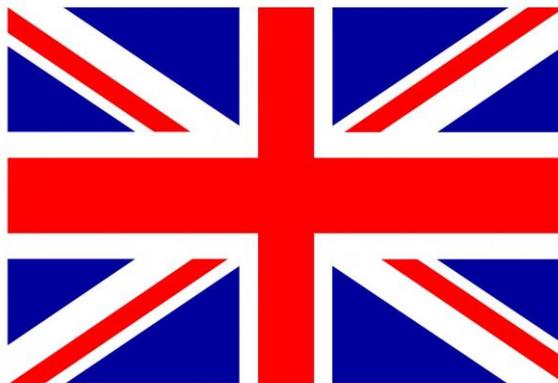


**CANADIAN/AMERICAN REBELS
IN VAN DIEMEN'S LAND.**

By

REG.A. WATSON



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(An Essay)

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THE REBELLION.

British North America (Canada) of the early nineteenth century was governed in two sections, Upper and Lower Canada. Most Canadians were staunchly loyal to Britain and to the Crown. Across the border lay the vibrant new nation of the United States. This nation, yet untorn by the civil war, was politically antagonistic towards the British north, even though two decades had passed since the 1812 war.

Canada received probably as many as 40,000 refugees from the U.S. after the 1776 War of Independence. These settlers had an intense dislike of anything south of the border. The majority of Canadians shared this view. Such a nation as the U.S. however, could not but influence some Canadians, particularly those with grievances or radical ideas.

People of Anglo-Celtic stock prominently settled Upper Canada, while in Lower Canada a large number of people from a French culture settled in Quebec.

Colonial governments up to the late 1830s ruled rigidly. Except for the Governor, all officers ruled for life. Generally speaking the system worked well, but there were, naturally enough, instances of injustice, corruption and inefficiency.

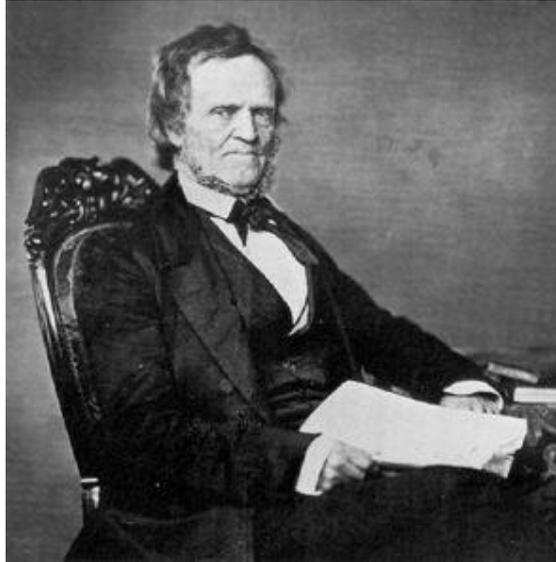
In Quebec whereas the majority of the population were French speaking, the English dominated the Executive Council and the Legislative Council, while the French dominated the Assembly. Obviously such a conflict of interest would result in confrontation.

This manifested itself in an armed rebellion, led by Louis Joseph Papineau. Our study, however, is not concerned with the Lower rebellion, but that of Upper Canada. The only interest this study has in it, is the way it influenced the upper one. There was, however, no other connection between the two, they being quite separate uprisings. (1)

By the mid 1830s, a number of non-loyalist Americans had settled in Upper Canada. Their interest and aims came in conflict with the establishment.

They were republicans in nature and many were Baptists, Methodists and Presbyterians who opposed the established Church of England. They cherished American institutions and ideas and because so, they were looked upon with suspicion by the rest of the loyal populations.

One man to take advantage of this tension was a Scot named William Lyon MacKenzie. This wiry, little man developed his rather radical political ideas by the writings of contemporary Scottish Whigs.



William Lyon MacKenzie

MacKenzie was born in 1795 in Dundee and migrated to Canada in 1820. MacKenzie's political fervour was supplemented by his strong Presbyterianism.

MacKenzie was anti-British and was influenced by the republic to the south of Canada. He founded a paper called the Colonial Advocate and because of its outspoken views became controversial. (2) MacKenzie was elected to the colonial assembly and in 1834 was elected the first mayor of the new city of Toronto.

MacKenzie, with a committee, sent to London a list of grievances on colonial rule. The home government took the report very seriously. Many back in Toronto, looked upon the report as disloyal and in the ensuing election of 1836, MacKenzie lost his seat.

