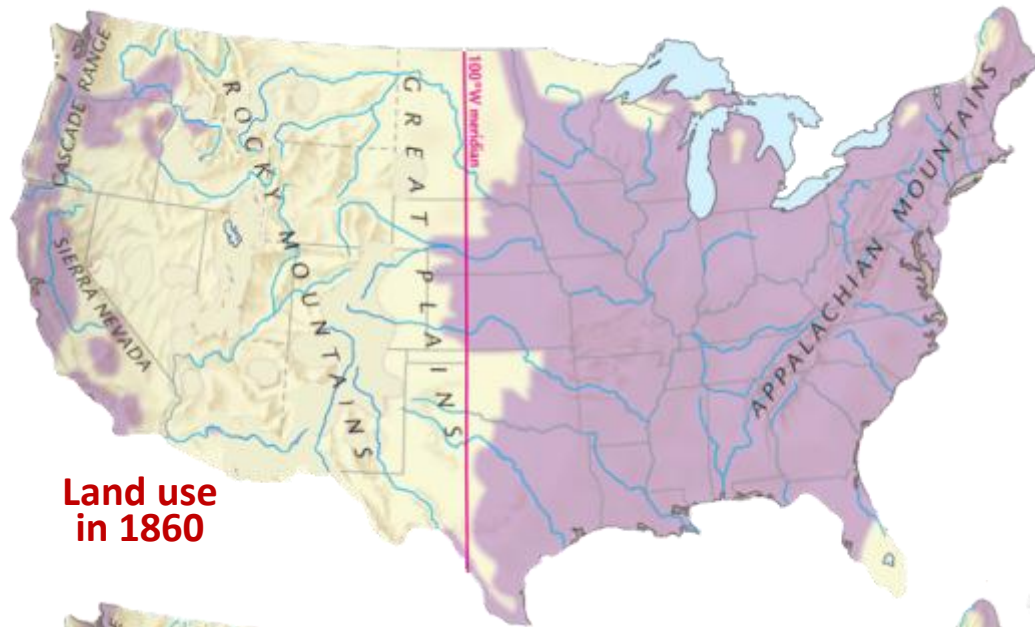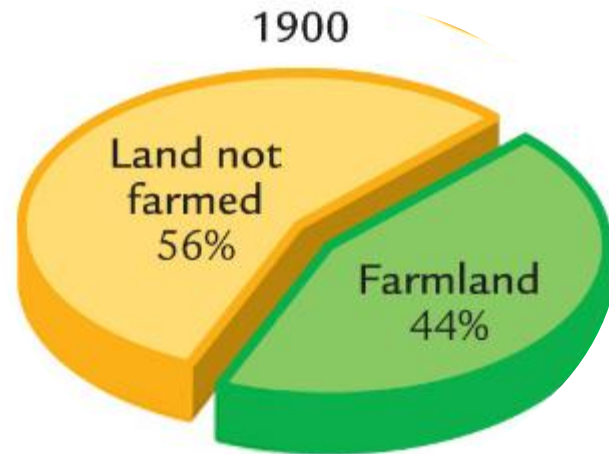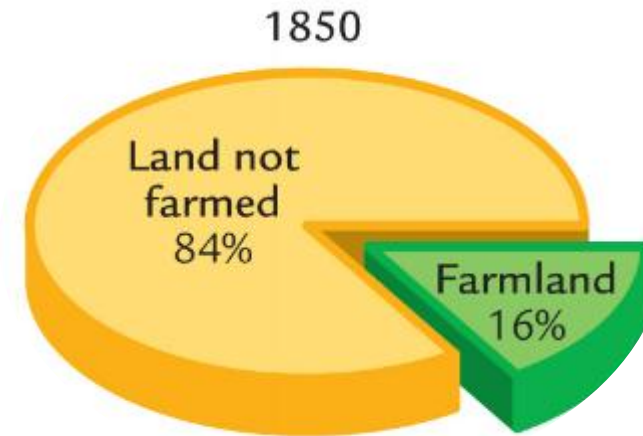# MINERS IN THE GILDED AGE

After the Civil War, the area west of the Mississippi River was settled by miners, ranchers, and farmers

Land use in 1860

Land use in 1880

1850

Land not farmed 84%

Farmland 16%

1900

Land not farmed 56%

Farmland 44%

LAND PUT TO USE
1880

Land used for farms, cities, mines

Other land

Mining was the first industry to attract settlers to the West after the Civil War

Before the Civil War, miners discovered gold in California, Colorado, Nevada

After the Civil War, miners resumed their migration into the West to find more gold and silver

WA

Coeur d'Alene

CASCADE RANGE

Columbia R.

Missouri R.

ND

MT

Butte

R O C K Y

OR

ID

SD

Deadwood

BLACK HILLS

WY

NE

Sacramento R.

Salt Lake City

NV

SIERRA NEVADA

Sacramento

Virginia City

Utah Terr.

Leadville

Denver

Colorado R.

CO

Arkansas R.

KS

CA

Arizona Terr.

Rio Grande

New Mexico Terr.

Oklahoma Terr.

In Co

Tucson

Silver City

TX

MINING THE WEST

★

Major Mines of the Late 1800s

Copper

Gold

Lead

Molybdenum

Silver

Zinc

Some miners found huge discoveries of gold and silver

By 1880, miners at the **Comstock Lode** extracted $270 million in gold and $400 million in silver
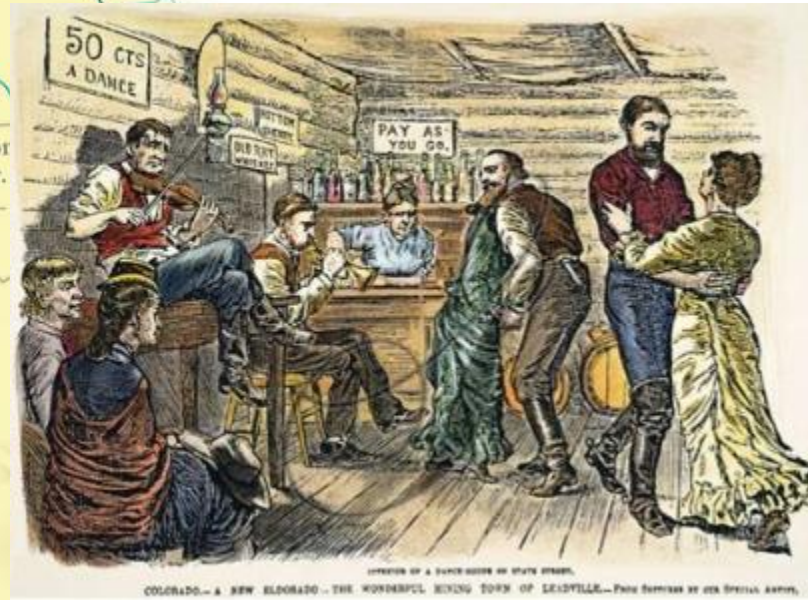
Silver miners in Leadville, CO

