A Dissertation

entitled

"To Excite the Feelings of Noble Patriots:" Emotion, Public Gatherings, and Mackenzie's American Rebellion, 1837-1842

by

Joshua M. Steedman

Submitted to the Graduate Faculty as partial fulfillment of the requirements for the

Doctor of Philosophy History

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Dr. Ami Pflugrad-Jackisch, Committee Chair

_____
Dr. Kim Nielsen, Committee Member

_____
Dr. Roberto Padilla II, Committee Member

_____
Dr. Rebecca Mancuso, Committee Member

_____
Dr. Cyndee Gruden, Dean
College of Graduate Studies

The University of Toledo

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An Abstract of

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This dissertation is a cultural history of the American reaction to the Upper Canadian Rebellion and the Patriot War. This project is based on an analysis of newspaper articles published by William Lyon Mackenzie and his contemporaries, diplomatic cables between Washington D.C. and London, letters, and accounts of celebrations, toasts, and public meetings which occurred between 1837 and 1842. I argue Americans and Upper Canadians in the Great Lakes region made up a culture area. By re-engaging in a battle with the British, Upper Canadians, and their American supporters sought redemption. Reacting to geographic isolation from major metropolitan areas and a looming psychic crisis motivated many of these individuals to act. And, even though the rebellion and Patriot War were ultimately unsuccessful, the threat of a rekindled conflict with Britain crept into North America while thoughts of the revolutionary Spirit of '76 invigorated the masses and served as a litmus test for maintaining peaceful international relations between the U.S. and Britain, a preface to Manifest Destiny, and a testament to the power of the nineteenth-century culture industry.

To my wife, Katie, and my Grandpa “Papa” Arnie. Katie, your love and support through nearly 10-years of school means the world to me. I love you and you are the best thing about me. Papa Arnie, thank you for introducing me to history at such a young age. Both of you made this possible and I am forever grateful. Thank you!

Acknowledgements

This must be so-called “light at the end of the tunnel” I have heard so much about. However, as a good academic (and a wee-bit of a pessimist), I know it is just another train speeding toward me. Joking aside – I want to briefly acknowledge a few people who helped me through this process, all of whom I am forever grateful.

First and foremost, I could not have done this without my advisor, Dr. Ami Pflugrad-Jackisch. Our conversations, your encouragement, and willingness to let me explore different historical frameworks allowed me to grow as an intellectual and mature as an academic. Working with Dr. Roberto Padilla over the past 5-years strengthened my writing skills and led to new interests in East Asian history and popular culture. I can never repay you, Dr. Padilla, for your conversations, well-wishes, countless meals, and your uncanny ability to “Yoda” me!

The now Dr. Steve Bare, my brother-in-arms, we did it! We conquered the PhD! I enjoyed my time in the upper catacombs of University Hall and adventures in Ann Arbor, Michigan with my officemate Lei Wang. You are a great friend and the older brother I wish I had. Sean Kirkwood, perhaps my closest friend, if it was not for you, I would not have been introduced to the work of Slavoj Zizek. Oh, and as per many of our conversations, all great scholarship somehow mentions Walter Benjamin. Well, I’m joining the club. Here goes nothing: “Walter Benjamin!”

Finally, in 2015, I lost my mother, Julie Steedman, to sarcoidosis. We had differing opinions on my academic career, but I made it here because of you. I wanted to attend UT because of you. I know you watched over me; and, I thank God you did so. I love you, mom, I miss you dearly. I wish you could read this. I know you are proud.

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Chapter One

Introduction

In the blustery winter months of late 1837 and early 1838, Louise Sizer, a young woman from Buffalo, New York commented on a number of topics ranging from boys, to the weather, to school in her journal. However, amidst Sizer's inner-most thoughts, and musings about her day-to-day life, which included arriving to school "20 moments before the bell rang" and waltzing with the dashing Major Lewinski, Sizer, a rebellious soul, remarked on an ongoing struggle for freedom in Upper Canada. Sizer believed the British presence in the region seemed warlike. And, after the Upper Canadian Patriots lost their foothold on Navy Island, Sizer said to her brother in his office: "I am glad of it… and I hope they will get into Canada." [1]

Maybe it is because I have a younger sister, but leafing through Sizer's diary in the reading room of the Buffalo History Museum's archive seemed invasive. Diaries, according to historian Jane Hunter, were neutral spaces where young women "charted a middle way between the fiery rebel and the good daughter… [they were] surrogate battlefields upon which girls struggled to blend family with personal impulse."[2] Although an excellent source of first-hand information on life in Buffalo during the 1830s, reading Sizer's diary felt as if I was at the center of a 1980s sitcom plot. At any moment, Sizer or (more likely) my own sister, would bust in to the archive, catch me in

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[1] Louise E. Sizer, Journal Belonging to Louise E. Sizer, Buffalo, New York, 1837-1858, Buffalo History Museum, Buffalo New York, A81-11.