Dissatisfied even more, he openly talked of rebellion and spoke before large crowds, mainly made up of rural folk who were feeling the effects of a severe depression.

The support that he received at these meetings, gave him a false impression of the over all backing. Somewhat misjudging the situation, he drafted a constitution on the lines of the U.S. Constitution.

By now Papineau's rebellion in the south was underway and this prompted MacKenzie to do the same in the north.

It was a rebellion that was poorly planned poorly executed and lacked popular support.

MacKenzie planned to attack and hold Toronto with a force of about 500 men.

Francis Bond Head, historians have blamed Lt-Governor of Upper Canada for the rebellion because of his inability to cope with the situation.

Whether he was or wasn't is not our intention to judge, but we should mention that Head states that MacKenzie's "traitorous arrangements were of a minute nature that it would have been difficult even if I had to desired it, to have suppressed them." (3)

Head was recalled to England in disgrace. Fearing of his assassination by rebels, he disguised himself when making his way out of Canada. He was recognised, however, at a hotel he was staying at a place called Watertown, across the American border by a Hugh Scanlon. Regardless of his fears, his enemies did him no harm; they actually cheering and gleefully (if not mockingly) sent him on his way.

MacKenzie went into action December 19th, 1837 by blocking the main road into the city. It must be remembered that the force at Head's disposal was only minimal.

Head in Toronto, learned of the danger when a Colonel Moody, escaped from the rebel's clutches and raced to the Lt-Governor to tell all. Head gave orders that the alarm bell be rung. Afterwards he dashed to the City Hall to mobilise the town's forces. He then ordered thirty volunteers to approach the rebels, not to attack but to observe.

According to Head, within a day he mustered 500 men. Before any further action, Head despatched two men to approach the rebels in an attempt to stop any bloodshed.

MacKenzie refused to listen, so on the Thursday, two days after, the militia with Head in charge, marched out to meet the rebels who were easily defeated.

The day after 2,000 loyal men flocked to the city to bolster Head's militia. It was all over for McKenzie.

MacKenzie fled across the border where he spent twelve years in exiles. He did return with some loyal supporters and with a number of sympathetic Americans to make several raids back into Canada. This strained the relationship between London and Washington, even though the U.S. Government did not approve of these incursions. (4)

In time, he became disillusioned with American politics and after he was pardoned in 1849, he returned to Canada and was elected to Parliament two years later. He died in Toronto in 1861.

Small though both insurrections were, they did serve to condemn the old system of government. The major result being that Canada should unite by an Act of Parliament in 1840.

Whereas MacKenzie fled to the United States, some of his fellow rebels were not that lucky. Many were arrested and were hung. Others had their death sentences commuted to transportation. A number were captured after the Battle of Windmill Point. It was here that William Gates took possession of the site, but loyalist soldiers charged with bayonets fixed after the rebels being bombarded by cannon. Gates managed to flee but in the process was hit on the head by a blackman, knocking him unconscious. One hundred and fifty two others were captured with him. They were handcuffed and taken in hand. In the end 93 Canadian and American, but mainly American, were transported as convicts to that place of penal servitude, Van Diemen's Land. Not all the 93 were sent for political purposes. Horace Cooley, for instance was transported for burglary; Jon McManagall for murder and was Jon Dean. Others like William Highland, were sent for desertion.

There were also previous ship arrivals (*Marquis of Hastings* 18/July 1839 & *Canton* 12 Jan 1840) that also brought Canadians to our shore as prisoners. However, a number of these were because of desertion. Then back in April 1st 1838, the vessel *Moffatt* dropped 23 Canadians, but these mainly were for, again, desertion.

Thus the full total of arrivals from Canada was 145, but as noted, not all for political purposes. This distinction should be made clear when the episode is recounted.

The Statistics then are interesting; of the American prisoners, 86 were for political offences. There was one civil offence. Of the Anglo-Canadians, seven were for political reasons, 46 for desertion and five for civil offences.

On the 12th February 1840 the rebels arrived on the HMS Buffalo, a three decked frigate, on which conditions were bad. It was an aged warship mostly used to carry troops and supplies. Also it was used to transport convicts. The vessel was soon after wrecked off New Zealand. Aboard was Daniel Heustis.

Before disembarking, it is interesting to note that George Augustus Arthur; just recently Lt-Governor of Van Diemen's Land replaced Lt-Governor Head as administrator of Upper Canada.