MINING THE WEST

Major Mines of the Late 1800s

Copper
Gold
Lead
Molybdenum
Silver
Zinc

In the Gilded Age, mining corporations used expensive hydraulic mining techniques to extract most of the gold and silver in the West
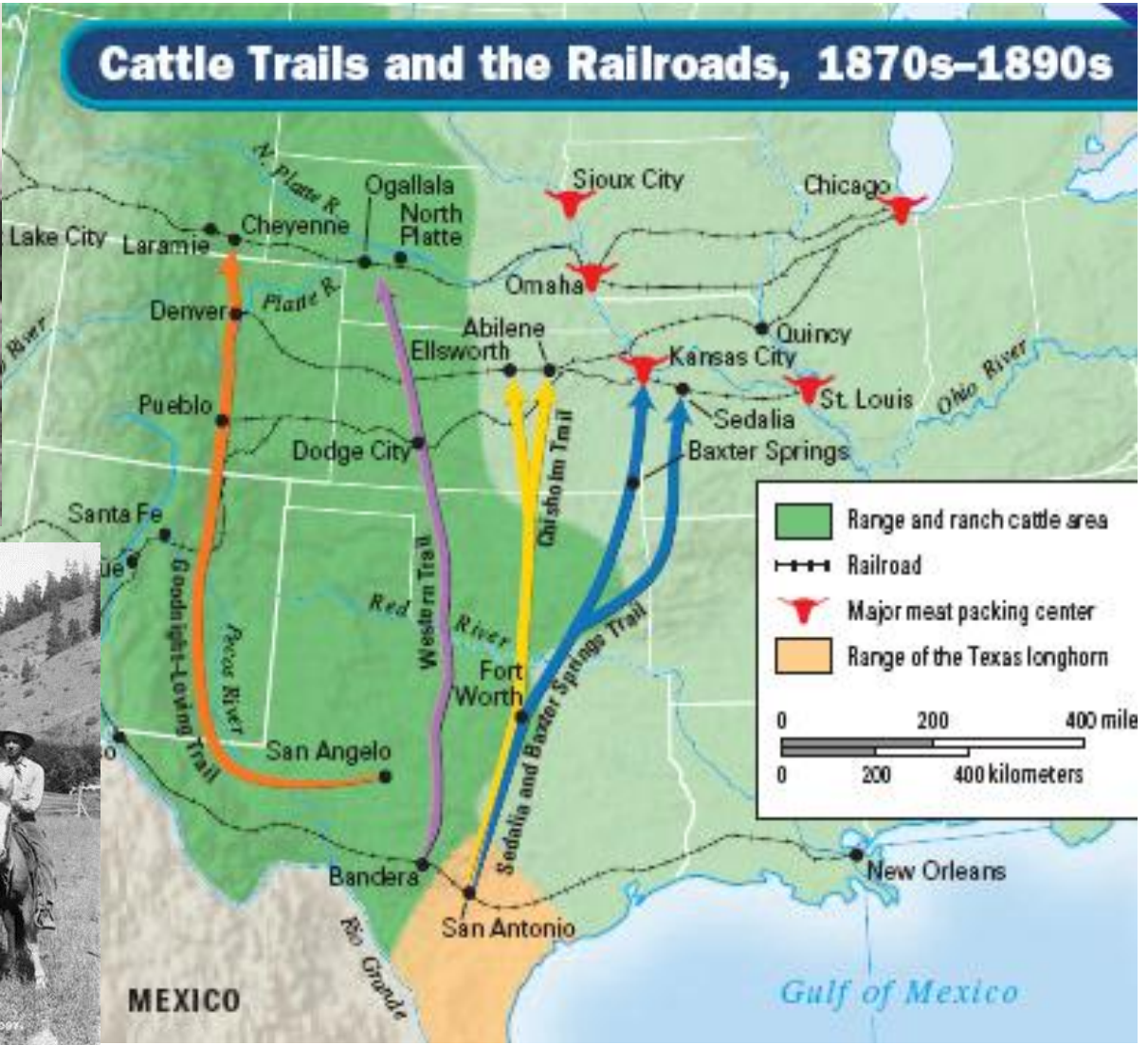
Mining towns helped develop the West because each town created a need for businesses and government

Ranchers and the Cattle Boom

After the Civil War, demand for beef led to a cattle boom in the West

Ranchers drove longhorn cattle across the open range to railroad towns
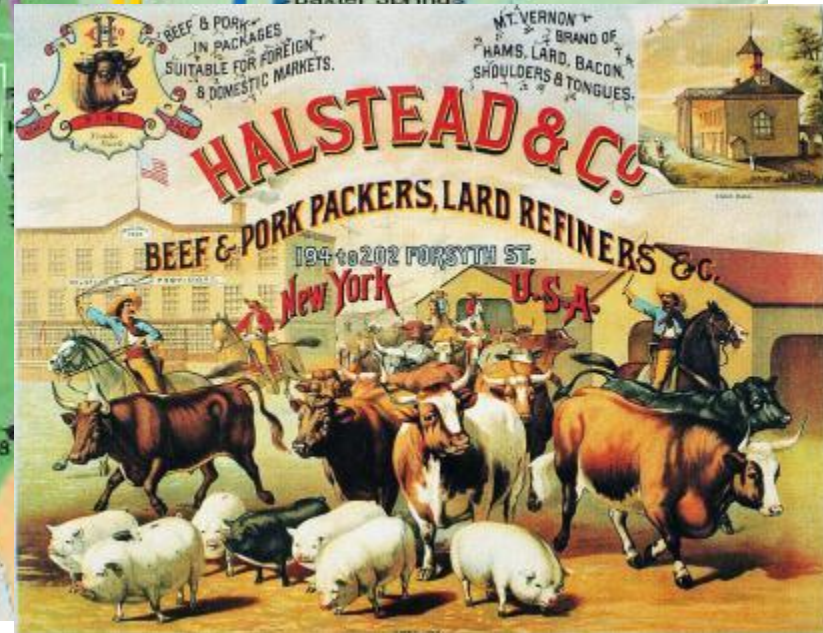

Cattle Trails and the Railroads, 1870s–1890s

Cattle bought for $4 in Texas were driven 3 months across the open range

Cattle were sold in Western cattle towns like Dodge City for $40...

..and shipped by train to meatpacking plants in cities like Chicago

Cattle drives led to new towns in the West

Dodge City, Kansas

Cattle ranching faced difficulties by the 1880s

The open range was closing as farmers used new barbed wire fencing to close off their farms

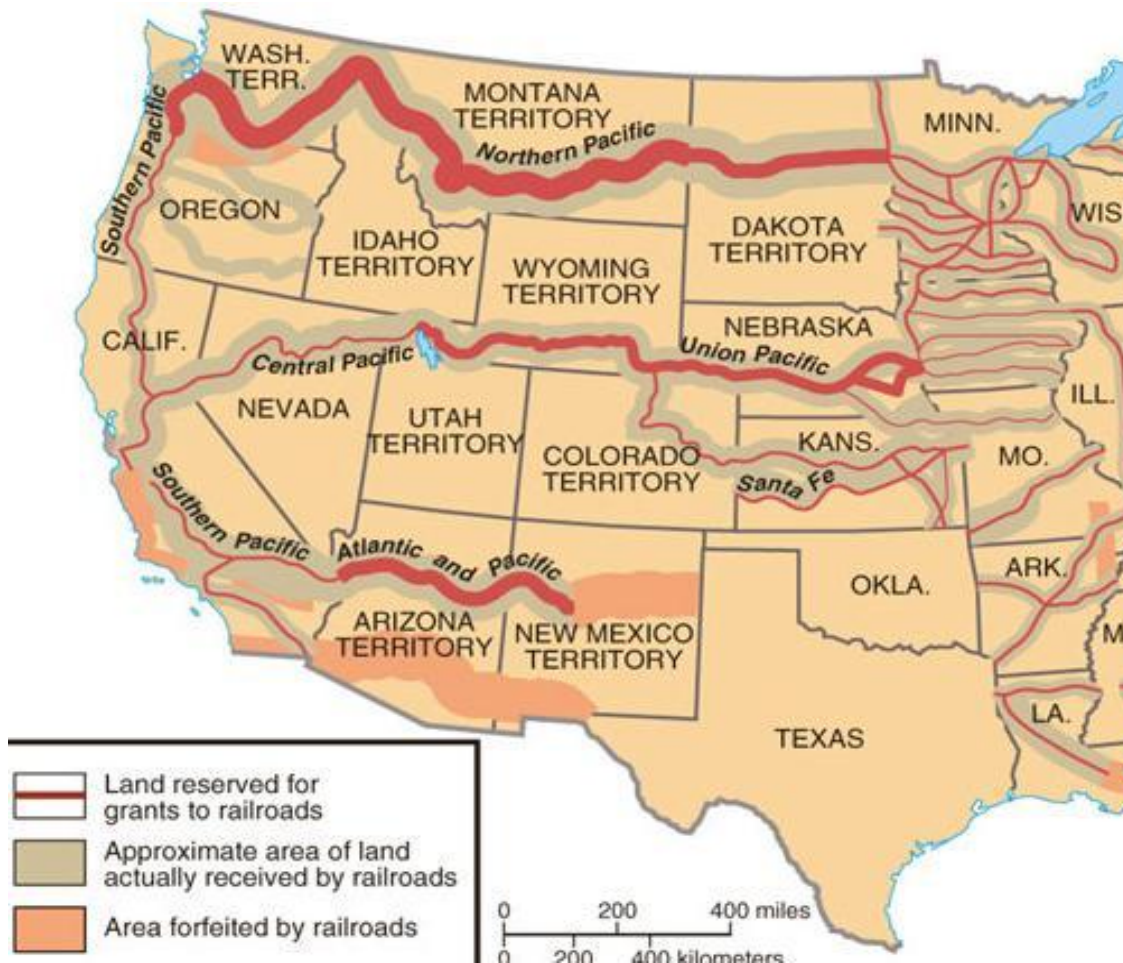Overgrazing and drought left little grassland for grazing cattle

By 1900, the glory days of the cowboy were over

THE TRANSCONTINENTAL RAILROAD

Miners, ranchers, and farmers were connected to Eastern cities in 1869 with the completion of the transcontinental railroad

The federal government encouraged railroad construction by giving millions of acres of land to railroad companies

WASH. TERR.