[2] Jane H. Hunter, *How Young Ladies Became Girls: The Victorian Origins of American Girlhood* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2002), 47.

the act, and I would reflect on the experience with an omnipotent narrator a la Fred Savage's Kevin Arnold from *The Wonder Years*.

From the late 1830s to the early 1840s, the Upper Canadian Rebellion (December 1837) and the Patriot War (1838-1840s) were at the center of American culture. In fact, in the United States, the excitement that surrounded the rebellion made the Rebellion and Patriot War a form of popular culture. According to the cultural theorist Stuart Hall, popular culture is a "site where 'collective social understandings are created;' a terrain on which the 'politics of signification' are played out in attempts to in people to particular ways of seeing the world."[3] Supporters of the rebellion used a variety of means (newspapers, pamphlets, rallies, and toasts) to keep the memory of the rebels who lost their lives and the Patriot War alive in minds of American citizens.

This project is a cultural history of the American reaction to the Upper Canadian Rebellion and the Patriot War. This dissertation is based on an analysis of articles published by William Lyon Mackenzie (1795-1861) and his contemporaries, diplomatic cables between Washington D.C. and London, letters, and accounts of celebrations, toasts, and public meetings that occurred between 1837 and 1842. Through a close reading of these documents, I argue Americans and Upper Canadians in the Great Lakes region made up a culture area. Reengaging in a battle with the British, Upper Canadians, flanked by their American supporters, sought redemption from tyranny through war. Reacting to geographic isolation and a psychic crisis motivated these individuals to act potentially risking everything. And, even though the rebellion and Patriot War were

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[3] Stuart Hall's definition of popular culture is quoted in John Storey's *Cultural Theory and Popular Culture: An Introduction* (Athens: The University of Georgia Press, 2006), 3.

ultimately unsuccessful, the threat of a rekindled conflict with Britain crept into North America while thoughts of the revolutionary Spirit of '76 invigorated the masses and served as a litmus test for maintaining peaceful international relations between the U.S. and Great Britain in the nineteenth century.

What was the Patriot War?

Before continuing, a synopsis of the Upper Canadian Rebellion and the Patriot War will familiarize American readers who may know very little about the two conflicts. The Treaty of Paris (1783) formally ended hostilities between the United States and Great Britain. With the success of the American Revolution and the ratification of the Treaty of Paris, thirteen of Britain's North American colonies ceased to exist. As a result of this loss of British land, a refugee crisis occurred within Britain's North American domain. Nearly 50,000 United Empire Loyalists and British soldiers were forced out of the United States and many fled to British-held Canada.[4] These refugees settled in what the then Province of Quebec. As a response to this influx of new immigrants, and in order to appease the province's growing bi-lingual, bi-national population, on December 26, 1791 the Crown passed the Constitutional Act. This act of parliament formally partitioned the large Province of Quebec in two smaller, more manageable provinces, Upper Canada (present day Ontario) and Lower Canada (present day Quebec).

With the Constitutional Act in place, Anglophone Canadians flocked to Upper Canada. Upper Canada transplanted and emulated many British institutions within the province. In 1795, the province's capital relocated to York (Toronto) and a group of

[4] United Empire Loyalists were a group of English speaking British subjects who fled the Thirteen American Colonies during or after the American Revolution.

wealthy elites known as the Family Compact governed the province. American influence crept into Upper Canada. Americans living in the Midwestern United States as well as lands directly bordering Canada interacted with Upper Canadians on a regular basis. These interactions between Americans and Upper Canadians were cultural, economic, and ideological. Some of these interactions, however, were not necessarily beneficial for Upper Canadians.

The United States and Upper Canada were intertwined in the antebellum period of U.S. history. Culturally, Americans and Upper Canadians read many of the same newspapers and periodicals. In cities like Detroit, Michigan and Buffalo, New York, Upper Canadian newspapers and American papers circulated between readers in both nations. Ideologically, many British officials and Upper Canadian elites believed that an American style republic was on the horizon. The Family Compact, the ruling oligarchy in Upper Canada, neglected Upper Canadians politically by not allowing "responsible government" in the province.[5] The colonists had a representative body with little legislative power; however, all major decisions were made by colonial governors and officials in London. For the Upper Canadians –who rebelled in 1837 – these factors, among others, provided an impetus for change.

In late December 1837 rebels led by William Lyon Mackenzie, a Scottish born immigrant to Upper Canada, a newspaperman, and politician, launched an attack on York (present day Toronto). Prior to the attack, Mackenzie published many tracts in his newspapers and periodicals which alleged the Family Compact's corruption. Many of these accounts, particularly on the eve of the rebellion, evoked the memory of the

[5] Responsible government refers to a representative government that is beholden to the people it governs.