William Gates, another Canadian transportee, describes Arthur as "notorious for his tyranny". (5) This is perhaps being unfair so perhaps at this stage we should quote a past historian who said of Arthur, "Indeed by the standards of his time, he was a humane man." (6)

It was true that during his time as Lt-Governor of Van Diemen's Land (VDL), Arthur saw more than 20,000 convicts arrive during his twelve years of office. Yet he implemented improvement for their welfare and though he was a disciplinarian, Port Arthur on the Tasman Peninsular was perhaps one of the most advanced penal settlements in the British Empire at that time.

In his new capacity as Lt-Governor for Upper Canada, Arthur took a personal interest in the rebels. He had little time for disloyalty and held these convicts in contempt. Yet Arthur's administration was with the civil population and not governing convicts. Naturally, however, he carried a great deal of influence.

He personally met some of the rebels at Fort Henry, Toronto.

According to William Gates, Arthur enquired of his part in the recent rebellion, as he did with the others then present.

It should be stated that contrary to general belief Arthur did his best to restrain the amount of hangings and indeed in a letter to Lord Glenelg, the Colonial Secretary, he expressed a desire to issue a free pardon to a number of those being transported to VDL, but he believe public feeling in Upper Canada did not approve.

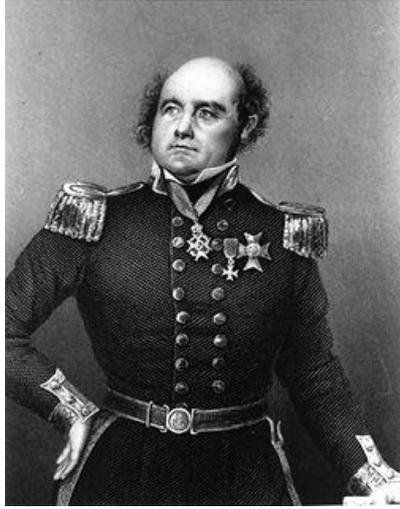
One who arrived on the *Canton*, James Gemmell, who made a statement on Arthur, declaring that, "Sir George Arthur promised to obtain my liberty. I was the only one of my family that joined the rebellion and I should have got my liberty had the Rebellion not broke out again."

Gremmell's behaviour on board the *Canton* and whilst in VDL was stated as "good". Although he gained his ticket-of-leave 27th January 1842, he made his escape in an American Whaler, as did others such as Benjamin Wait and Samuel Chandler. Previous escape attempts of Gremmell are told in Linus Wilson Miller's "*Notes of an Exile to Van Diemen's Land*".

Gemmell's life post VDL is quite fascinating at one time becoming a Mormon and on intimate terms with Brigham Young. He gave evidence into the Moutain Meadow Massacre.*

Heustis with the others were conveyed to Quebec and were placed aboard *HMS Buffalo* under the command of Captain Wood. On September 28, 1839 it hoisted sail and departed.

VAN DIEMEN'S LAND IN THE LATE 1830s



Sir John Franklin

The island to which the 92 - one died during the trip - were being sent to was under the jurisdiction of Sir John Franklin. VDL was still very much a penal isle, but after the unpopular George Arthur, Franklin was welcomed by cheering crowds. Franklin promoted free emigration with extensive land sales and proposed to devote 60,000 pounds to bring working families from Great Britain. He believed that large free emigration and the eventual stop to convict transportation would bring VDL permanent prosperity.

That, however, would be some years off and a great deal of his time was spent administrating the convict settlement. Lady Franklin took a great deal of interest; some would say interference, in public affairs. This in itself caused some dissatisfaction with his government as Lady Franklin, a strong will person with a “male intellect” (7) tended to let it be known she wanted her say.

However, the frank and human attributes of Sir John won the support of settlers and the colony was reasonably well managed. It was at this stage that settlers began to visualise a bright future, free of convict transportation. Already such a thought was being openly expressed.

One year after Franklin’s arrival he had the business of the Legislative Council opened to the public. The colony’s population was about 45,000 and it was during Franklin’s term that Hobart was made a city in 1842, and he was to oversee the first census count in 1841.

In 1840, convict transportation ceased for New South Wales, but it was still very much the way of life for VDL and would be for another twelve years.

THE EXILES ARRIVE.

After a 16,000 mile voyage the *Buffalo* anchored in Hobart Town harbour. The only place the ship stopped was Rio Janeiro where it lay for four days.

The prisoners were unaware of their exact destination, knowing only, that it was either Sydney or Hobart. Many because of the boisterous passage took ill and one, Asa Priest, died. Fellow convict, William Gates, said that Priest died not from disease, but from a broken heart having left behind a wife and six children.