MONTANA TERRITORY

Northern Pacific

MINN.

Southern Pacific

OREGON

IDAHO TERRITORY

WYOMING TERRITORY

DAKOTA TERRITORY

WIS.

CALIF.

Central Pacific

NEVADA

UTAH TERRITORY

COLORADO TERRITORY

NEBRASKA

Union Pacific

ILL.

KANS.

Santa Fe

MO.

Southern Pacific

Atlantic and Pacific

ARIZONA TERRITORY

NEW MEXICO TERRITORY

OKLA.

ARK.

MI

TEXAS

LA.

Land reserved for grants to railroads

Approximate area of land actually received by railroads

Area forfeited by railroads

0   200   400 miles

0   200   400 kilometers

PRODUCTS WILL PAY FOR LAND AND IMPROVEMENTS!

MILLIONS OF ACRES

View on the Big Blue, between Camden and Crete, representing Valley and Rolling Prairie Land in Nebraska.

IOWA AND NEBRASKA

LANDS

FOR SALE ON 10 YEARS CREDIT

BY THE

Burlington & Missouri River R.R. Co.

AT 6 PER CT. INTEREST AND LOW PRICES.

Only One-Seventh of Principal Due Annually, beginning Four Years after purchase.

20 PER CENT. DEDUCTED FROM 10 YEARS PRICE, FOR CASH.

LAND EXPLORING TICKETS SOLD

and Cost allowed in First Interest paid, on Land bought in 30 days from date of ticket.

Address GEO. S. HARRIS, LAND COMMISSIONER,
or T. H. LEAVITT, Ass't Land Comm'r, Burlington, Iowa.

Or apply to

FREE ROOMS for buyers to board themselves are provided at Burlington and Lincoln.

The Central Pacific was built from West to East by Chinese workers

The Union Pacific was built from East to West by Irish workers

Oregon

Idaho

Wyoming

Promontory Point

South Dakota

Minn.

Iowa

Sacramento

Great Salt Lake

Nebraska

Omaha

San Francisco

Nevada

Utah

Colorado

Kansas

Mo.

California

© D. Burns

On May 10, 1869 the two tracks met at Promontory Point in Utah

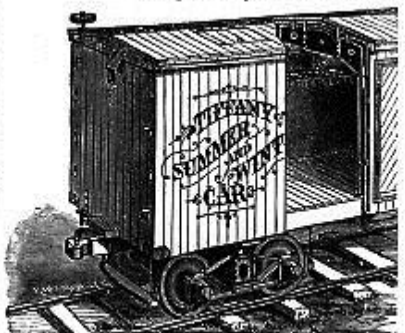By 1890, there were five railroads that extended to the Pacific Coast

Railroad innovations included time zones to coordinate train schedules

...luxury trains called Pullman Palace cars and refrigerated train cars

GREATEST ECONOMY IN THE USE OF ICE.
Adopted by Several Railroads and Fast Freight Lines,
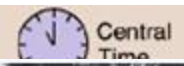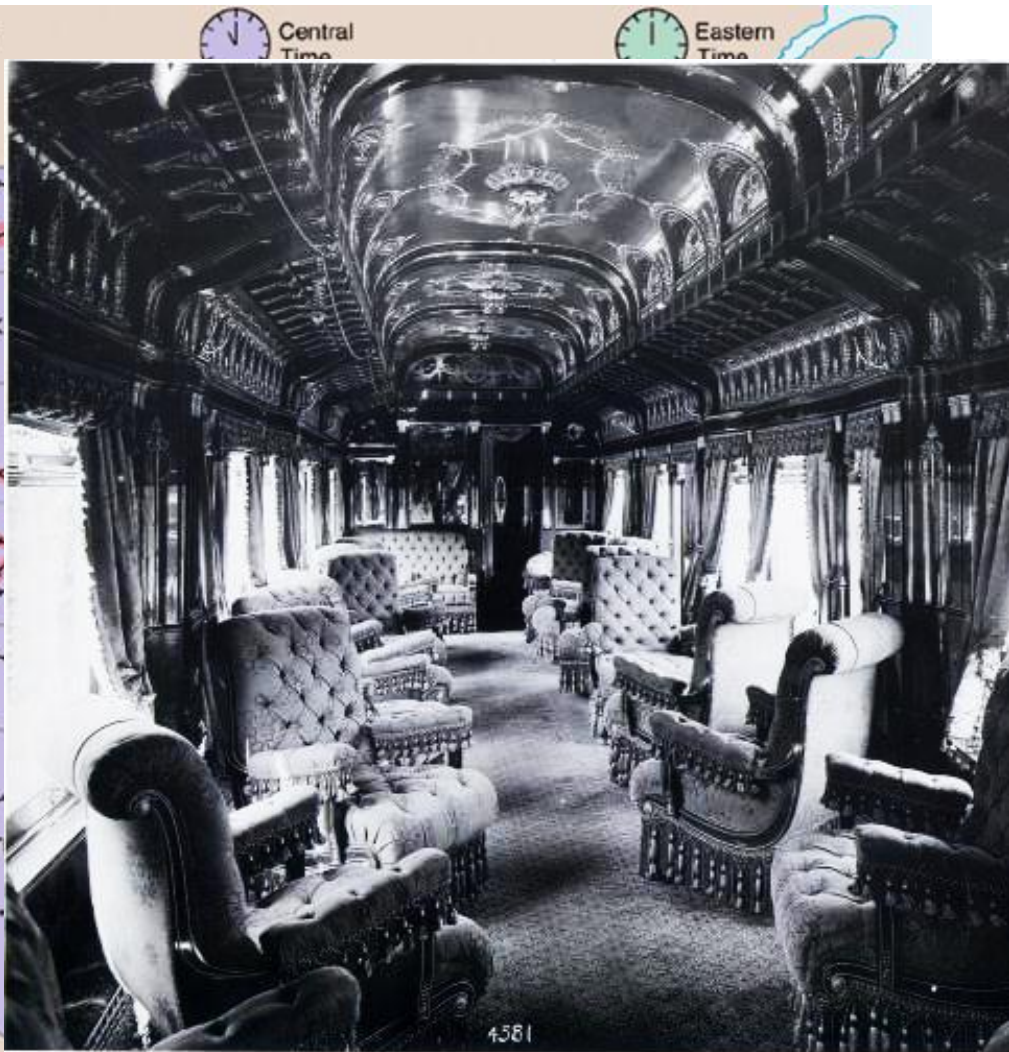FOR TRANSPORTATION OF
BEEF,
POULTRY,
EGGS,
BUTTER,
FRUIT,
And all kinds of Perishable Goods, Summer and Winter.
CHARLES F. PIERCE, Manager,
74 Washington Street,   Chicago, Ill.
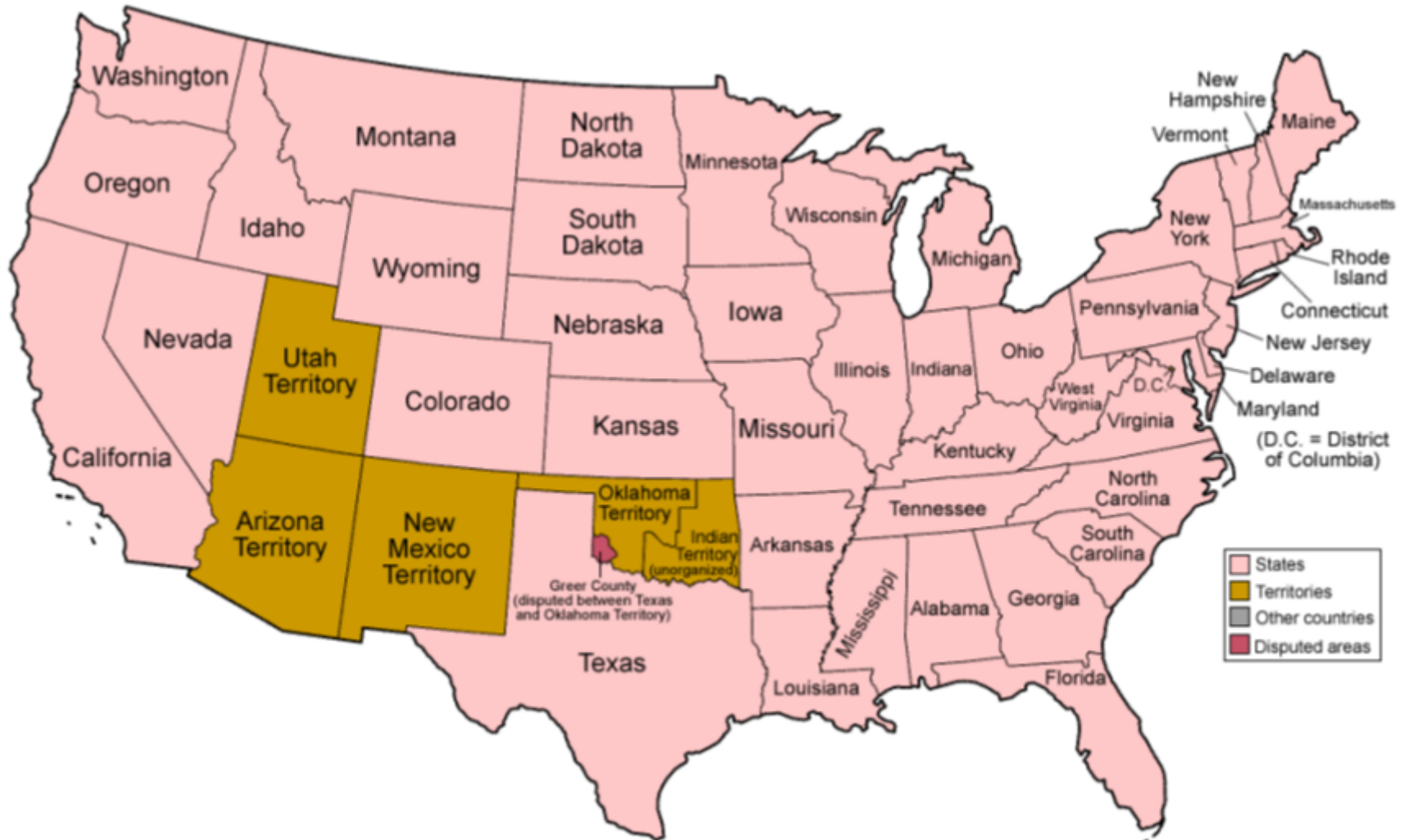ABSOLUTE PROTECTION FROM EXTREME COLD.

