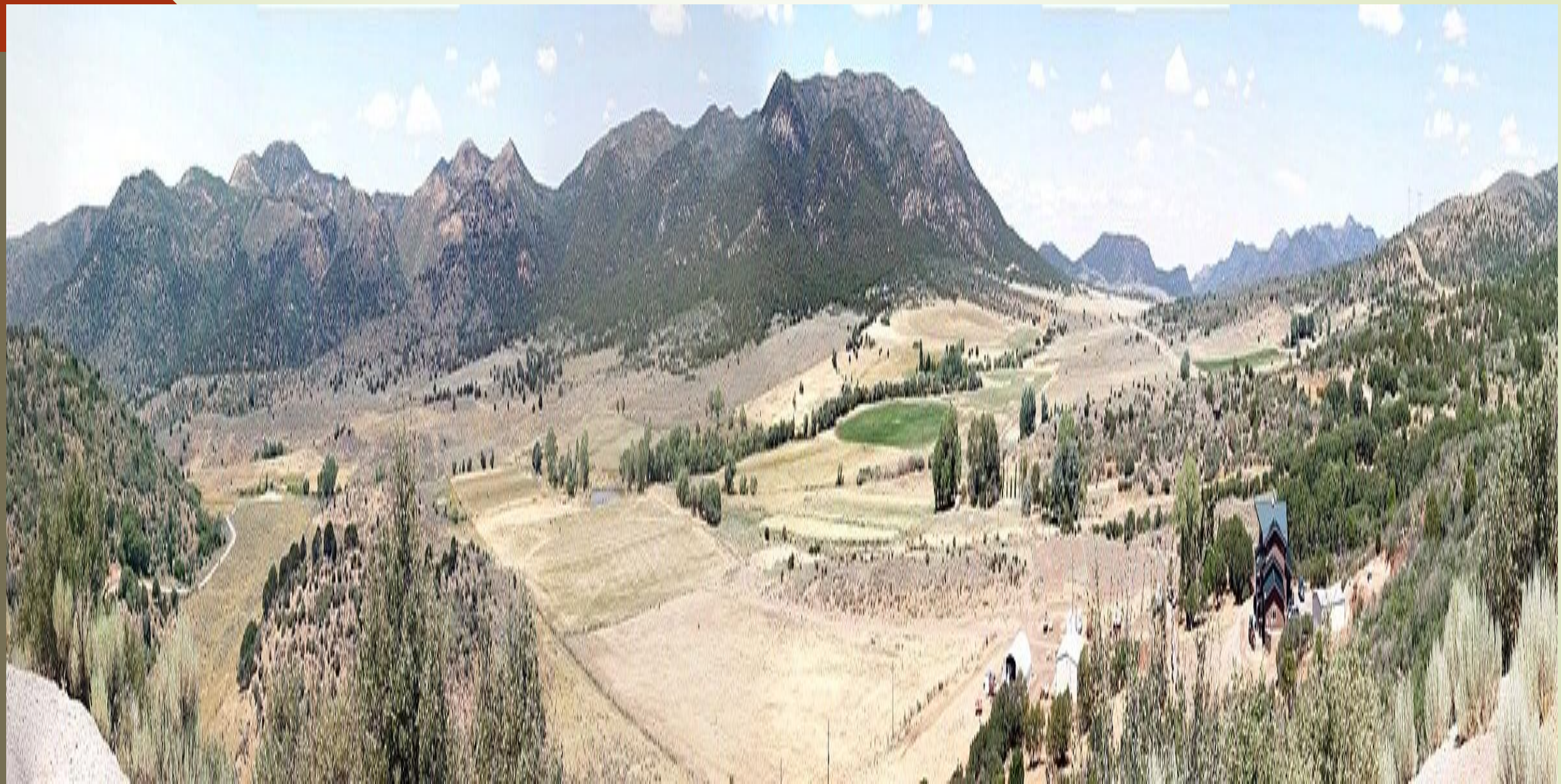
Settlement

- Early Days
  - 2,000 settlers arrive in valley 1847
  - Timpango Indians offer land and Deal…"don't kill wildlife"….we don't steal cattle
- Indian 'War'
  - Mormons arrive in 1,000's, expand townships, kill wildlife, Indians starve and steal cattle
  - Brigham Young orders "selective extermination" in 1850
    - ..kill all men, spare women and children "if they behave"
  - Mormon army surround Indian camp near Provo ….men surrender but lined up and shot i front of families..100 killed, 1 Mormon
  - Children and women become slaves to Mormon settlers…some escape
- Brigham Young self appointed as Governor of 'Utah' territory and creates 'Zion'
  - Establishes 'theodemocracy'' rule by church leadership

Utah War

- Cause
  - Brigham Young wants to create “Deseret” …from Oregon to Mexican border
  - Promotion of polygamy…25% Mormons multiple wives. Abomination to Protestants
  - US government sees threat of new nation…declares Mormons in rebellion. Sends army
- Meadowland Massacre
  - Mormons believe arrival of US army sign of “end of days”, wagon train ‘occupiers”
  - Ally with Piute Indians to attack wagon train…attack repulsed
  - Mormons guarantee settlers safety if they disarm, dress up as Indians and kill 120 adults and children over 4
  - US army arrives….digs up bones……Brigham Young claims innocence
- Peace Negotiations
  - Army occupies Salt Lake City, build forts
  - Peace Commission