Since leaving Rio, no land was seen and it was only the information casually conveyed by a sentry that they knew they were heading towards Hobart.

It was somewhat of a relief to know the place of the disembarkation and to be off the ship which they had been on for some months. The arrival was not welcomed. The newspaper Hobart Town Advertiser reported: *“These men are a body of Americans of the lowest order, many of whom have been convicted of offences against the laws of their own country and are now under conviction not merely of a political offence, but also of the most atrocious acts of wanton robbery arson and murder.”* (21st Feb. 1840).

Soon after the ship anchored, February 12th 1840, it was visited by the General Superintendent of Convict, William Gunn, and each were asked pertinent questions, such as name, trade, religion, age, parent’s name.

One of the exiles, Linus Miller recorded: “On the following morning the work of initiation into the mysteries of a penal colony commenced. William Gunn Esq., Principal Superintendent of Convicts, accompanied by several subordinates, all of whom affected importance, took possession of the cabin. Proclamation was made that every prisoner should instantly make his appearance at the cabin door when called, upon penalty of “severe punishment”. The men were summoned in alphabetical order, and in due course my own turn came.”

Linus Miller was a tall, handsome youth of about twenty years. He came from a well-to-do family from Rochester, New York. He was well educated, having studied law. He saw it as his destiny to help the Canadians to gain their freedom, but while doing so, he termed black Canadians as “niggers” – little more than animals. At his trial (July 14 1838) he called the magistrate “unfit for his business”. This brash young American defended himself well, but later chose to be represented by a lawyer. Nonetheless, a verdict of “guilty” was proclaimed and he was sent to Fort Henry then on to Quebec City.

William (Billy) Gates takes up the story: “We had been escorted to shore in a large boat, something like a scow propelled by oars. On shore we were received by a number of her queenship’s most dutiful minions, wearing blue runabouts, with a badge on one arm and carrying a bludgeon in the other hand, an insignia of their office – the constableness... We had gone but a short distance when we passed four scaffolds upon which as many men were just about to be executed! And little further along, beyond the town, we passed a gang of criminals – some two hundred in number – working the road in heavy chains; and yet a little further along another gang, without the chains... Our march continued till we arrived at Sandy Bay station, a mile and a half, or such a matter, from the town.”

William Gates was another brash American. While being a religious fellow he despised British royalty and joined the Canadian rebellion when he was 22 years old. He wrote: “We had full confidence in our cause as a just and noble one. We believed we were about to do our neighbours a deed of charity, such as the golden rule inculcates when it teaches us to do to our fellows as we would they should do to us.” – whether the majority of Canadians wanted it or not!

Their coming to Hobart Town had attracted a large crowd and upon leaving the vessel, Heustis and companions were marched by escort through the streets of Hobart. Any laggards were readily dealt with.

“Come on you bloody crawlers, you’ll have to walk faster than this tomorrow, with a cart full of stone, my bloody oath you will, come along there, you are not quite as smart now as when you was in Canada shooting the Queen’s loyal subjects, with your Yankee rifle, you’ve got no rifle here, but you’ll find plenty of cart and stone,” so

called a guard, and according to fellow Canadian convict, Robert Marsh, the caller was a Yankee sailor.

As they marched they passed four scaffolds prepared for executions, finally arriving at the Sandy Bay station, two miles from the city approximately where Wrest Point Casino is now situated. There they were sent to work on the roads and had changed their clothing for convict garb. They were joined by another ten who arrived earlier.

The Sandy Bay station consisted of ten heavily guarded huts. Work was hard and only Sunday was the day free from labour. Williams Gate's chore was hauling a heavy cart, six feet long by 4 and a half feet wide by two feet deep, loaded with rocks or dirt. He was of a team of four men attached to the cart by leather yokes and the daily quota was ten loads. They hauled up to twenty miles a day.

The following day, they were visited by the Lt Governor, Sir John Franklin and were paraded before him.

Franklin in addressing Linus Miller, supposedly said to him: "So much the worse; so much the worse. Not satisfied with being a republican yourself, you must strive to make others so. You had no interest in the country; you had therefore no business with the affairs of your neighbours. What! Attempt to set up your institutions in Canada! Stir up treason and rebellion in your own! – violate not only the laws of your own country, but those of England! You are an extremely bad man. I cannot conceive how any man could be so desperate, so depraved. How merciful her Majesty was to spare your life! Hanging would have been too good for you! – Sympathiser! Bad man! Very bad man."

