The body parts naming each chapter is important, and usually has more than one meaning.

‘Heads’ at the start of this one refers to humans as ‘heads of cattle’ or how the enslaved person’s head is controlled.

The time period here is the turn of the new millennium, 1790-1812, when the nature of slavery is making a transition, caused by both internal and global events.

What is going on here? Left: Female slave being branded. Center: Branding Irons. Right: Iron collar with owner’s name, with muzzle
Transforming Slavery: From Capture to Breeding, as in Breeding Herds of Cattle

- One geopolitical reason was the banning of the slave trade, but not slavery itself.
- Britain first banned the trade in 1807, and the US Constitution, signed in 1789, gave it 20 more years, until 1808.
- There was no restriction internally, save for those states in the North that had made slavery illegal and in the Northwest territory.
Once slavery reached the Mississippi River, it had to cross it.

The area on the other side changed hands between Spain and France.

Jefferson tried several times to buy it, but was refused until a key event. What was it?
The Haitian Revolution: Shaking the New World and the Old

- Many never considered before is the motive force behind the Louisiana Purchase, which doubled the size of the US.

- Spain, Britain, France and the US all contended for it, but what finally cinched the deal was the impact of the slave revolution in what is now Haiti.

- Former slaves in power weakened the will of the of the European powers. Napoleon reversed his position, and sold it to the US for a mere $15 million.

- Enslavers in the US tried to keep slaves from Haiti from entering New Orleans, fearful they had been ‘infected’ with freedom.

- 90% of Haitians were slaves, with a small number of Frenchmen, British and Spaniards. A sizable buffer of mulattoes stood in between. Loverture died in Napoleon's prison.
Haiti’s Example Spreads Fear and Rebellion

- Napoleon’s brother-in-law, Charles LeClerc, was sent to divert the revolution and restore slavery.

- LeClerc died of yellow fever, and Jean-Jacque Dessaline turned, and defeated the French, killing a great number.

- When the slaves took power and independence, they declared any ‘Black’ could be a citizen, but anyone, even whites, could become a Black by declaring that white men had no special prerogative to rule or otherwise be on top.

- Haiti thus, early on, rejected the social construct of race and white privilege.
Between 64 and 125 enslaved men, inspired by Haiti, marched from sugar plantations near present-day LaPlace on the German Coast toward the city of New Orleans. They collected more men along the way. An estimated 200–500 slaves participated. During their two-day, twenty-mile march, the men burned five plantation houses (three completely), several sugarhouses, and crops. They were armed mostly with hand tools.

White men led by officials formed militia companies to hunt down and kill the insurgents. Over the next two weeks, white planters and officials interrogated, tried and executed an additional 44 insurgents who had been captured.

Executions were by hanging or decapitation. Whites displayed the bodies as a warning to intimidate slaves. The heads of some were put on pikes and displayed at plantations.

The other meaning of ‘heads’

Art by renowned River Parishes artist Lorraine Gendron depicts the revolt by enslaved people in 1811 in St. John and St. Charles parishes that reverberated around the country.
The Red Stick War: To Clear the Land, First Clear It of People Living There

- Expanding into the Louisiana Purchase required control of New Orleans.

- In the War of 1812, the US Contended with Britain, including the Orleans Territory.

- Some Native American Tribes became allies of the British, hoping to save their lands from the enslavers.

- Thus came the battle with the Creeks or ‘Red Sticks’ with Andrew Jackson in the Orleans Territory, now Alabama. After winning against the ‘Creeks, Jackson took his soldiers and allies on to New Orleans.
Slaves and Deceit in the Battle of New Orleans

- Jackson was outnumbered by the Brits, and thus added to his forces by recruiting 500 slaves, promising them their freedom.
- James Roberts, one of the slaves who heard Jackson’s words explained that they seemed like ‘divine revelation.’ ‘In hope of freedom, we would run through a troop and leap over a wall.’
- After winning, Roberts was separated from his wife and four children and sold at auction. The war had not brought freedom to Roberts or millions of other slaves; it merely secured the western frontiers of their captivity.
- British forts and Indian alliances no longer hindered America’s western expansion. General Andrew Jackson’s defeat of the Creek Indians further cleared the way for population growth in the Deep South, where land-hungry planters established frontier communities to serve the growing demand for cotton.
Chapter 3: The Right Hand

- Maspero’s Coffee House as the ‘Wall St’ of the New Orleans slave and cotton trade.

- ‘Hand’ with two meanings: Field Hand and Letter of Hand as a credit voucher or IOU.

- Slaves were imprisoned and auctioned on the upper floor of Maspero’s. Females could be taken to private rooms for ‘close inspection’.

- Eventually, only paper notes were bought and sold as pure speculation.
How New Technology Drove Slavery’s Rapid Expansion

- The ‘Cotton Gin’ was invented by Eli Whitney in 1793.
- Before, one slave could ‘clean’ a pound of cotton per day.
- After the gin, one slave could clean 50 pounds per day.
- Because of patent disputes, the ‘gin’ was slow to be put in use, taking off after 1810.
Steam Power Upgrades Globally

- Steamboats on the rivers got cotton to the ports.
- Steam ‘gins’ increased ‘clean’ cotton.
- Steam looms in New England and Britain mass produced cotton cloth.
Cotton And Railroads

- As plantations moved inland from the rivers, steam powered railroads got cotton to the rivers.
- Just as all the land was cleared by slave labor, so were the railroad networks in the Southern states build by slaves.