American Revolution. Purposefully evoking the fiery Spirit of '76, Mackenzie republished literature in his newspapers, such as Thomas Paine's *Common Sense*, which supported independence from Great Britain during the American Revolution. Mackenzie, among others, attempted to legitimize the Upper Canada Rebellion by linking it to the American Revolution and other successful nineteenth century revolutions throughout the Atlantic World. Mackenzie's attack on York was ultimately unsuccessful. As a result, the Patriot War, an undeclared war pitted a tacit British, Canadian loyalist, and American alliance against a cadre of Americans and Upper Canadians united in the cause of ending British thralldom in North America.

Americans living in the U.S.-Upper Canada borderlands flocked to the aid of their Canadian brethren. These events took place in the midst of the Jacksonian Era. Mackenzie was said to be quite fond of Andrew Jackson. The Jacksonian mindset appealed to the common man. It also is characterized by an overt hostility to some hierarchies (i.e., the aristocracies of the East Coast) and a disdain for the British. The contempt for the British fueled aggression against the British throughout the 1830s and the early 1840s. As these conflicts occurred in Upper Canada, the Panic of 1837 engulfed the U.S. economy. Further, the so-called Market Revolution – or perhaps more accurately, the nation's transition to capitalism - transformed all aspects of American society. These changes moved the United States from a mostly rural agrarian nation to a burgeoning industrial society. These innovations reached the frontier during the late 1830s and early 1840s linking industrializing metropoles to the rural hinterland. Some effected by hardships associated with the economic downturn throughout the 1830s turned to Mackenzie's rebellion as a source of hope. If successful, Mackenzie promised

the rebels would be rewarded with land, an income, and, perhaps, a fresh start in a new Canadian republic mirroring the United States.

Americans supported the Canadian rebellion by forming civic organizations. Aside from various localized mutual relief societies, the Hunters' Lodges, a secret, quasi-masonic organization formed and furnished the rebels with supplies to combat the British and American forces guarding the frontier. Throughout the late 1830s and into the 1840s the Hunters and rebels undermined U.S. efforts to maintain a peaceful diplomatic relationship with the British. Tensions between the two sides reached a near a boiling point after Canadian loyalists burned a rebel ship in U.S. territory known as the *Caroline*. Loyalists burned the steamship *Caroline* on December 29, 1837 and sent it over Niagara Falls. The rallying cry "Remember the *Caroline!*" became a reminder of American, British, and Canadian Loyalist efforts to squash the revolutionary Spirit of 76.

The *Caroline* Affair led to then President Martin Van Buren to proclaim American neutrality in any conflict occurring in Upper Canada. Van Buren as well as senior military officials, including General Winfield Scott, ordered enforcement of this presidential decree, which urged Americans, especially those living on the borderlands, to avoid all hostilities. Moreover, this proclamation stated the United States was at peacetime; Americans were not permitted to furnish Canadian rebels with weapons, money, or other supplies which would further hostilities. Van Buren deployed General Scott and his forces to defend the Canadian frontier from a potential rebel invasion, stop American supporters from providing Upper Canadians aid, and to keep British and Canadian forces out of the United States. Van Buren also stressed that sheriffs and

attorney generals in the regions bordering Upper Canada were to arrest individuals who violated American neutrality laws.

Mackenzie's arrest elevated him to a martyr for Canadian liberty. The Upper Canadians and Americans who supported the rebels eulogized Mackenzie. The arrest was highly publicized by Mackenzie in his newspapers and almanacs. The then governor of New York, William Seward (1801-1872) received numerous letters and petitions urging him to release Mackenzie. While in office, Seward also dealt with the international, diplomatic, and legal turbulence associated with the arrest of Alexander McLeod (1796-1871). Allegedly, McLeod helped sink the *Caroline*. He was arrested in the United States charged with violating American neutrality laws. After a theatrical display of international diplomacy, the U.S. freed McLeod. In 1840, in a state of declining health, Mackenzie was released from prison. Following his release from prison, Mackenzie worked a number of newspaper jobs. In one notable case, Mackenzie's friend, Horace Greeley (1811-1872), employed him as a correspondent to cover the New York State Constitutional Convention. At this time, Mackenzie also edited a number of almanacs and periodicals. Mackenzie became an American citizen in 1843 and returned to Canada near the end of his life.