Chinese workers were recruited to America to build the railroad…

…But, Congress passed the Chinese Exclusion Act in 1882 which ended Chinese immigration to America

The migration of Americans into the West left no unorganized territories by 1890... the western frontier had closed
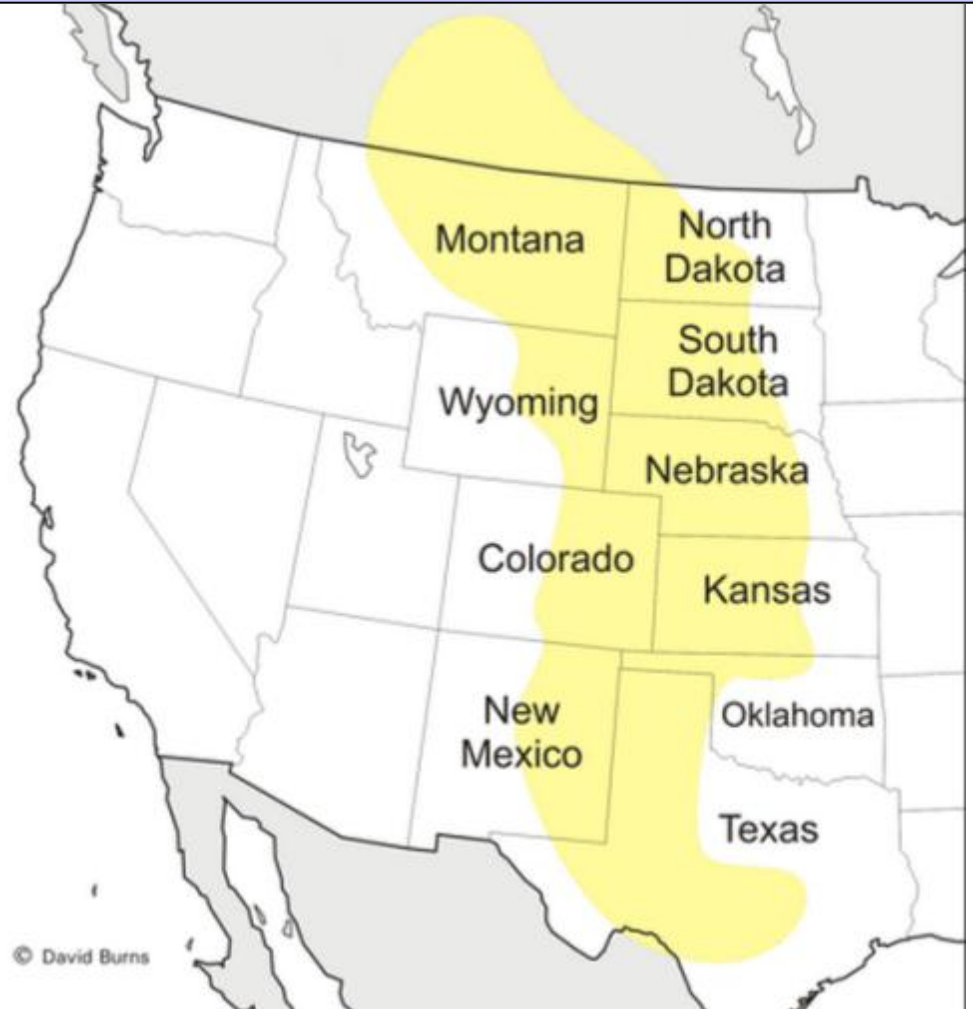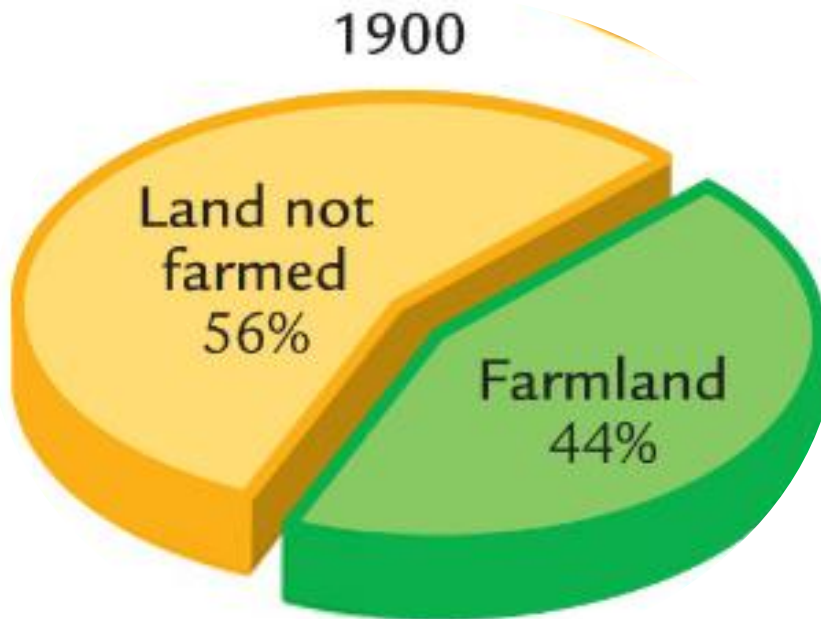

States and Territories of the United States of America
1890

The Homestead Act and Farmers

The majority of migrants into the west were farmers

In 1862, Congress passed the Homestead Act, giving 160 acres of free western land to anyone who promised to farm the land for 5 years

Hundreds of thousands of migrants moved into the Great Plains to gain free farm land

1900

Land not farmed 56%

Farmland 44%

Montana

North Dakota

South Dakota

Wyoming

Nebraska

Colorado

Kansas

New Mexico

Oklahoma

Texas

© David Burns

Homestead life was difficult on the Great Plains

Farming was difficult, but homesteaders learned dry farming techniques and planted new varieties of crops

Homesteaders built sod houses because of the lack of trees in the Plains

Tornados and droughts were constant problems

60% of homesteaders failed to make it the required 5 years...