Meadowland Massacre site



The agreement

- “Deseret” boundaries reduced to current state of ‘Utah’
- ‘Theodemocracy’ replaced by US ‘model’’ but Church dominates
- Commitment to investigate Meadowlands Massacre (scapegoat shot 1872)
- No interference Mormon religion….polygamy continues
- A “slave territory” but less than 300 slaves…..Indians moved to reservations
- Utah thrives…. Population rises from 2,000 in 1850 to 50,000 by 1860, Salt Lake City 20,000… not accepted as “State” till 1890 after “new revelation” ‘banning’ polygamy

Salt Lake City 1863

LA NOUVELLE JÉRUSALEM, ou LA GRANDE VILLE DU LAC SALÉ (AMÉRIQUE). — Page 263.

Brigham Young aged 70

Abraham Lincoln…asked by M
what He will do with Utah
during the civil war…
..” Well, go tell Brigham Young
 if he leaves me alone, I will
leave him alone.”

Brigham Young dies in 1877, aged 76 ….55 wives, 57 children…nation mourns…..

Intermission

The South

Virginia in autumn

South Carolina tree tunnels

Mississippi swamp

Stanton Hall…Natchez Mississippi

Appalachian Mountains

Mississippi River

“King Cotton”

Rise of "King Cotton"

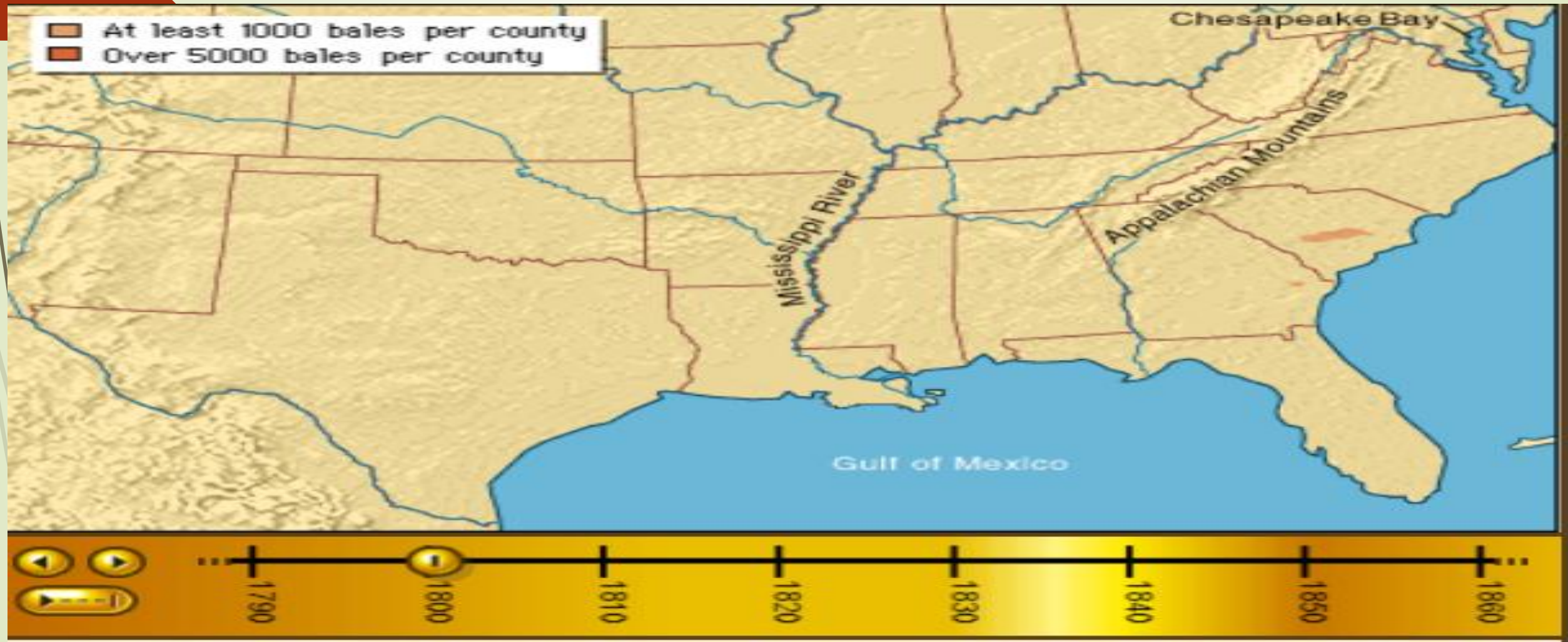
- Exports boom ….industrialisation….textile mills "clothing the world"
  1830 …720,000 bales / 1860 5 million…….60% US Exports

- Prices of slaves increase from $300 in 1830 to $800 by 1860s

- Slave population increases from 2 million (1820) to 4 million (1860)
  - Atlantic Slave Trade banned 1808, enforced by British Navy
  - Non cotton growing Southern states breed slaves to "sell South

