

Empire and Food: Sugar in the Eighteenth Century Empire



Themes

- Introduction: the British love sugar
- Sweetness before sugar
- Sugar as item cultural exchange
- Political economy of sugar
- Sugar and sweetness: a created need
- Conclusion

Introduction

- Food is not just food; it has a history etc.
- Sugar enters British diet 18 century
- But, boy, did it stick

pudding



Sweeties—Candies to you Yanks



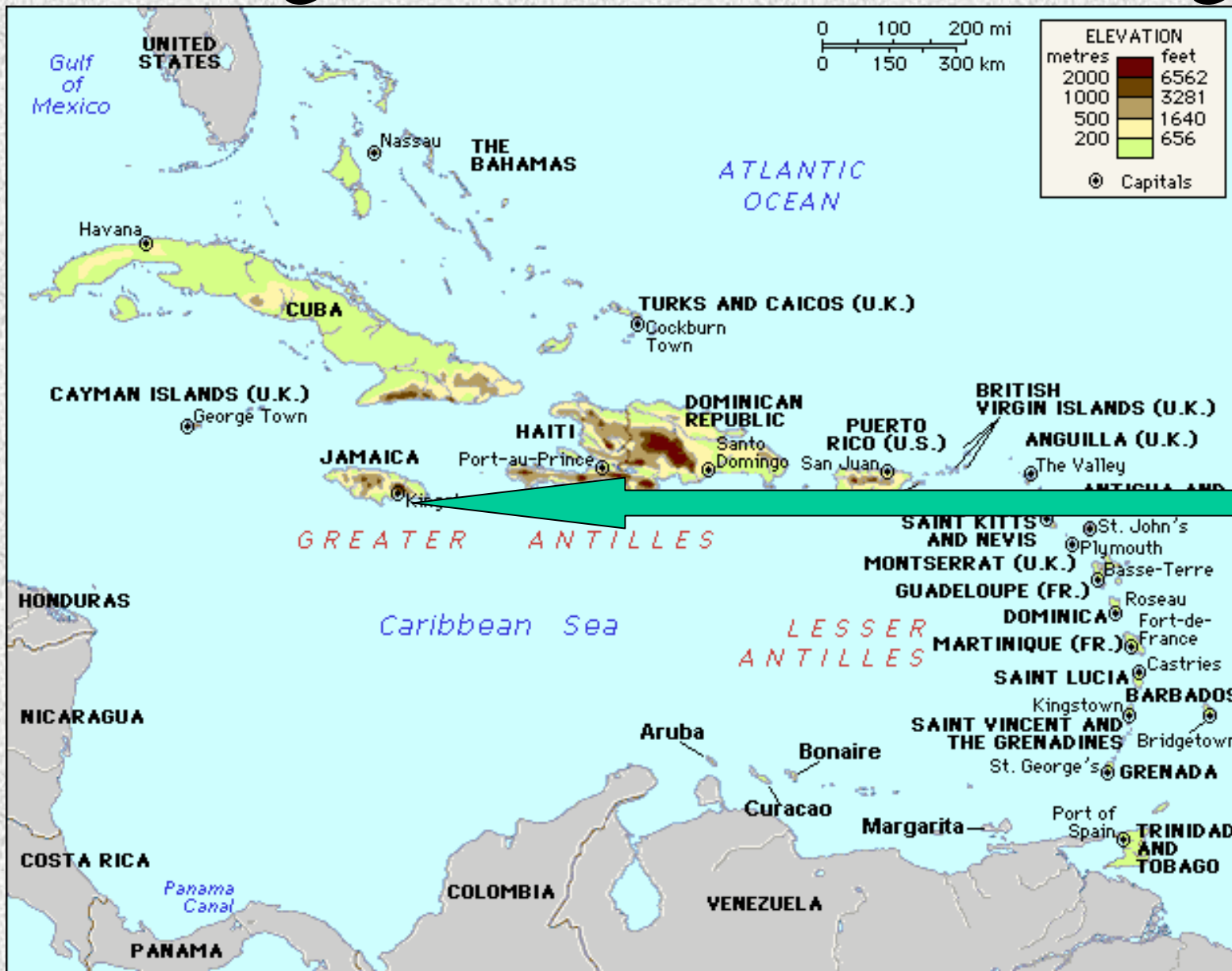
And don't forget a nice cup of
tea—go see Vera Drake



But there was Sweetness before
sugar, believe it or not

- Honey, fruit etc
- Origins in India, Middle East
- Sugar a luxury item pre c. 1750

Sugar and Cultural Exchange



Jamaica

Barbados

Political Economy of Sugar

- Methods of production combine old methods and new

Political economy of sugar

- And the methods of modern industry



Political economy of sugar also meant:

Slavery



Sugar and Sweetness: a created need

- Necessary neither to diet nor health
- Comfort, calories, stimulant
- The increased need for these because of industrial revolution at home
- Its role in economic change
- The changes it induced in the diet

Conclusion

- Empire not something that is happening just “out there” across the sea; its forms and products were present in the metropole.