...but those who were successful transformed America into a food exporter

Predominantly cropland

Forest with scattered cropland and pasture

Predominantly grazing land

Sparsely populated or nonproductive land

Beef cattle

Dairying

Sheep

Hogs

Corn

Wheat

Rice

Hay

Tobacco

Sugar cane

Cotton

Fruit

Wine

Some African Americans known
as "exodusters" took advantage of the
Homestead Act to escape the Jim Crow South

Nicodemus, Kansas

NATIVE AMERICANS

The Gilded Age brought devastation to the Indians

By the end of the Civil War in 1865, 2/3 of all Indians lived on the Great Plains

Plains Indians like the Sioux, Comanche, and Cheyenne tribes were dependent upon the buffalo and the horse

Importance of the Buffalo

The buffalo provided the Plains Indians with more than just a high-protein food source.

THE SKULL of the buffalo was considered sacred and was used in many Native American rituals.

THE HORNS were carved into bowls and spoons.

THE BONES of the buffalo were made into hide scrapers, tool handles, sled runners, and hoe blades. The hoofs were ground up and used as glue.

THE HIDE was by far the most precious part of the buffalo. Native American clothing, tepees, and even arrow shields were made from buffalo hide.
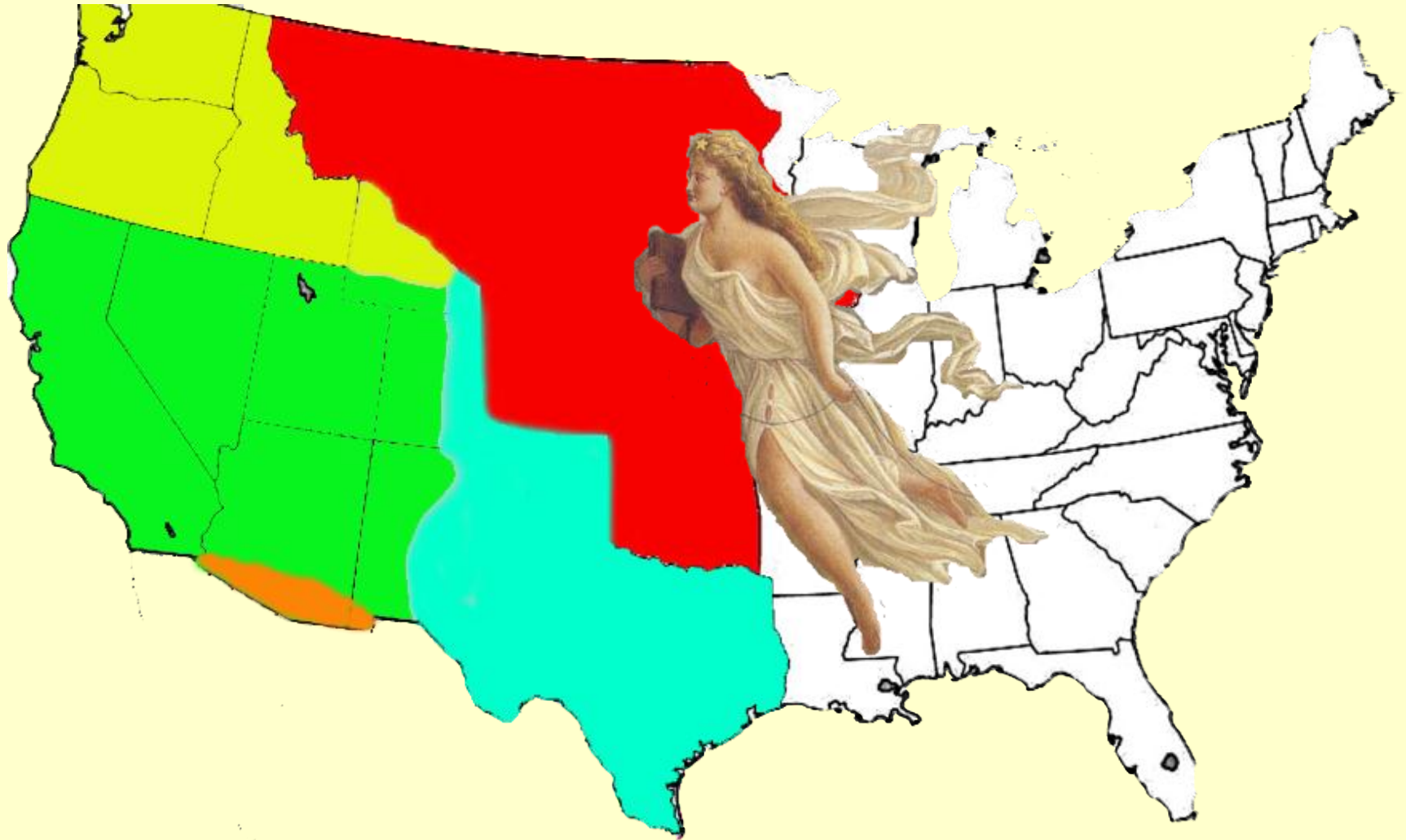
1800 65,000,000

1870 1,000

2000 260,000

In the 1830s, Jackson used the Indian Removal Act to relocate Indians to lands west of the Mississippi River…

MICHIGAN TERRITORY

N.Y.

PENNSYLVANIA

R.I

ONN

OHIO

DEL.

MEXICO

ATLANTIC OCEAN

ORIDA TERRITORY

New

Ceded lands and dates of cession

Indian reservations

Gulf of Mexico

Seminole 1832

…This "Indian Country" was located in the Plains and was protected from white settlers