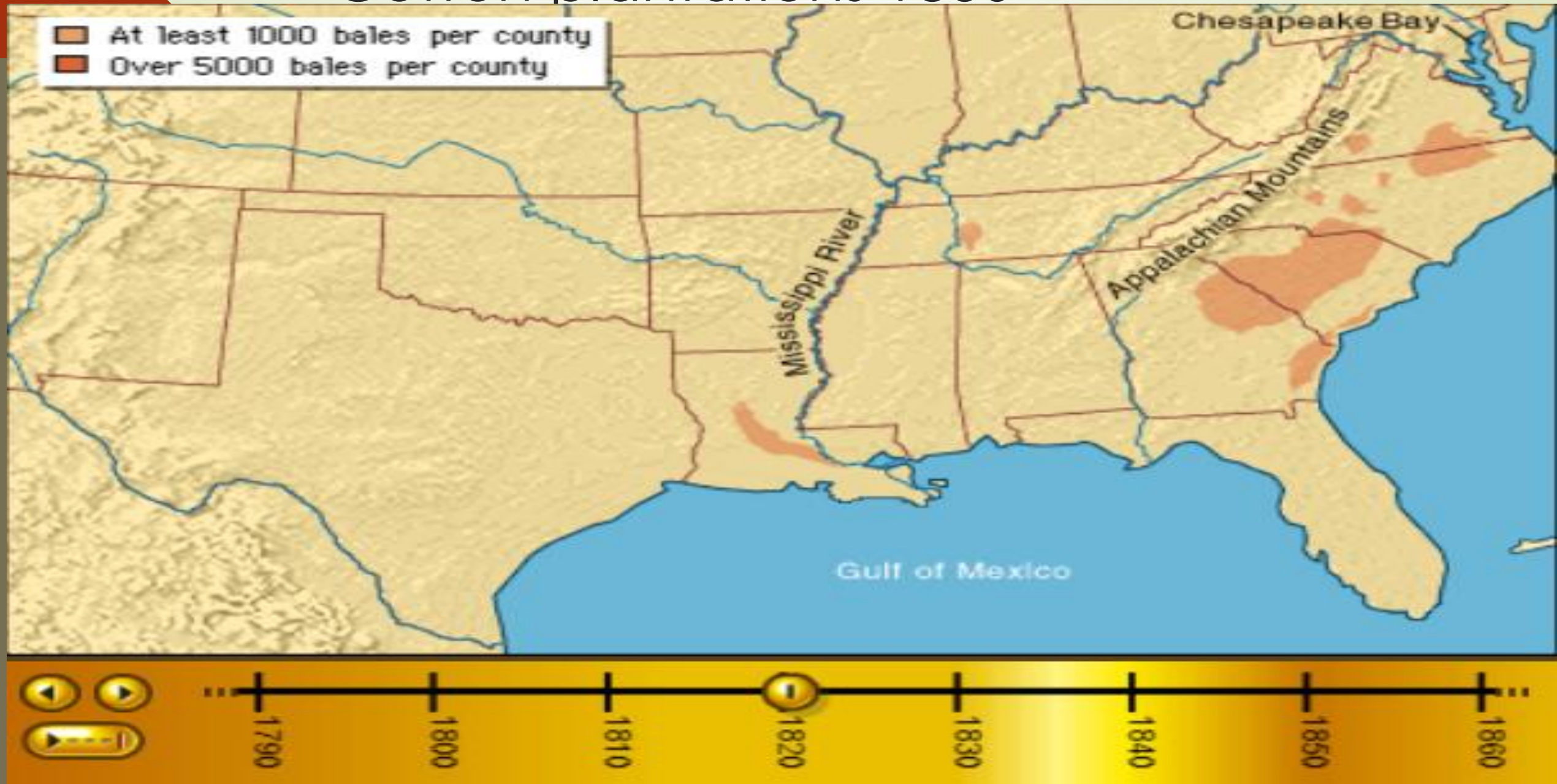
Value of slaves makes 60% of Southern Wealth