By 1841, the Patriot War was over. The rebels' hope for an American-modeled republic in Canada was temporarily quelled. In the United States, John Tyler's September 5, 1841 presidential proclamation forced the Hunters Lodges and mutual aid societies supporting the rebels to disband. This executive action ended the Patriot War. In 1840, the Crown granted responsible government to both Canadas. The Act of Union abolished the legislatures and provinces of Upper and Lower Canada in favor of new governments

as well as the unified Province of Canada with Canada East (Quebec) and Canada West (Ontario). Numerous Americans captured by the British and Canadian forces in Canada during the Upper Canada Rebellion and Patriot War were exiled to Van Diemen's Land (Tasmania). The exiles were eventually pardoned by the Crown and all Americans living in the British penal colony returned to the United States. Following the Upper Canada Rebellion and Patriot War, the American people remained interested in Canadian affairs. Small-scale "invasions" and talks of annexation occurred throughout the latter decades of the nineteenth and into early twentieth centuries.[6] The Patriot War, however, remains relatively obscure in early American history.

Frameworks

This project is organized around three major ideas: the U.S. and Upper Canada are a culture area; Americans and Upper Canadians, especially those in the Great Lakes region of North America were subjected to geographic isolation and anxieties associated with the transition to capitalism; psychic crisis and fantasy.

The U.S. and Upper Canada: A Culture Area

In the 1830s, the United States and Upper Canada (much of the present day Canadian province of Ontario) were by no means strange bedfellows. In fact, U.S. citizens and subjects of the Crown in Upper Canada had a great deal in common. The individuals with the most in common lived in border states and cities around the Great Lakes. The two peoples made up a "culture area." Political scientist John Dumbrell writes that the U.S., Britain, and Canada is a culture area. According to Dumbrell, a culture area "is a term used by anthropologists to designate transnational communities which exhibit

[6] There are a number of instances where Americans attempted to invade Canada. Some of these invasions include the Fenian Raids (1866-1871) and the Oka Crisis of the 1990s.

common characteristics, most commonly language, values, and social behavior." Dumbrell continues, "Holders of power are seen as constructing myths, identities – even "culture areas" – in order to preserve authority and identify enemies."[7]

One mode in which power is maintained in these large areas is through simultaneity. According to the cultural anthropologist Benedict Anderson in his seminal (and oft-cited) *Imagined Communities*, simultaneity is the idea that an event happening in one area has the ability to effect multiple individuals across a given geographic space. These individuals often experience a shared experience through "homogeneous, empty time" which is most easily defined in print media such as newspapers, pamphlets, and books.[8]

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[7] John Dumbrell, "Sentiment and the US-UK Relationship, 1960-1990," *"The Special Relationship/" La<< Relation special>> entre le Royaume-Uni et les Etats-Unis*" Edited by Antoine Capet and Aissatou Sy-Wonyu (Mont-Saint-Aignan, France: The University of Rouen, 2003), 127-128.

[8] I am not using Anderson in the way most scholarship utilizes his work. In lieu of his "imagined communities" concept which helps explain the development of the nation state, I utilize the idea of simultaneity which is hand-in-hand with the development of "flash press" or the "penny press" of the 19th century. Newspapers help spread the ideas which sparked the Upper Canadian Rebellion. For more, see: Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities*: *Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism* (New York: Verso, 1989), 25-27.

Figure 1: The U.S., Canadas, and the Great Lakes Region, ca. 1812[9] (Courtesy: Wikimedia Commons)

The U.S. and Upper Canada shared a number of characteristics outlined by Dumbrell. The most obvious similarity was that Americans and Upper Canadians shared the English language. Their common Anglo heritage and use of the English language "did not differentiate them from their respective imperial metropoles."[10] What made them different was that both the U.S. and Upper Canada were established post-1787 and made both entities products of the American Revolution/War of Independence. The geographic proximity between the U.S. and Upper Canada allowed Americans and Upper Canadians to frequently interact with one another rather than with individuals from the motherland.

Although divided by arbitrary geographic borders, and as subjects of the Crown, many Upper Canadian colonists admired certain "Yankees" in the United States. For

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[9] The title of this map was edited from "Northern theatre of the War of 1812" to what is found above. For more, see "Anglo-American War of 1812" Wikimedia Commons, accessed May 24, 2019, https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Anglo_American_War_1812_Locations_map-en.svg.

[10] Anderson, *Imagined Communities,* 49.