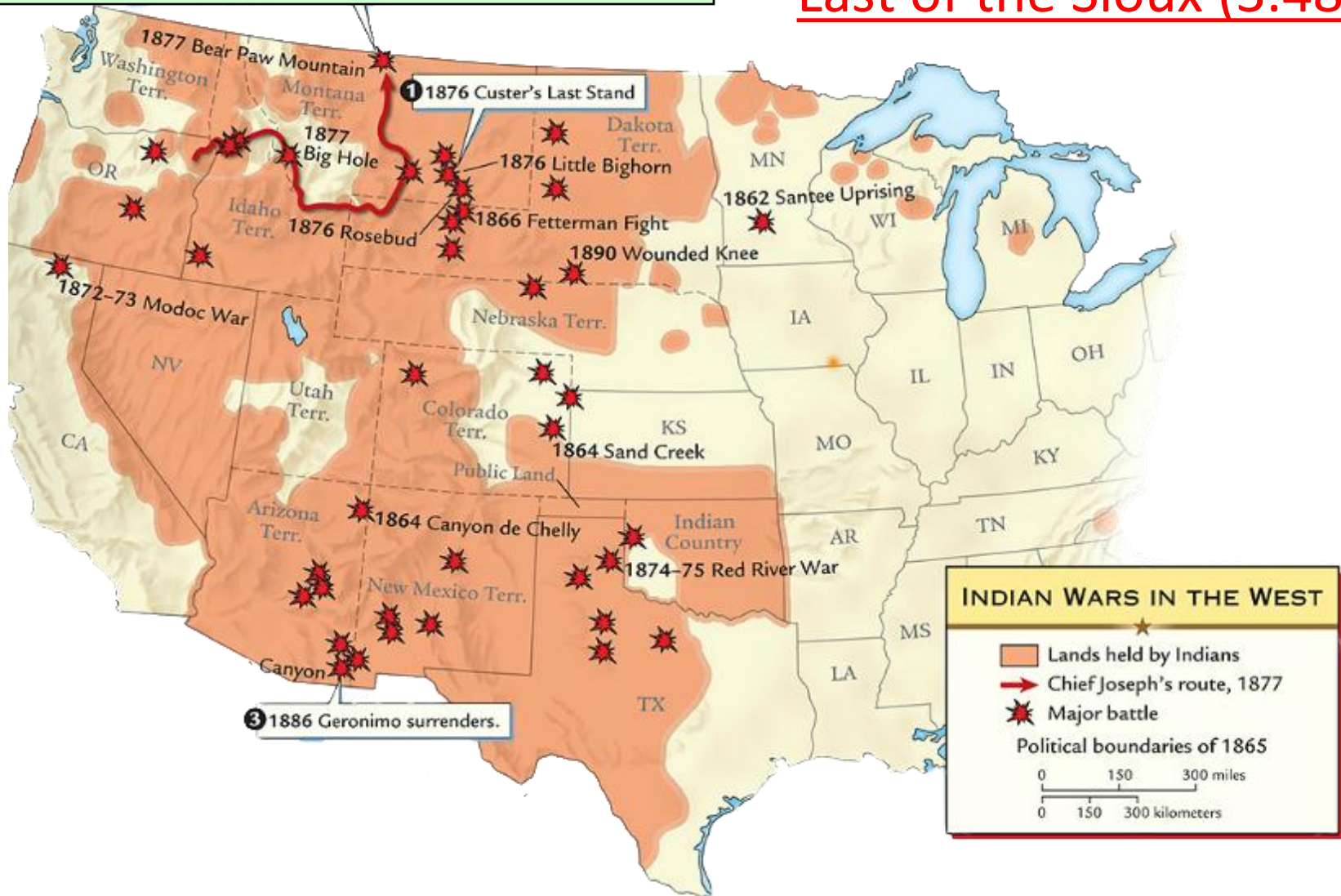In the 1840s, Manifest Destiny led to the acquisition of new western territories…

…as a result, Indians were concentrated onto small reservations

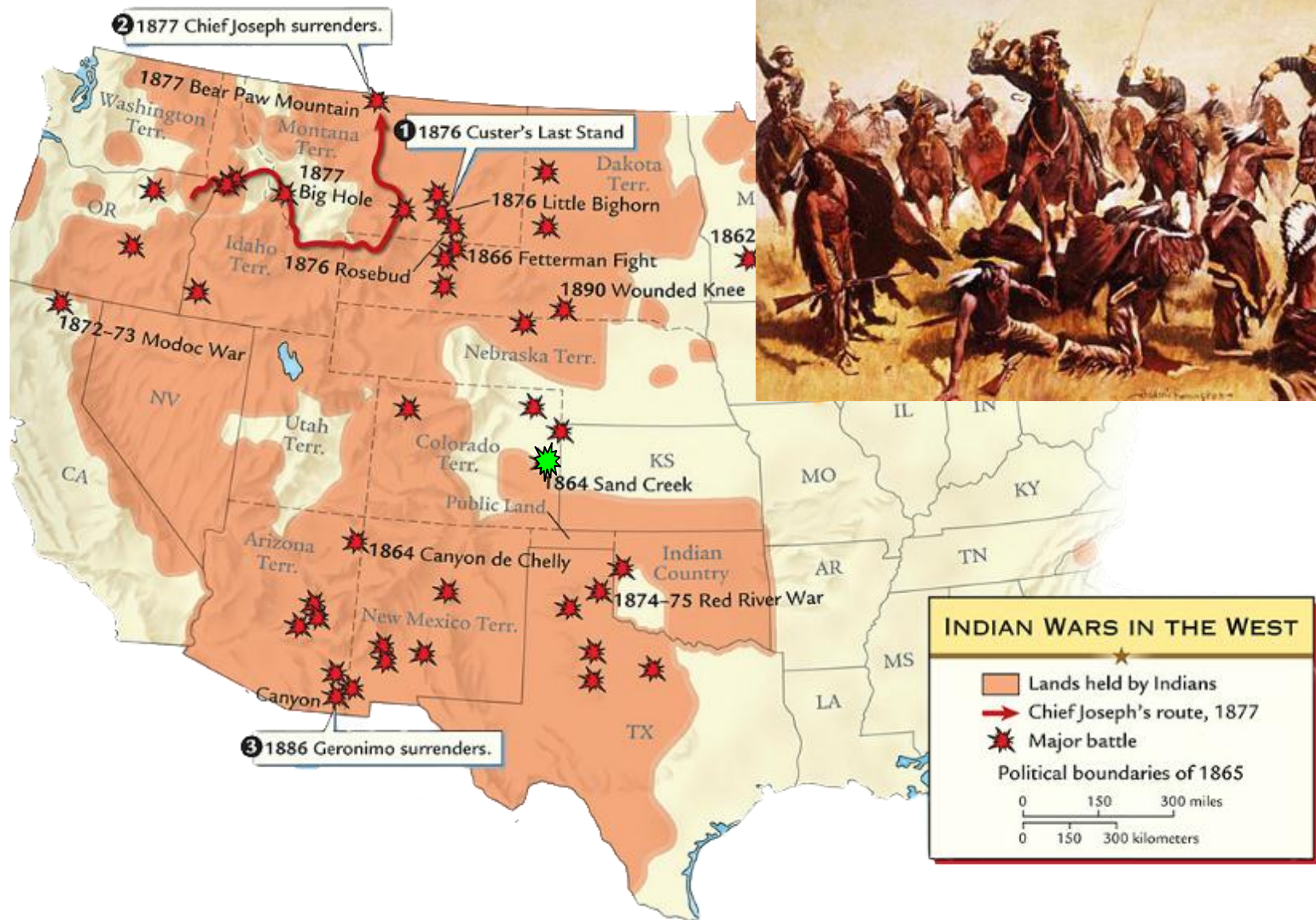The flood of miners, ranchers, and farmers during the Gilded Age violated Indian territories…

…This led to a series of violent conflicts known as the "Indian Wars"

Last of the Sioux (3.48)

1877 Bear Paw Mountain
Washington Terr.
Montana Terr.
1 1876 Custer's Last Stand
Dakota Terr.
1877 Big Hole
MN
OR
Idaho Terr. 1876 Rosebud
1876 Little Bighorn
1862 Santee Uprising
WI
MI
1866 Fetterman Fight
1890 Wounded Knee
1872–73 Modoc War
Nebraska Terr.
IA
NV
Utah Terr.
Colorado Terr.
KS
IL
IN
OH
CA
1864 Sand Creek
MO
KY
Public Land
Arizona Terr. 1864 Canyon de Chelly
New Mexico Terr.
Indian Country
1874–75 Red River War
AR
TN
Canyon
MS
LA
TX
3 1886 Geronimo surrenders.

