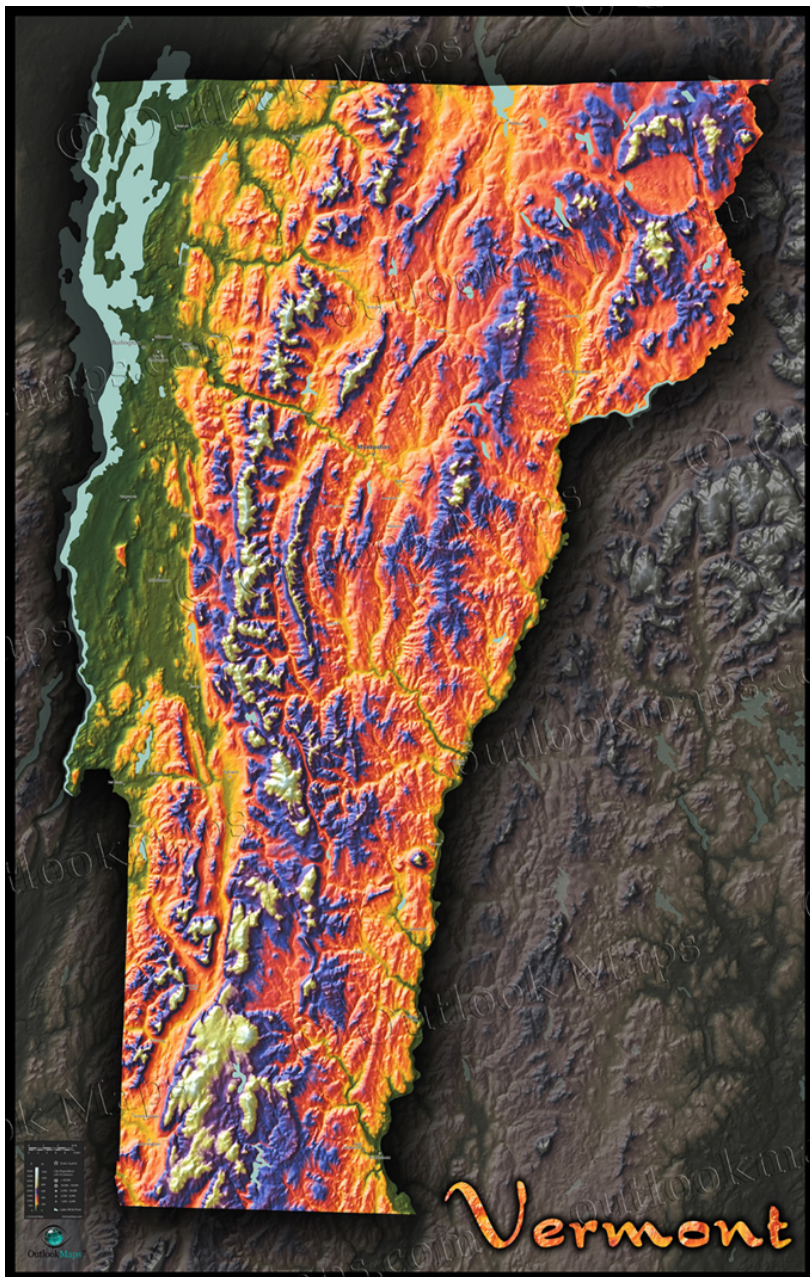


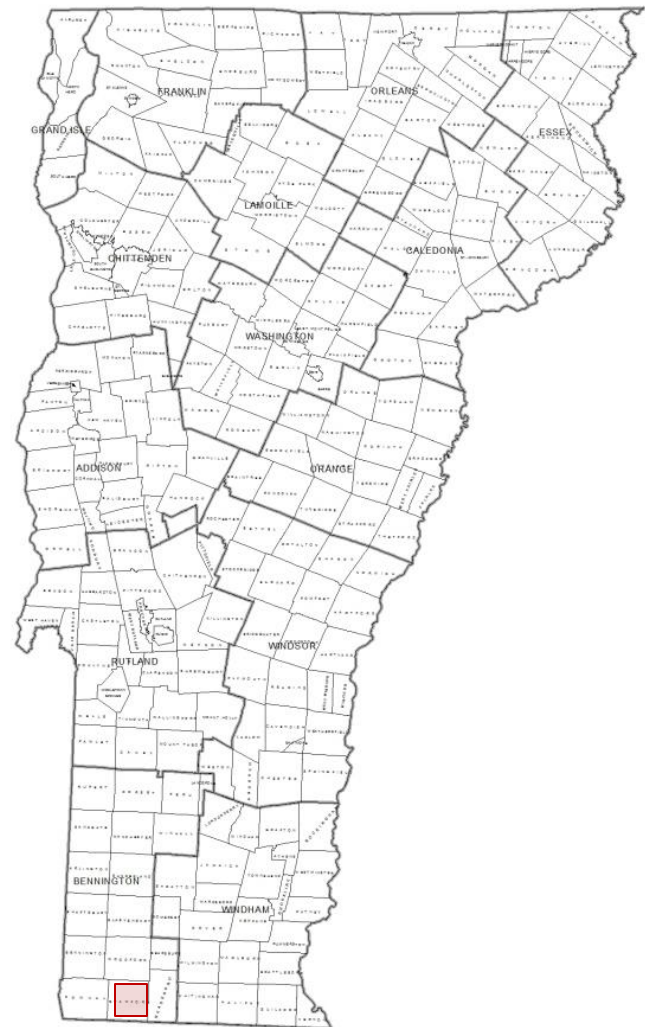
# Why Did Wauconda's First Settlers All Want to Leave Vermont?



Because Vermont  
Was a Mess -- War,  
Floods, Population,  
Tariffs, Merino  
Sheep, Land Prices,  
and Disease



## Vermont Town and County Boundaries



Created by the Vermont Center for Geographic Information, <http://vcgi.vermont.gov>





# Merino Mania

- Napoleonic Wars – Spain lifted blockade on exporting merino sheep
- introduced shortly after war of 1812

- New England textile industry grew rapidly
- merino thrive in poor rocky soils
- need large grazing areas
- small farms consolidated into large farms
- by mid 1830s over 1 million in Vermont – 6 sheep for every human
- If you didn't raise sheep you worked for someone who did
- changes in tariff laws created economic booms and busts for sheep owners
- wool prices crashed when western farms could produce wool cheaper



# Why Emigrate?

- Population – more than tripled from 1790 to 1830
- Floods – trees were gone; wiped out mills; erosion
- Disease – esp. tuberculosis but many others
- Weather related crop failures – esp. 1816
- War – Embargos hurt trade with Canada
- Exhausted natural resources – “They didn’t cultivate the land, they mined it.”
- Vermont was isolated, poor transportation, bypassed by industry
- Land Prices -- 10-20 \$/acre in 1832