Heustis wrote: "He rides back and forth along the line, like a general reviewing his troops, two or three times, as last he halts about the centre, takes a long breath, draws himself up, making the great mass of corruption and wind, appear as consequential as possible, all eyes were upon him, expecting when he opened his mouth to hear something resembling the report of artillery or of the thunder, for he was as big as a large thunder cloud and being Her Gracious Majesty's representative and with all a glutton, for we were informed that he devoured sheep each meal" (8)

The rest of the narrative is humorous reading. Heustis writes very sarcastically, which was perhaps unfair to Franklin, who was a very humane man, but understandable.

The station at Sandy Bay consisted of ten heavily guarded huts, under the command of a fellow called Skeane and their overseer was Thomas Hewit(t), described by Heustis as a "convict felon".

Work was hard with only Sunday was free from labour. William Gate's chore was hauling a heavy cart, six feet long by four and a half feet wide by two feet deep, loaded with rocks or dirt. He one of a team of four men attached to the cart by leather yokes and the daily quote was ten loads. They hauled the cart up to twenty miles day. Over the next few months they tackled their chores and by all accounts there was never any let up. Hewit proved to be a hard man and four, William Reynolds, Jacob Paddock, Horace Cooley and Michael Murray, attempted to escape. They were soon recaptured, tried and sent to Port Arthur on the Tasman Peninsular, for two years. One of their lot, Lysander Curtis, died having been denied suitable medical supervision when ill.

Samuel Snow described their lot: "Our employment consisted of levelling DOWN hills and levelling UP valleys, breaking stone and drawing them in hand carts to where they were wanted, for making and mending McAdamised roads."

On the Sabbath they were marched to Hobart Town for church. The majority were not of the Church of England persuasion and hated being forced to partake in the church's ritual. On the way to the church the troop was constantly the focus of attention. Many of the bystanders took the opportunity to hurl abuse at the rebels.

On one occasion, for refusing to work, Heustis and ten other colleagues were confined to their cells for twenty four hours. When they appeared before a magistrate, they were sentenced to seven days solitary confinement on bread and water. Afterwards they were sent back to work.

Soon another fatality occurred with the death of William Nottage who died while rocks were being blastered.

Most of the rebels were not hardened criminals and were from reasonably well-to-do well families. Hard, relentless labour soon took its effect with severe blisters on hands and sore and bloody feet. By now their condition took a turn for the worse with the coming of the harsh southern Tasmanian winter. They were then marched to Lovely Banks station, "but" writes Heustis, "it proved anything but lovely."

William Gates was to write about their transferral to Lovely Banks: "Three days' rations were allowed us, which, with our cup and plate, were rolled up in our blankets that swarmed with fleas, and slung over our backs. Escorted by a company of soldiers and constables, were started for some place toward the interior. We were told that our destination was for another part of the road, where the work was lighter and consequently easier and where we should enjoy greater privileges."

Lovely Banks was about 40 miles north of Hobart on the midland Highway. Their task was even harder than at Sandy Bay having to be up at dawn and working until sunrise. William Gates writes that Branberson, the Superintendent and Tom King the Overseer were worse than Skeane and Hewit. Gates states of their time at Lovely Banks:

"Hiram Loop, for refusing to labour without shoes was shut up in a loathsome cell for several days and fed on bread and water! Many were sick, some of who were thrust into the cells for not performing the cruel tasks required by the overseers. No matter how stormy the weather might be, we had to do our day's work. Finding it difficult to drive us as hard as they wished, our taskmasters began to threaten us with the cat-o'-nine-tails; but we assured them we would all fight till death before that ignominious punishment should be inflicted on any of our party, it was not attempted. We had no fires to warm ourselves by, or to dry out our wet garments. Wet and cold we went to bed, and in the morning I have repeatedly found my body and limbs so benumbed and stiff, in consequence of hard labour and exposure, that I could scarcely raise myself up. And yet I enjoyed better health than many others. The horrors of such a life, mortal pen is inadequate to describe."

According to Daniel Heustis even though the weather was "disagreeable" their clothes were in tatters and were forced to labour without shoes. This was clearly a breach of convict requirement, but the citizens and authorities held the rebels in contempt alike. They were forced to work on a rock pile and drag loaded carts two miles five times a day. Only Sundays were their days off. Usually many Van Diemenonians sympathised with the plight of the convict and sympathised with the Irish exiles, who arrived nearly ten years later, but Yankees and Yankee republicanism was generally viewed with disgust.