Upper Canada, New York State was its closest English-speaking neighbor and one individual Upper Canadians respected was New York Governor Dewitt Clinton (1769-1828).[11] Upper Canadians revered Clinton for a myriad of reasons such as he did not support wartime embargos during the War of 1812, and, in the eyes of many Upper Canadians, he was not overtly radical, like other American politicians. He embodied "the best qualities of a good politician, diplomat, and businessman." Despite Clinton's support of Thomas Jefferson (1743-1826), he was pragmatic, loyal, and had a strong work ethnic; which was ingrained in the Protestant faith.[12]

In the nineteenth century, Protestantism was a major faith in the U.S. and Upper Canada and shaped everyday life.[13] In 1826, a contributor to the *Kingston Gazette* commented that the American work ethic was worthy of praise. Americans were hard workers, had "a good sense… [of] industry." Americans persevered in times where there was no hope. "The true Yankee is never discouraged, for he [possessed] the faculty of alleviating present uneasiness by looking to the future."[14] This future may have been salvation either in wealth of in the eyes of God. Or, perhaps more likely a way in which work as Stephen Kalberg and Max Weber suggests, "becomes meaningful by analyzing

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[11] Elizabeth Jane Errington, *The Lion, the Eagle, and Upper Canada: A Developing Colonial Ideology* (Montreal & Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1987), 124.

[12] Ibid., 124-125. Evan Cornog, *The Birth of Empire: DeWitt Clinton and the American Experience, 1769-1828* (Oxford & New York: Oxford University Press, 1998), 5-6.

[13] By Protestantism, I am referring to religious institutions not associated with the Roman Catholic Church or the Eastern Orthodox Church. Mark A. Noll, *A History of Christianity in the United States and Canada* (Grand Rapids, MI: Williamm. B. Erdmans' Publishing Company,1992), 130. Robert Choquette, *Canada's Religions: An Historical Introduction* (Ottawa: University of Ottawa Press, 2004), 164. Robert P. Swierenga, "Religion and American Voting Behavior, 1830s to 1930s," in *The Oxford Handbook of Religion and American Politics* eds. Corwin Smidt, Lyman A. Kellstedt, and James L. Guth (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009), 80-82.

[14] Errington, *The Lion, the Eagle, and Upper Canada*, 124.

the beliefs, and the psychological rewards they imply for specific conduct, of an ideal type – or an unusually representative figure" to model oneself such as the theologian Richard Baxter (1615-1691), Governor Dewitt Clinton, or even American statesman, Benjamin Franklin (1706-1790).[15]

However, aside from a shared Anglo heritage and links to Protestantism, what linked the U.S. and Upper Canada perhaps more closely was the effects of the changing economy in the 1820s and 1830s. Historian Janet Larkin writes that the U.S.-Upper Canadian border did not get in the way of American and Upper Canadian economic interests. Upper Canadian officials loyal to the Crown, such as John Graves Simcoe (1760-1806), the first Lieutenant Governor of Upper Canada, "welcomed the large influx of American emigrants." Robert Hamilton (1753-1809), a wealthy Great Lakes merchant, believed that Americans were better suited to settle in Upper Canada than Europeans; Americans, Hamilton opined, "adapted to local conditions more rapidly than Europeans and made better farmers." Hamilton emphasized the "ties of British subjects and Americans rather than their differences."[16]

After the War of 1812, the ties that bound Americans and Upper Canadians together were slowly becoming undone. Despite continued mutual economic interest in the Great Lakes region of North America, two founding myths emerged which Americans and Upper Canadians utilized to instill a sense of unity and cultivate a sense of patriotism. Both myths were centered around the American Revolution and War of

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[15] Stephen Kalberg, "Introduction" to Max Weber, *The Protestant Ethic & The Spirit of Capitalism* (New York: Routledge, 2012), xlix.

[16] Janet Larkin, *Overcoming Niagara: Canals, Commerce, and Tourism in the Niagara-Great Lakes Borderland Region, 1792-1837* (Albany: State University of New York Press, Albany, 2018), 14-15.

1812. The American-side of these myths were centered around the American Revolution. These myths are so ingrained in the American psyche, the "mere frequency of repetition appears to confirm their authenticity."[17] While across the northern border, what historians deem the "militia myth" in Canada boasted the accomplishments of British-led Upper Canadians soldiers defeating American invaders.[18] The "rejection of republicanism" following the American Revolution and the American Civil War paid dividends. Canada "resolved the Blackstonean sovereignty paradox… and became the brightest jewels of the empire-commonwealth"[19]

The U.S.-Upper Canadian culture area defined national identity, preserved authority, and defined enemies. This structure laid the groundwork for individuals such as William Lyon Mackenzie to capitalize off of the distant past where Americans and Upper Canadians mutually benefitted from one another. The culture area defined by the U.S. and Upper Canada was a preexisting condition that was ready to be exploited. By 1837, the outbreak of a rebellion in Upper Canada was eminent as a virulent strain of rebellion plagued the Atlantic World. Upper Canada was no exception to this rule.

The Antebellum Psychic Crisis and Fantasy

Finally, the concept of a "psychic crisis" plays a major role in this project. Originally, the historian Richard Hofstadter used the term to reference the U.S.'s imperial surge in 1890s. According to Hofstadter, the psychic crisis of the 1890s was a result of a

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[17] Ray Raphael, *Founding Myths: Stories That Hide Our Patriotic Past* (New York: The New Press, 2014), 4.