INDIAN WARS IN THE WEST
Lands held by Indians
Chief Joseph's route, 1877
Major battle
Political boundaries of 1865
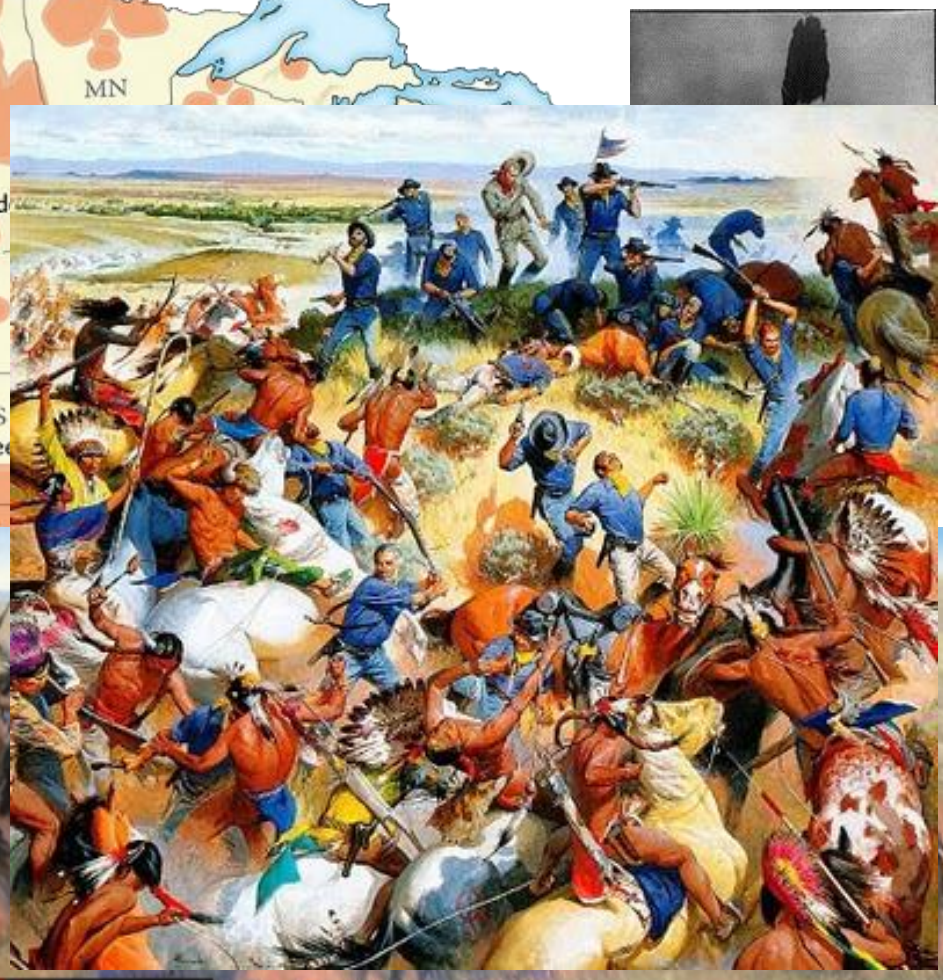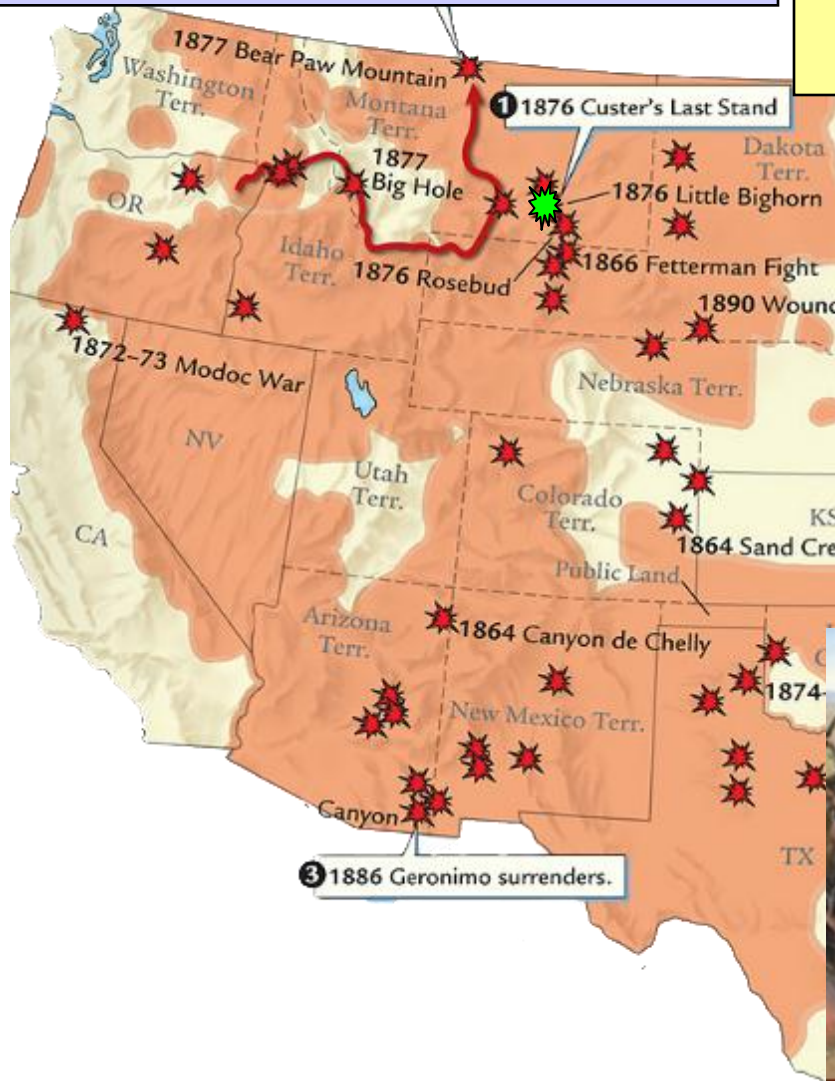0   150   300 miles
0   150   300 kilometers

INDIAN WARS

In 1864, Colorado militia attacked and murdered Cheyenne Indians, mostly women and children, in the Sand Creek Massacre

In 1876, Americans flooded into Sioux territory in South Dakota when gold was discovered

The Sioux, led by Sitting Bull, retaliated by ambushing Colonel Custer and all 197 soldiers in the Seventh Cavalry at Little Big Horn
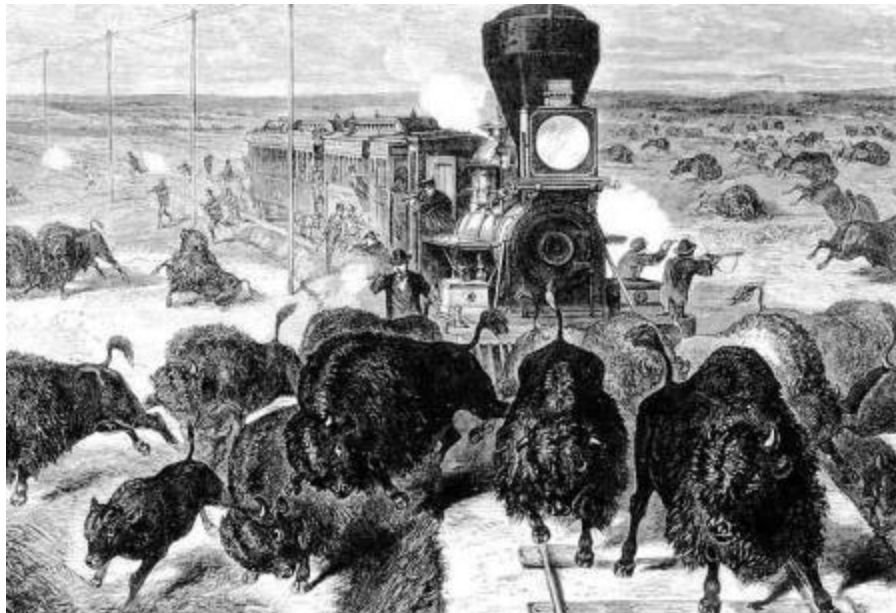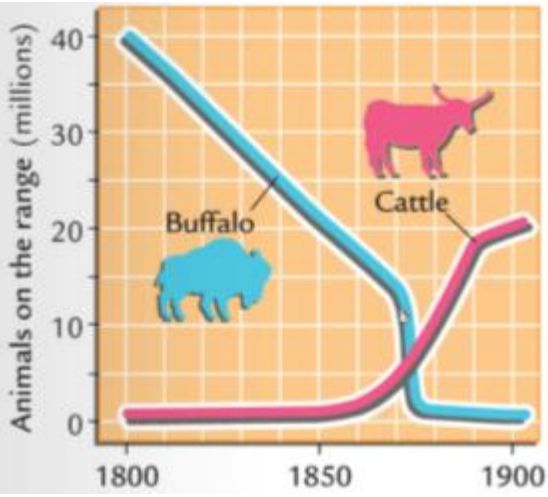
The most effective way to defeat the Indians was by killing off the buffalo