Cotton plantations 1800

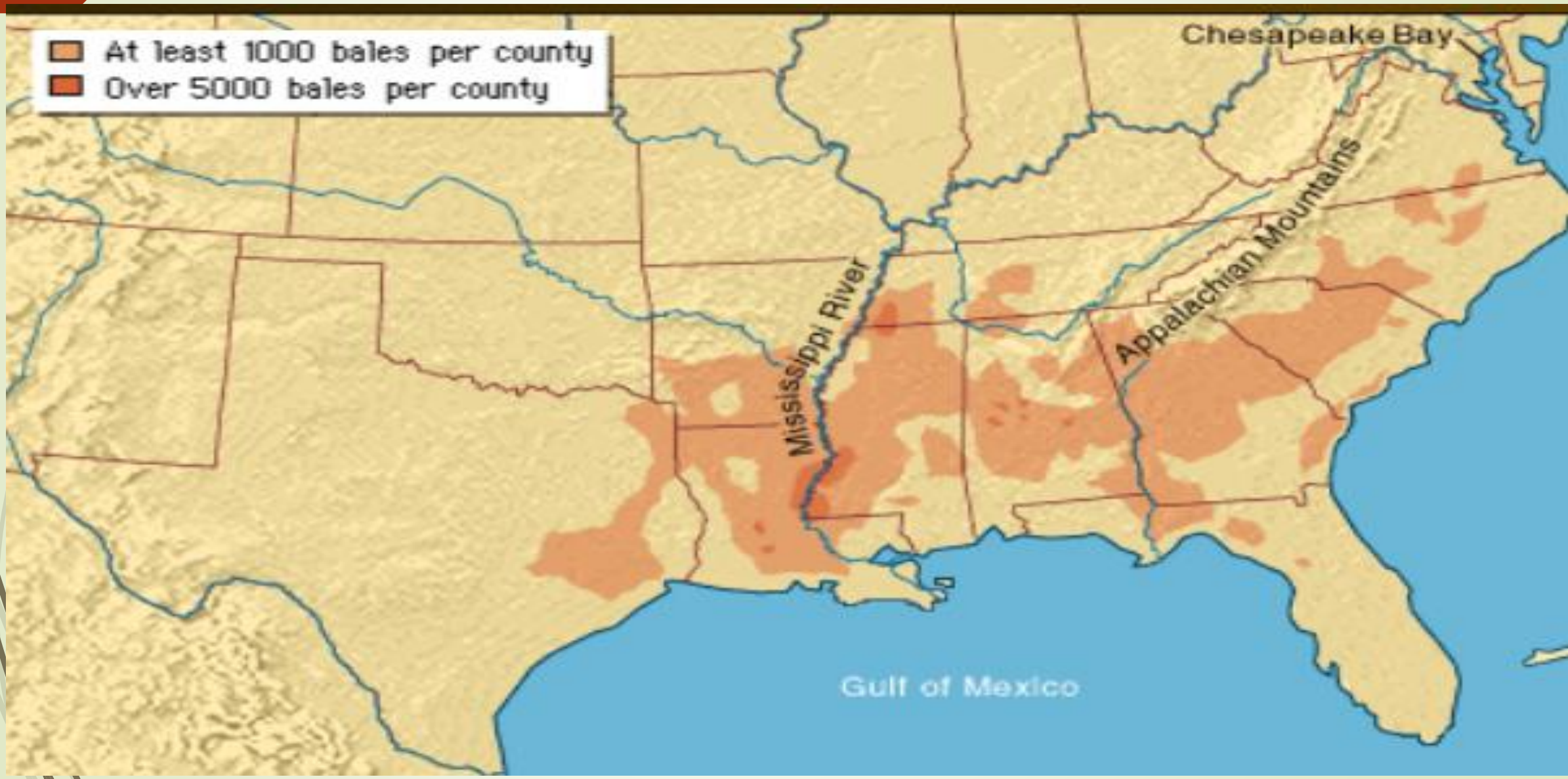


Cotton was an economically insignificant specialty crop in 1790. The entire South produced only about 1.5 million pounds, most of which came from semi-tropical, long-staple cotton plants.