Tom King, the overseer, had a special hate for Heustis, overloading his burrow to such an extent that he could not wheel it. Heustis complained to the magistrate,

Major Ainsworth. King in returned informed the magistrate a long list of complaints against Heustis who naturally denied them.

Heustis' health had deteriorated substantially. The doctor upon a medical inspection informed the magistrate of the truth of his claims. The magistrate reprimanded King and ordered him to put Heustis "at light work".

After suffering much from the cold and dampness the convicts were moved back south twenty miles to Green Ponds (Kempton). The new superintendent was Bobby Nutman, and although he had a bad reputation, he treated the rebels with humanity. Upon hearing this, Franklin had him replaced with a man called Wright, after a John Pooke was used as a temporary 'fill-in'. Wright served Franklin well, but against the rules, Wright kept poultry and a certain amount of stock. He also drew upon the convict's rations to supplement his own. Upon complaints about his brutality and the exposure of his corruption, Franklin eventually dismissed him.

After they had been 14 months in the colony, Sir John Franklin visited the rebels and warned them against any further attempted escapes. "I have given them orders (soldiers and constable) to shoot you down like wild beasts, if you should take to the bush; depend upon it, if you should attempt it, not a man of you will escape." (Heustis).

On the 14th May 1841, they left Green Ponds for Bridgewater and for the first time were housed together with about 300 other convicts.

They were all employed building a bridge across the River Derwent for which they had to quarry and cart the stone. The rebel convicts had little affinity with the other convicts, being described by Heustis as "vile". However, it must be said that at no time were exiles subjected to corporal punishment.

A nephew of George Arthur, called Mason, was magistrate in the area and took an instant dislike to the rebels. Eight of them took off, but were unsuccessful in the escape.

In consequence the remaining was divided into units of six and were dispersed. Heustis, with 21 others, were sent to Browns River (Kingborough, just south of Hobart). It was in this locality that Heustis witnessed his first flogging. (9)

At Browns River, Heustis had to assist in building by cutting logs in the bush and transporting them upon their shoulders to the site. Marsh described the conveniences for flogging "at this Station, were in a high state of perfection. A portion of the time, these floggings took place as often as five mornings in a week and the number of culprits thus doomed to ignominious punishment, varied from one to ten."

Unwilling to live with ordinary convicts, Heustis' unit received permission to build themselves a separate hut to live in. This request was granted. However, within a few days after completion, their quarters were taken over by the soldiers.

Stealing was another major problem at Brown's River, besides absconding. Marsh said that it was impossible for the convicts to live without stealing. The convicts would frequently climb out of their huts through the chimney without being seen by the watchmen and then steal potatoes. If caught of course they would incur a heavy flogging plus three months hard punishment in irons

On the 16th February 1842, their two years probation expired and they were given a "ticket-of-leave". This allowed them relative freedom. They were not, however, allowed to wander from an allotted district.

This pleasing news was dampened when they realised they were completely destitute. On approaching William Gunn, the General Superintendent of Convicts,

Heustis was informed that it was not the government's concern. Consequently Heustis and his companions headed towards Launceston, camping on the way. Near Oatlands, a large landowner, R. Kermode, who owned the property, Mona Vale, employed them with another 28 rebels who were engaged there.

Kermode treated them reasonably well. He supplied them with clothing, beds and provisions at agreed prices for which he would be paid in grain at the market price. After the harvest, they left. Heustis went to Campbell Town where he was then employed in making winnowing machines. He also turned his attention in making shingles. During the course of this employment he was robbed of his meagre possessions by bushrangers.

Heustis then teamed up with fellow American, Elon Fellows. They gained employment on a property on the South Esk River owned by a Mr Benton.

Towards the end of February, the wale-ship *William Hamiton* of New Bedford, sailed into Hobart. On board was Charles P. Heustis, brother to Daniel.

The brothers met at Campbell Town, all the time being watched by the suspicious police, fearing an escape attempt by Daniel. Charles, after visiting his brother, left and returned to the U.S.

On two occasions, Heustis was called upon to assist in capturing bushrangers who were plundering the Campbell Town district. The bushrangers in the first instance were Jeffs and Conway. They were captured by two of the rebels, Aaron Dresser and Stephen Wright, who besides receiving a substantial reward also received their freedom.

The second instance, the bushrangers involved was Martin Cash and his companions, Kavanah and Jones.