Hunters killed buffalo for their hides which were sold in the East

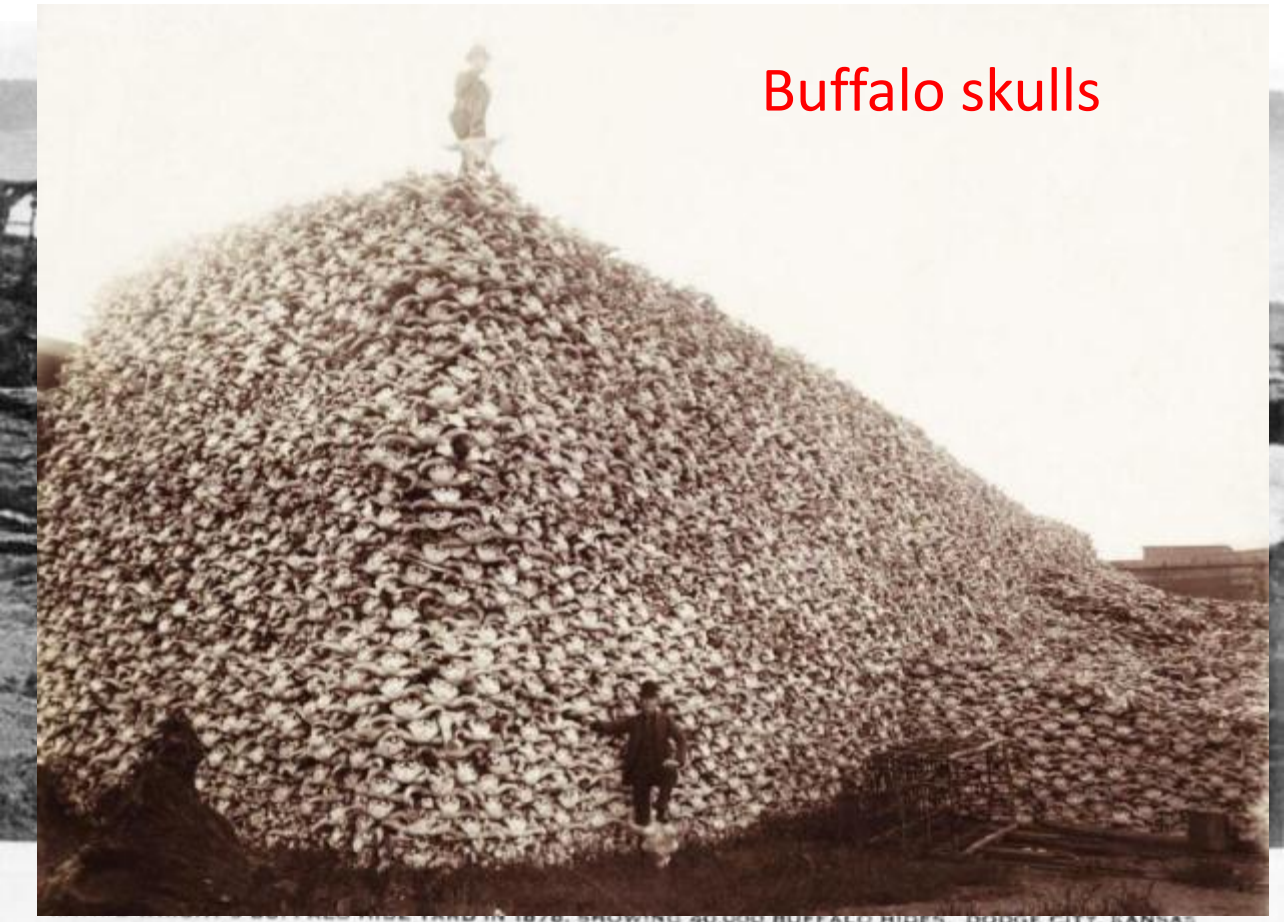The U.S. government and railroad companies hired hunters to kill buffalo

The Buffalo (2.52)

A hunter could kill 100 buffalo per day; The buffalo hunters in the West killed as many as 3 million per year
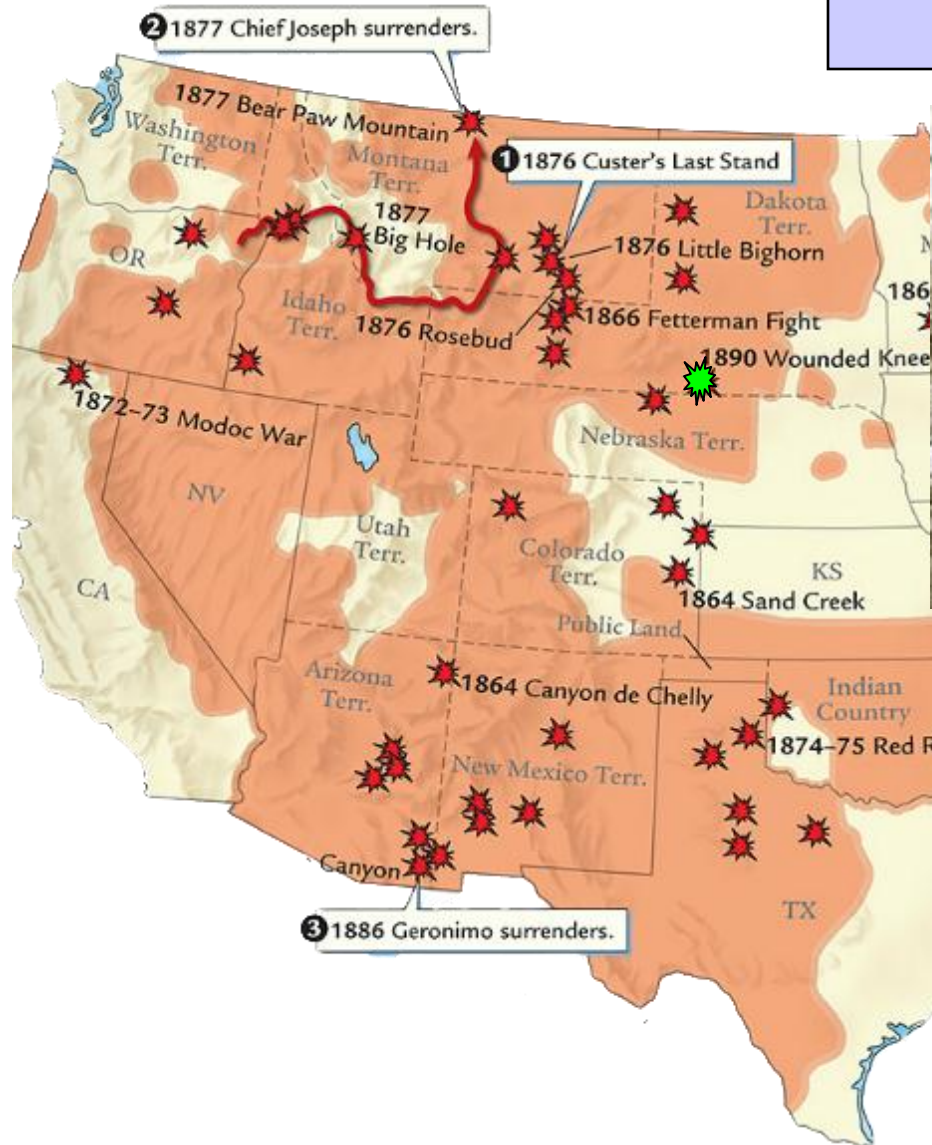
By the end of the Gilded Age, less than 1,000 buffalo remained in the Plains

1800 65,000,000

1870 1,000

Buffalo skulls

The last Indian battle in U.S. history was Wounded Knee in 1890

The U.S. army attacked the Sioux after tribal leaders refused to stop their "ghost dances"

At Wounded Knee, 200 men, women, and children were killed; Indians never fought the U.S. again

With the buffalo all but exterminated and **the frontier closed** by white settlers, the Indian wars ended in 1890

By 1890, Indians were restricted to **small reservations** in isolated locations

PACIFIC OCEAN

ATLANTIC OCEAN

Gulf of Mexico

Land lost by Native Americans before 1775
Land lost 1775–1864
Land lost 1865–1894
Land retained by Native Americans
Land returned to Native Americans

500 Miles

1000 Kilometers