Cotton plantations 1830



Cotton plantations 1860

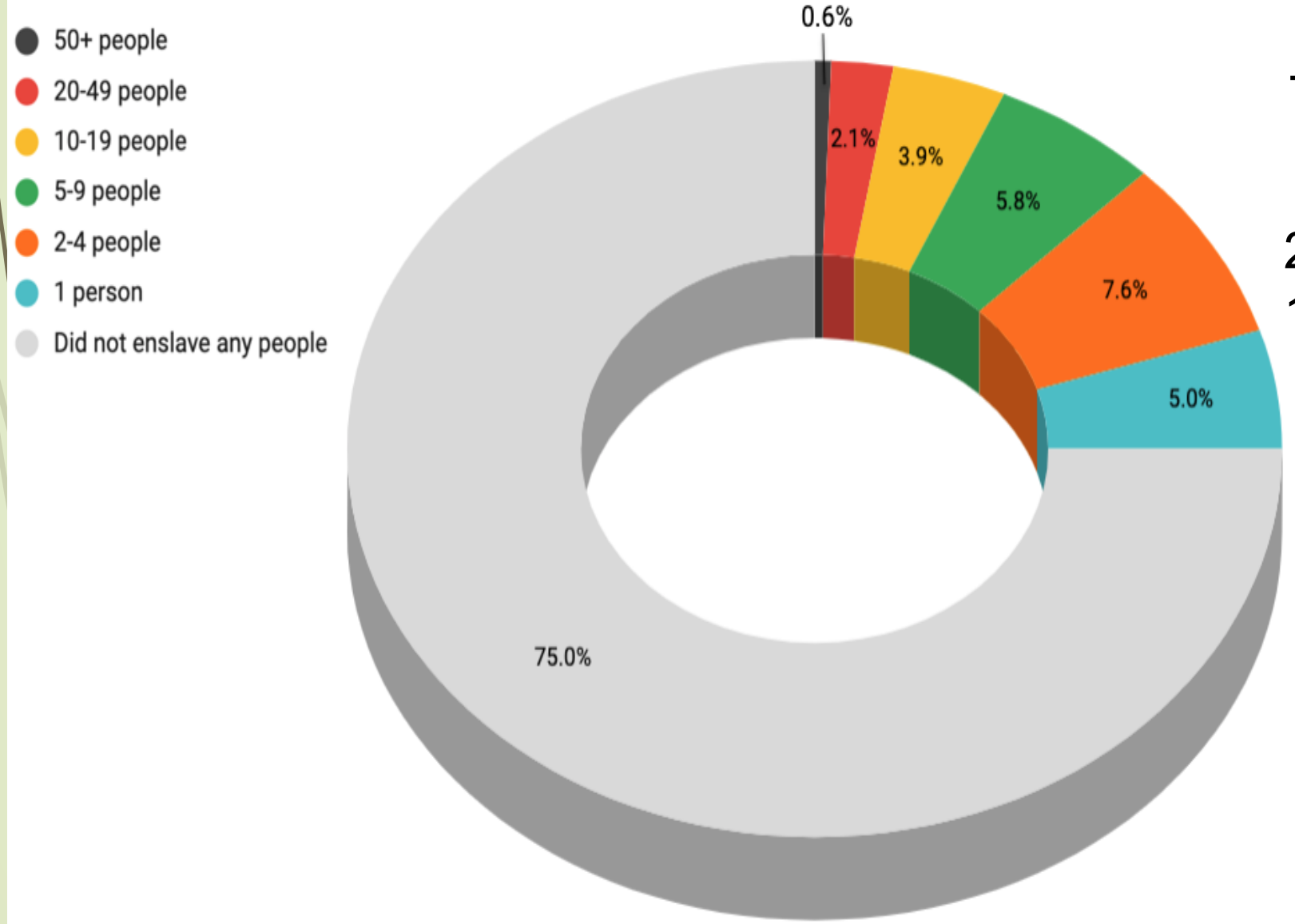


East Texas Cotton fields

Plantation house…home of the top 2,000

Slaves picking cotton Georgia 1850

Most Southerners do not own slaves .....but want the right to do so



75% non slave owners

2,000 families owned more than 100 slaves… leadership class

Most slave owners own 2- 50 slaves. Member of family and store of wealth

Slaves 50% of South wealth.. Owning slaves aspiration of Many…status symbol

Slaves the principle source of wealth

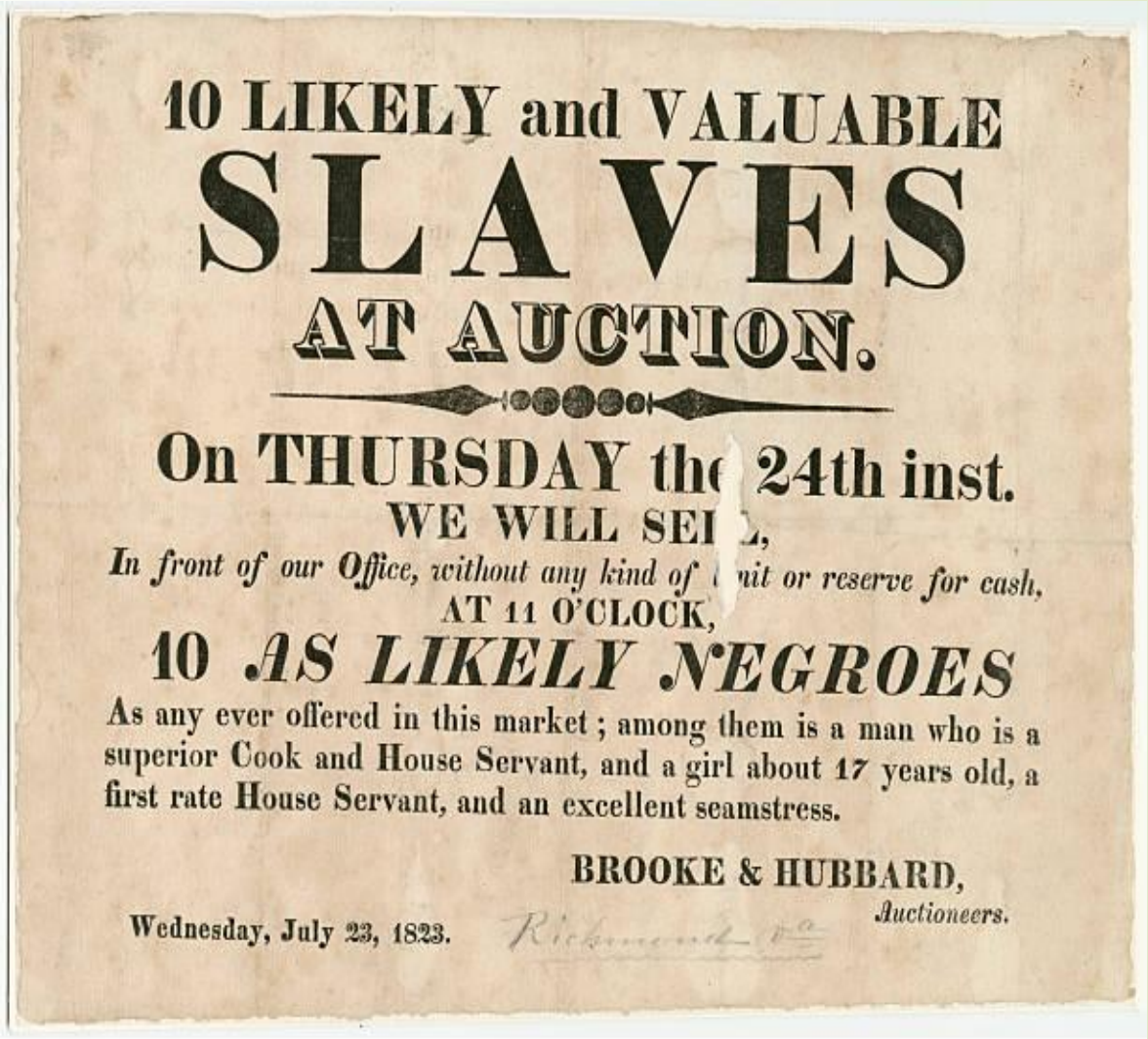
GREAT SALE
of
SLAVES
JANUARY 10, 1855

THERE Will Be Offered For Sale at Public Auction at the SLAVE MARKET, CHEAPSIDE, LEXINGTON, All The SLAVES of JOHN CARTER, Esquire, of LEWIS COUNTY, KY., On Account of His Removal to Indiana, a Free State. The Slaves Listed Below Were All Raised on the CARTER PLANTATION at QUICK'S RUN, Lewis County, Kentucky.