[18] Errington, *Lion, the Eagle, and Upper Canada*, xxii.

[19] D.G. Bell, "Sedition Among the Loyalists: The Case of Saint John, 1784-6" in *Canadian State Trials Volume I: Law, Politics, and Security Measures, 1608-1837*, edited by F. Murray Greenwood and Barry Wright (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1996), 223.

decade of "aggressive irrationality" which led to a generation of men acting out their frustrations. An outlet –in the form of a war against an enemy other (the crumbling Spanish Empire) –remedied this irrationality. War, historian Walter Hixson writes, created "a short term cathartic relief from psychic crisis." The U.S. has always been a violent nation plagued with a litany of internal anxieties. A psychic crisis is by no means exclusive to the 1890s or any time period in U.S. history and the term is mentioned from time-to-time during periods of economic uncertainty, social and political turbulence, and times of war.[20]

In the 1830s and the early 1840s the U.S. endured a psychic crisis much like that of the 1890s. A decade of widespread change, a dying revolutionary generation, and a lack of major national conflicts – such as the American Revolution or the War of 1812 – led many white men in the U.S. to seek an outlet for their aggression and anxieties. Many of these men's fathers and grandfathers served in prior generation-defining conflicts. These men who served in the Revolution and the War of 1812 vanquished colonial rule and defended the young nation. To these men of Jacksonian ilk, the nation's oldest enemy, the British, a perfect target, tyrannically ruled their English speaking brothers and sisters in Upper Canada. This was enough for these individuals, through their maudlin filibustering escapades, to attempt an overthrow of British rule in Upper Canada and export the very distinct brand of American republicanism of the 1830s with all of its imperfections from the United States north to Upper Canada.

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[20] Walter L. Hixson, *The Myth of American Diplomacy: National Identity and U.S. Foreign Policy* (New Haven & London: Yale University Press, 2008), 15.

Finally, the concept of fantasy originates in psychology. Fantasy is essentially a desire to know what the world is like when one is not in it – either prior to conception or after one's death. The philosopher and cultural critic Slavoj Žižek provides a rather concrete literary example using Mark Twain's classic novel *The Adventures of Tom Sawyer* (1876). In *The Adventures of Tom Sawyer*, Sawyer and Huck Finn have the idea of being present at their own funerals. For Žižek, this is the definition of fantasy. However, for clarity's sake, a general, more concise definition of fantasy is, in short, the state, or gaze of, an individual who loses touch with reality.[21]

For Mackenzie and his supporters, the Upper Canadian Rebellion, Patriot War, and its fallout was a fantasy bungled from its inception. Poor planning and an inordinate amount of bad luck was the downfall for the Patriot cause. Moreover, contrary to Mackenzie's idealism, most Americans did not rise up as they did during the American Revolution. The Americans did not form a star-spangled brigade to thrash the British. In reality, a small number of North Americans engaged this phantasmal crusade veiled in republican imagery, a warped reading of the past, and in large part, a reaction to a decade of economic uncertainty.

Review of Literature

The Patriot War is all but gone from American historiography. In his article, "The Patriot War of 1837-1838: Locofocoism With a Gun?," historian Andrew Bonthius blazonly claimed there is "a nagging gap in the historiography of the US and US-Canada/British relations, having been exorcised from the historical lexicon so long ago."

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[21] Slavoj Žižek, *Event: A A Philosophical Journey Through a Concept* (Brooklyn, NY & London: Melville House, 2014), 23; Žižek, *Less Than Nothing: Hegel and the Shadow of Dialectal Materialism* (London and New York: Verso, 2012), 676.

Bonthius continues claiming, "many social historians, who would otherwise likely have addressed the subject are not simply unaware of its existence."[22] Although this may seem provocative or bordering on the sensational, Bonthius is absolutely right. There is indeed a gaping lacuna in contemporary historical scholarship on the Patriot War – especially in the United States.[23] The following literature review strengthens this claim, situates this project in the historiography of U.S.-Upper Canadian border conflicts, and emphasizes the "human element" of the conflict to paint a clearer portrait of the Patriot War and its aftermath.

Originally published in 1938, one of the first scholarly treatments of the Patriot War in the United States was Edwin C. Guillet's *The Lives and Times of the Patriots: An Account of the Rebellion in Upper Canada, 1837-1838 and of Patriot Agitation in the United States, 1837-1842* (reprinted 1963/1968). Guillet paid particular attention to the emotional aspects of the Upper Canadian Rebellion and Patriot War. He writes, "Never was a movement so characterized by jealousy and disunion. In many respects it was every leader for himself and the devil take the deluded followers." Chapter 18 of *The Lives and Times of the Patriots* "The United States and the Patriot War" is particularly important to this project. Guillet writes, "It was the complex nature of the American Patriot movement which caused its failure, for it was characterized throughout by divided leadership and petty jealousy." Guillet's work pointed out the obvious – it, however,

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[22] Bonthius, "The Patriot War of 1837-1838," 12.