In 1843, Sir John Franklin handed the reigns of power to his successor, Sir John E. Eardley Wilmot.

It was while Sir John Eardley Wilmot was attending a cattle show at Campbell Town that Mr Kermode of Mona Vale promised to speak to the Lt-Governor on Heustis's behalf.

Wilmot favoured strongly Kermode's pleas for a pardon. Consequently a petition was drawn up and signed by leading citizens on behalf of the Canadian/American exiles.

Another Midlands land owner, Robert Taylor of "Valleyfield" spoke on behalf of another exile, that of Chauncey Bugy (sic), whose real name was Bugbee. He married a local girl (convict) by the name of Eliza Hughes and their descendants still live on the island today.

Heustis, however, was impatient to begone and not waiting for the result of the petition, laid plans for an escape.

Twenty men with the same intention, assembled at Stoney Boat Harbour on the east coast to be taken off on an American whaler that Heustis and his companion, James Pierce, had arranged.

Their plans were destroyed when a government armed vessel appeared together with the whaler. Nothing happened for several days, with the intending absconders waiting on the beach with the whaler sadly sailing around, closely watched by the government vessel.

In the end, some constables visited the 20 men and took them to Swanport, where they were charged in attempting to escape.

Little came of it, however, and Heustis was sent back to Campbell Town and took a job of fencing. He continued for some time in this occupation, except for a twelve week break, when he was again called upon to look for bushrangers.

On the 20th October 1844, he received news that he had been pardoned by the Queen. On the 1st Jan 1845, he left Campbell Town to go to Hobart Town.

Heustis wrote: "My inmost soul danced with joy and but for the sad reflection that so many of my brave comrades still pined in the land of slavery, I should have been supremely happy."

Heustis boarded the ship, *Steiglitz* of 390 tons and said farewell to VDL. He wrote: "Mount Wellington alone was seen towering above the ocean. I gazed upon this last landmark of misery's abode until it was lost in the darkness of night. Adieu, detested land of unmitigated wretchedness!" Heustis's comrade, Robert Marsh wrote, "the appalling history of unmitigated suffering, on that detestable prison island." They left behind a corrupt, inefficient, cruel system, which tolerated the victimization of the weaker by officials. This was accurately described by James Syme in his *Nine Years in Van Diemen's Land*, in which he stated, "the lash was too frequently deemed requisite by the magistrates to keep the gang under any tolerable subjection, but it did not deter those restless and turbulent spirits from fresh outrages and insubordination, and such frequently occurred."

Samuel Snow wrote: "We had seen misery in all of its varied forms; we had seen how prone man is to tyrannise over his brother, when clothed with 'brief authority', and we had learned to cherish the institutions of our own beloved country, our native land. We had thought of the moral influence exerted upon the minds of children of the free population by being associated with, and surrounded by so many of the most vicious human beings the world ever saw; we had in countless instances seen TOTAL DEPRAVITY PERSONIFIED."

Daniel Heustis eventually returned to the USA where he travelled extensively.

Linus Miller left in September 1845 lamenting the fact he was leaving many of his comrades behind him.

All remaining prisoners were eventually pardoned. Some of the exiles, such as Calvin Matthews petitioned the Governor through the agency of the American Consul in Tasmania, Elisha Hathaway. Hathaway was born in Boston, Massachusetts and left in February 1854 after given a farewell dinner on 3rd Feb held in the Legislative Council Chamber with sixty guests, presided over by Sir Richard Dry. (10)

William Gates once free together with comrade Riley Whitney, walked to Hobart where they took a small schooner which in turn took them to Melbourne. Gates and Whitney took up shearing 150 miles inland from Melbourne and once the shearing season was finished, shepherding. With money saved, they returned to Melbourne, found a vessel that took them to Sydney and from there back to America to New Bedford on the whaler, *Kingston*.

Fellow rebel, John B. Tyrell returned to Upper Canada and became a cheesemaker. Twenty six of them returned to America on the whaler *Steiglitz* which took them to Hawaii and from there they found their own way back to the mainland of the USA.

Over eighteen months most of the others made it to America and Canada. A number had difficulties in returning and were still in VDL well into 1845.

Only a few chose to remain, one was Jacob Beemer, (vessel, *Canton*) who started a family in Tasmania's lower central tableland. He was great great grandfather of Hazel Hawke, wife of ex Australian Prime Minister Bob Hawke. Beemer was not a

genuine 'rebel'. Indeed, he hoped to use the movement to his own devious ends, in other words to obtain 'loot' in the form of a reward, he being an informant. His plan backfired, however, when he was convicted and transported with the others. Beemer spent his entire time in VDL in fear of his own life. There is little wonder he chose to remain in Tasmania rather than to return to North America.