3 Bucks Aged from 20 to 26, Strong, Ablebodied
1 Wench, Sallie, Aged 42, Excellent Cook
1 Wench, Lize, Aged 23 with 6 mo. old Picinniny
One Buck Aged 52, good Kennel Man
17 Bucks Aged from twelve to twenty, Excellent

TERMS: Strictly CASH at Sale, as owner must realize cash, owing to his removal to West. Offers for the entire lot will be entertained previous to sale by addressing the undersigned.

JOHN CARTER, Esq.
Po. Clarksburg Lewis County, Kentucky



10 LIKELY and VALUABLE
SLAVES
AT AUCTION.

On THURSDAY the 24th inst.
WE WILL SELL,
In front of our Office, without any kind of limit or reserve for cash,
AT 11 O'CLOCK,
10 *AS LIKELY NEGROES*
As any ever offered in this market; among them is a man who is a superior Cook and House Servant, and a girl about 17 years old, a first rate House Servant, and an excellent seamstress.

BROOKE & HUBBARD,
Auctioneers.

Wednesday, July 23, 1823. Richmond Va

Southern Belles: above reproach, mostly uneducated—role of Southern man to protect

Southern ladies…the ideal image

Cotton picking with overseer

Picking Cotton

Poor whites…..75% of white population …..deferential, ‘manly’ loyal to elite , superior to blacks

Slave quarters

Expansion blocked

- Compromise of 1850: competition “slave” vs “free” in land taken from Mexico ……but new lands arid and not fit for cotton or slave economy

- One answer…..create new states in Caribbean and Central America…with or without US government support

Enter the “Filibusters”

The Cuban Filibuster 1850-1851

- Cuba 1850
  - Population 1 million…500,000 slaves,
  - Spanish crush Independence movement and retain control
  - Reject offer by US President Polk to buy island for $100 million
  - Southern politicians consider island ideal “Slave State”

- Narcisco Lopez (ex Spanish officer and deserter)
  - recruits mercenary army to invade in 1850 from NY, blocked by US government
  - Moves south supported by Southern ‘expansionists”
  - Invades Cuba 1851…seeks allies with Cuban rebels…defeated, returns to US
  - Returns with 150 strong army of Americans, Germans, Spanish ‘filibusters”
  - Defeated, all arrested & shot…..except Lopez

    ….garrotted in public square

The "Grey Eyed man of Destiny".

William Walker 1824-1860)

- Born Tennessee…lawyer, medical student. Moved to New Orleans…"Believed in Manifest Destiny…vision: new US slave states in Mexico and Central America
- Recruits army of 50 to invade Baja California….retreats
- New plan….conquer Nicaragua …supported by "Knights of Golden Circle" influential secret society…
- Recruits 50 strong army of "immortals to support rebels
- Invades….wins….becomes President of Nicaragua recognized by US President 1856…reintroduces slavery, seeks to Americanise country,. English National language
- Coalition of Central Americans attack…. retreats to US
- Returns with 1860 with new 'army of immortals'
- Defeated….seeks escape on British Navy…..handed over to Honduras….and shot …together with 'not' immortals

South in mid 1850's'

- Booming cotton industry gives South great economic power, confidence, and sense of invulnerability
- Political Power ensured by alliance between Southern (pro slave) Democrats and new immigrants in North
- Southern elites determined to expand slave economy
  - Confident of military power….wars with Mexico
  - Expansions south failing
  - Aware North expanding and industrialising more rapidly…increasing "Abolitionist"