[23] Due to the dearth of historical scholarship, I am using work from historians and authors from the U.S. and Canada. Some of these books may have been written for a popular audience.

lacks a stronger emotional lens. This project builds upon Guillet's project which was originally published nearly a century ago.[24]

Oscar Kinchen's monograph *The Rise and Fall of the Patriot Hunters* (1956) is an attempt, as Kinchen explains, "to offer a plain and unbiased account of a vast secret society known as the Hunters' Lodges or the Patriot Hunters." The Hunters were a popular movement in the United States and the Canadas. These men, Kinchen explains, were inspired by the successful revolt in Texas in 1836 and the heroics of the revolutionary generation. If these men had successfully taken the Canadas, they would have had their own place in history along side these revolutionary heroes. Although dated, *The Rise and Fall of the Patriot Hunters* is something to build off of. Kinchen accurately surmised that republicanism and the memory of the American Revolution was a motivating factor of the Upper Canadian Rebellion and Patriot War. Kinchen's work is akin to a political or diplomatic account, which is to be expected, as the book was written in the 1950s. This project accentuates the lack of cultural, social, (and in this dissertation) emotional, elements of the Patriot War found in Kinchen's work and build upon its historiographical legacy.[25]

In 1983, Roger Rosentrenter's doctoral dissertation, "To Free Upper Canada: Michigan and the Patriot War, 1837-1839" was the first comprehensive examination of the Patriot War in Michigan. "To Free Upper Canada" pays particular attention to how Americans "spread the cause of liberty" and how this crusade influenced politics "and

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[24] Edwin C. Guillet, *The Lives and Times of the Patriots: An Account of the Rebellion in Upper Canada, 1837-1837 and of the Patriot Agitation in the United States, 1837-1842* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1968), viii.

[25] Oscar A. Kinchen, *The Rise and Fall of the Patriot Hunters* (New York: Bookman Associates, 1956), 5.

differing lines of authority, which created dilemmas for American officials responding to the Patriots." In a similar manner to Rosentrenter's dissertation, this project sees Michigan as a vital part of the Patriot War. However, instead of a state-level analysis, I focus more on Detroit (especially in chapter four). Detroit was a cultural melting pot and by 1837, a hotbed of Patriot activity, powder-keg of tension ready to explode.[26]

"The Patriot War of 1837-1838: Locofocoism with a Gun?" (2003) is Andrew Bonthius's provocative article which essentially "calls out" American historians for ignoring the Patriot War in Jacksonian Era historical scholarship. Bonthius's article is focused primarily on Ohio and emphasizes the role of agriculture and the Locofocos, a radical, pro-banking wing of Andrew Jackson's Democratic Party, in the Patriot's Jacksonian Era filibustering expeditions. It also underlines the "commonalities of life" in the U.S. and Upper Canada which led to "radical 'reformers' to join hands in battle." While this project certainly makes a case to include this conflict in Jacksonian Era scholarship, this project diverges from Bonthius's article by focusing on cultural institutions – such as parades, celebrations, and newspapers – and emotion in Michigan and Upstate New York; while Bonthius is more concerned with the economy, class tension, and the "inextinguishable" – yet somehow obscure, Locofocos.[27]

Historian John Irvine Little wrote *Loyalties in Conflict: A Canadian Borderland in War and Rebellion, 1812-1840* (2008). Little's monograph utilizes a borderlands framework. Doing so, Little explains, "shifts the approach from the state to local communities." Scholars may then focus on commonalities found on both sides of the

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[26] Roger Rosentrenter, "To Free Upper Canada: Michigan and the Patriot War, 1837-1839," PhD Diss. Michigan State University, Department of History, (1983), 1-2.