Two others were Chauncy Bugbey who married Sarah Hughes, a convict, in St Andrews, Campbell Town and Robert Collins, who married Catherine Gaffrey. Both arrived on the vessel, *Buffalo*. John Dean, who was actually sentenced for murder, and who arrived on The *Buffalo*, died at Impression Bay, Tasman Peninsular in 1885.

END

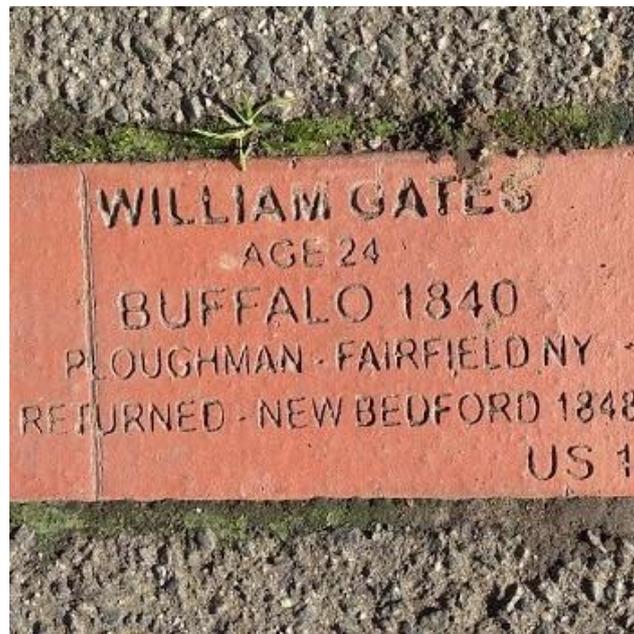
FOOTNOTE: There were two memorials to the affair in Hobart, both at sites unrelated to the exiles. The first, located near the terminal at Sandy Bay Beach was unveiled in September 30, 1970, by the Hon. Douglas Harkney, Canada's former Minister for Defence. There is no mention of Americans being involved on the inscription. This was removed by the Hobart City Council for a number of years, then it was re-located on the 16th February 2015 with the same wording, to a new site in Sandy Bay closer geographically to where the exiles were put to work. It was unveiled by the assistant High Commissioner of Canada and the Lord Mayor Hobart, Sue Hickey.

The second Memorial, unveiled December 12, 1995 is located at Princess Park, Battery Point. During the unveiling a Canadian French song of what appeared to be of suffering was sung, despite the fact the memorial deals with the Upper Canadian exiles and not the Lower Canadian rebellion.

Both mention 92 exiles, but we have seen that there were actually 93, but one died, Asa Priest, on the way out. We have also learnt that a number of these were sent for desertion and civil offences and should not be classed as political exiles.

We must view the situation in the times of the day. It was an uprising by mainly foreigners and they were subjected to the laws of the land they invaded. The Americans did not consider themselves exiles, but rather illegal transportees.

In Campbell Town, in the midlands of Tasmania, there is an array of paved bricks situated along Main Street. A number of them contain the names of the exiles and the ship that they came on. See pics below.



February 2019.

* excellent source for full material on James Gemmell is a work by Stuart Scott Ph.D. (2007) Inquiries: stupat@worldnet.att.net

APPENDIX

1. Papineau, fled to the United States after the unsuccessful uprising. He lived in Paris, but returned to Canada in 1845 after an amnesty was granted. He died in Quebec in 1871.
2. If it was not for the violent actions of his opponents, McKenzie's future rebellion may not have occurred. A pack of young loyalists broke into his office and destroyed the presses. As a consequence, MacKenzie was awarded 3,000 pounds in damages.
3. P. 328 of Head's narrative. See sources.
4. Indeed the United States authorities did much to suppress them, out of necessity. McKenzie was imprisoned for his part in instigating the raids.

5. In his narrative. See sources.
6. Kathleen Fitzpatrick. Her "Sir John Franklin in Tasmania." (1837-1843. P. 15.
7. As described by early historian John West. P.174 of his book.
8. P. 72-73 of Marsh's narrative. See sources.
9. P. 114 of his narrative.
10. Hobarton Guardian 8th Feb 1854. P.3 C. 6.

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Interesting reading:

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For list of other publications
check website:
www.regwatson.com