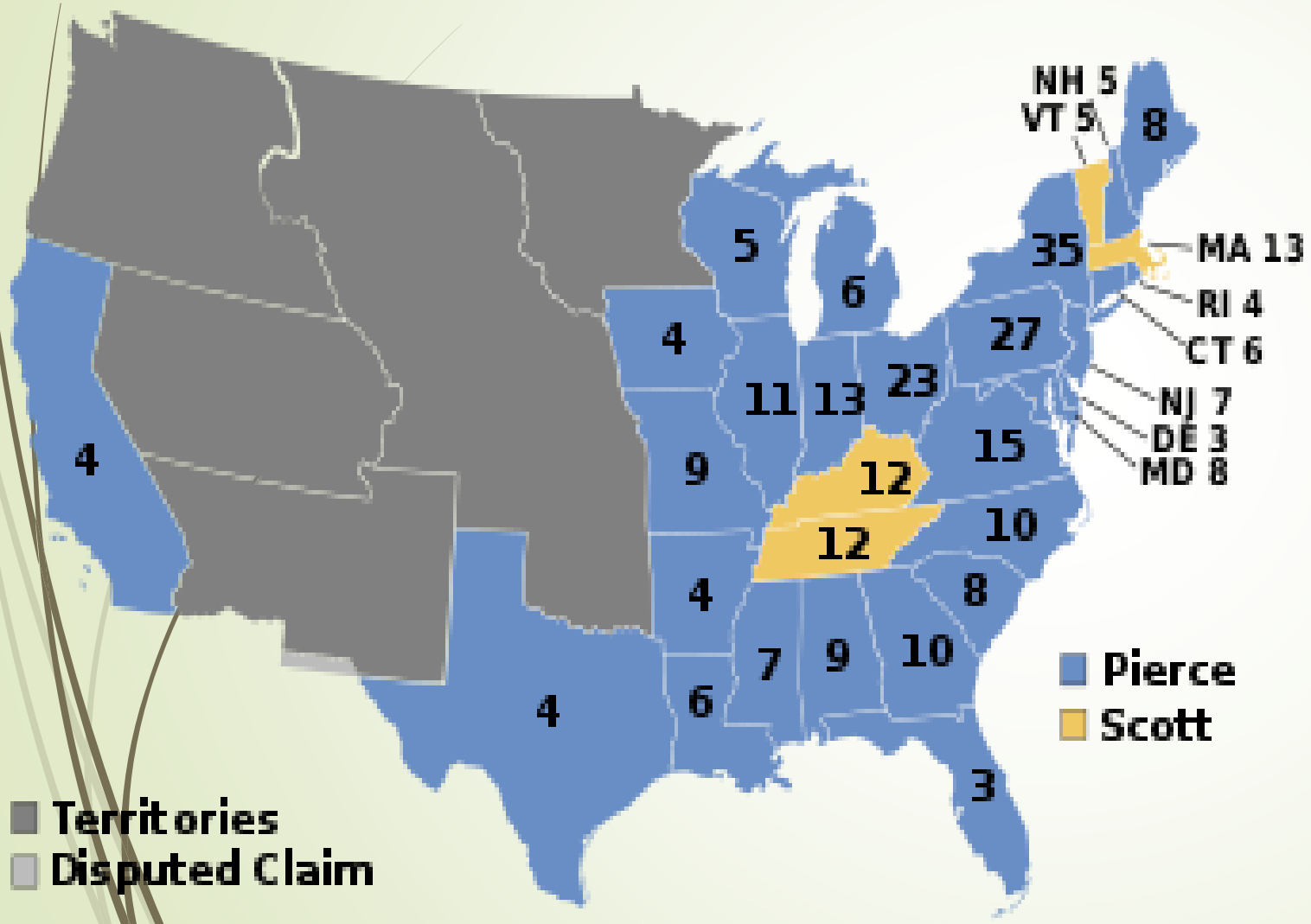
Only option: Expand West and "break" Missouri and 1850 Compromise

Politics of mid 1850's and crisis in Kansas

Election of 1852

- Whigs offer another Mexican War Hero candidate: Winfred Scott
  - Refuses to comment on expansion of slavery…or anything else
- Democrats pick reluctant compromise candidate Franklin Pierce
  - Compromise candidate….Northerner but indifferent to slavery
  - Committed to expansionism, pro Southern views
- Whig vote split by third parties
  - "Native American Party" formed 1840's….contests election for first time
    - Catholic world conspiracy …"replacing Protestant liberty
    - Includes 'Whig ideas" :rights of working people, government welfare, rights
  - "Free Soil"
    - Ban slavery from ALL new territories

1852 election



A election of personalities…"least Interesting Election in US history"

Democrats organise the vote
And score landslide

Whig Party obliterated

Anti Catholic and anti slavery
Voters believe election "stolen"

Franklin Pierce (1804-1869)

Born Vermont, Son of revolutionary war Hero Successful northern lawyer

Joined Mexican War.. Debilitated by Sickness and alcoholism

Popular Senator (deep voice. No opinions)

Son killed in train crash weeks after election…wife claims death God's Vengeance for Pierce acceptance

Failed initiatives: buy Cuba (rejected), secure Nicaragua (Walker killed)
Buy block of land from Mexico for future Railroad….pays $100m. Not used

Seeks to accommodate South, defers to new rising star Stephen Douglas

Becomes bystander…often drunk

Political backlash…election stolen

Arrival of the Papists

Germans vs Irish…stealing the election

Ballot Box

Rise of the "Know Nothings"

- Secret societies develop in North reacting vs mass immigration
  - World wide Catholic Conspiracy crushed European revolutions of 1848
  - United states next target : Boston Minister about Catholics: "the ally of tyranny, the opponent of material prosperity, the foe of thrift, the enemy of the railroad, the caucus, and the school"
- Convinced 1852 election "stolen" form National American Party
- Movement spreads across East coast…answer "Know Nothing" when asked to explain policies

Politics becomes violent

New York Protestant Street Gang 'Bowery Boys" ....

Dead Rabbits Riot, New York 1857

Independence Day riot at centre of Irish immigration ‘5 Points” New York

Protestant “Bowery Boys” attack Irish gang “Dead Rabbits"

1,000 involved, New York in chao For 2 days

State Militia imposes order..8 killed, 100’s Injured. Wide spread looting

Bloody Monday riots Louisville Kentucky 1857

Governor elected…
Election considered
Rigged by Democrats

"Know Nothing" mob
Attack Irish and German
Communities….fighting
Stopped by militia 25 kille
100 buildings burned

Riots consume attention
North and East...slavery
Issue remains on hold

The issue of Kansas

Decision needed on whether slavery allowed in new territories

- Most land north of agreed Missouri Compromise
- South believe it their destiny to expand slavery
- North believe it their destiny to prevent its expansion

Great Compromisers: Clay, Webster, and Calhoun die 1850-53 ….new generation of deal makers needed

The Little Giant

Stephen Douglas (1813-1861)

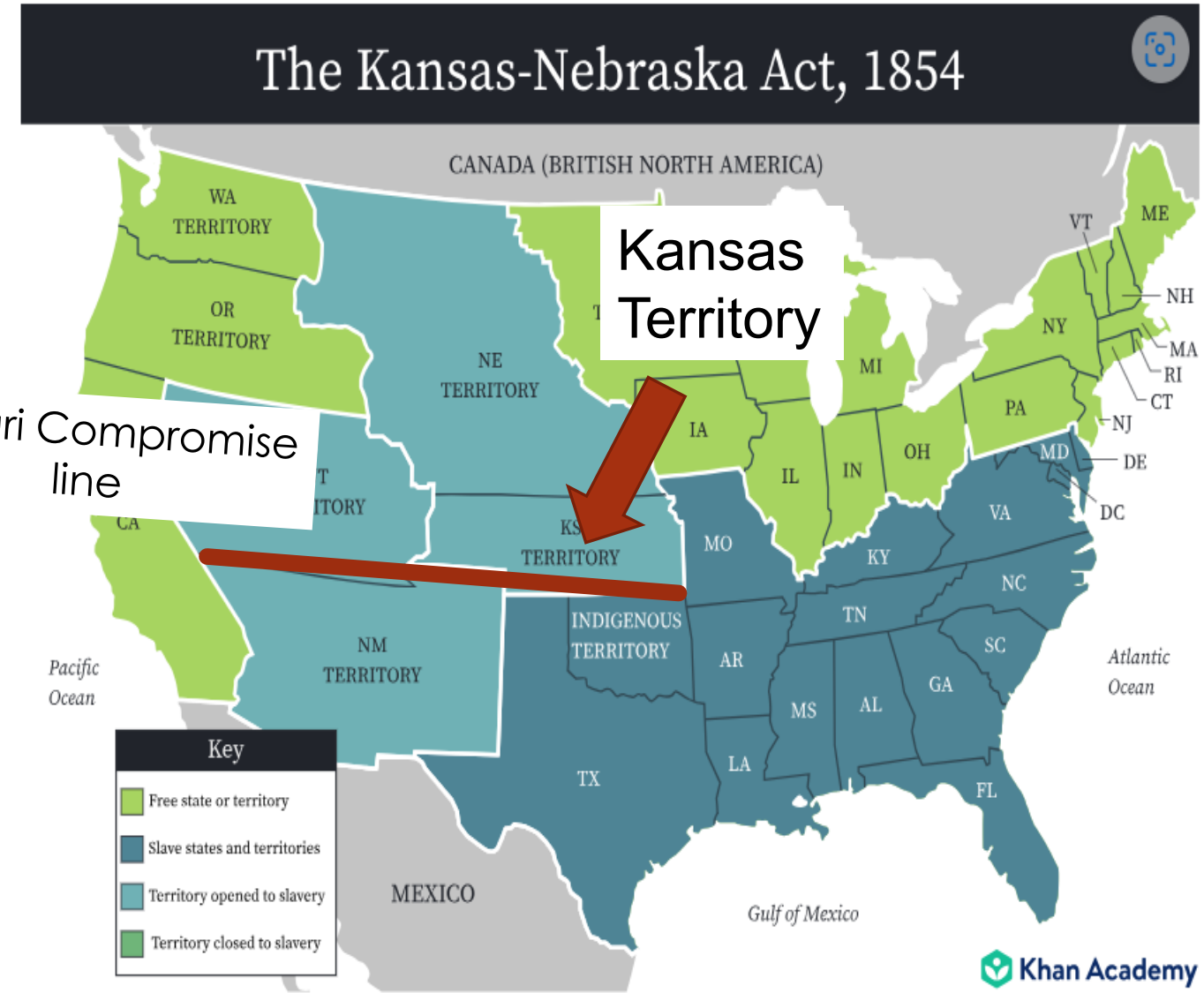
Northerner married into Southern aristocracy

Believes himself new generation of “great compromisers” (Clay, Webster, Calhoun;

Engineers a “great compromise” Kansas Nebraska Act of 1854

The most disastrous piece of Legislation in US history

The deal



Missouri Compromise abandoned

Kansas & Nebraska created

Settlers to decide if territory slave or free. No thought on how

Fugitive Slave law enhanced
….Southerners given right to collect escaped slaves
….fine of $1,000 to anyone who attempts to help/hide slaves

Northern reaction

Unexpected consequences

- Southern “slave catchers” enter Northern States to collect slaves

  ……..Abolitionists resist with violence

  ……Some States ban return of slaves

- Slave owners move into Kansas, claim residency, vote for slavery

  ……elect “Governor....

- “Free soilers” do the same….two Governors same place

  …Enter “free soiler” and Abolitionist zealot John Brown

  …” Second Coming” delayed by existence of slavery

There is nothing he will not do to abolish slavery

……..There will be trouble…see Talk 17