[27] Bonthius, "Patriot War," 12.

border and how actors "defined or ignored state-imposed boundaries." Little argues the threat of the United States – especially in the form of Patriot-led border raids – led to a sense of localism, rather than nationalism in the 1830s. This shifted identities which were "gradually replaced by "broader identities" which included Canada in its various shapes and the British Empire. While this project does emphasize much of what Little argues, it does so without an overt borderlands framework. Instead, I maintain that ideas from psychoanalysis and the history of emotions explains much of the anxieties that fuelled the Upper Canadian Rebellion and the Patriot War.[28]

In 2012 and 2013, Shaun J. McLaughlin wrote two popular histories of the Patriot War: *The Patriot War Along the New York-Canada Border* (2012) and *The Patriot War Along the Michigan-Canada Border* (2013). McLaughlin's work does an acceptable job of detailing the conflict for a popular audience. The historical detective work McLaughlin engages in is largely biographical. McLaughlin writes, "The fact that bands of Canadian colonists in Upper and Lower Canada took up arms in the pursuit of responsible government is not surprising given the political realities of 1837. That a legion of Americans took up their causes with force and vigor is, on the surface, puzzling." McLaughlin's work needs further elucidation. It was actually quite puzzling that Upper Canadians took up arms against the British. And, it is not surprising (by any means), that some Americans, especially those of the Jacksonian ilk, engaged the British after the Rebellion of 1837 during the Patriot War.[29]

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[28] J.I. (John Irvine) Little, *Loyalties in Conflict: A Canadian Borderland in War and Rebellion, 1812-1840* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2008), 7-10.

[29] Shaun J. McLaughlin, *The Patriot War Along the Michigan-Canada Border: Raiders and Rebels* (Charleston and London: The History Press, 2013), 9.

In 2019, historian Ruth Dunley published her biography on Judge Abram D. (A.D.) Smith (1811-1865), *The Lost President: A.D. Smith and the Hidden History of Radical Democracy in Civil War America*. A.D. Smith was, at one time, a member of the Hunters' Lodges and following a meeting of the Hunters in Cleveland, Ohio, elected President of the Republic of Canada. Smith, as Dunley explains, fought for truth or for what he deemed "truth." Smith "behaved like a knight-errant for republicanism and justice, battling the most fearsome foes of an American Yankee" which included monopolies, banks, monarchies, and race-based slavery. Smith embodied the Jacksonian spirit. Dunley's biography on Smith is especially important as it is among the first chronicling the life of a prominent member of the Hunters' Lodges. This project does not mention Smith as he, and Cleveland, fall outside of the geographic parameters of this study. The individuals found in the chapters that follow are perhaps more radical than Smith bordering on the quixotic. [30]

Chapter Summaries

Chapter two, "Fear and Loathing in North America: Emotion and the Transformation of the United States and Upper Canada, 1770s-1830s," is an overview of the region embroiled in the fallout from the Patriot War. It establishes this region as a culture area. The chapter argues a number of emotions – especially anxiety – led Americans to see Upper Canada as a land of opportunity. The chapter begins with a discussion of failed American excursions into the Canadas during the American Revolution. After the Revolution, Americans and Upper Canadians saw the Great Lakes

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[30] Ruth Dunley, *The Lost President: A.D. Smith and the Hidden History of Radical Democracy in Civil War America* (Athens: University of Georgia Press, 2019), 8.

as an area of mutual interest. However, the War of 1812 squashed this idealism. After the war, changes in the economy in the U.S. and Upper Canada led to uncertainty. As this wave of uncertainty swept in, many white American men questioned their place in the world. Many of whom bought into the egalitarian message of Andrew Jackson. This egalitarianism came to a screeching halt with the Panic of 1837. The economic panic effected more than just the U.S. The downturn in the British economy – which included Upper and Lower Canada – served as a conduit for change. In Upper Canada, reformists looked to the U.S. and the revolutionary generation as inspiration and challenged legitimacy of British authority in North America.

Chapter three, "The Reporter's Rebellion: William Lyon Mackenzie, the Memory of the American Revolution, and the Upper Canadian Rebellion," introduces readers to the Scottish born, Upper Canadian immigrant-turned-American newspaperman, William Lyon Mackenzie. This chapter situates Mackenzie's life in the context of antebellum American print and celebrity culture without divorcing these ideas from his life from his time in Upper Canada. Initially a grocer, Mackenzie is best known for his career as a newspaperman with political ambitions. He, however, was more successful as a newspaperman than a politician. After nearly a decade of failure, his political life reached its nadir and Mackenzie committed high treason. The so-called "firebrand" orchestrated the ill-fated December 1837 rebellion in York and later fled to the United States.

Chapter four, "The Joy of Rebellion: Mass Gatherings, Upstate New York, and the Upper Canada Question," examines the reaction to the Upper Canadian Rebellion and the beginnings of the so-called Patriot War in the Empire State. This chapter highlights Mackenzie taking refuge among supporters in Buffalo, the founding of the Republic of

Canada, mass gatherings and celebrations, and the *Caroline* affair. These events invigorated a segment of the population living along the U.S.-Upper Canadian border. However, the burning of an American steamer, the *Caroline* nearly drove the U.S. and Britain to the brink of war. American advocates of Canadian liberty condemned the actions of the Family Compact and the Crown in Upper Canada and formed a new government (in exile) on Navy Island in the Niagara River.

Chapter five, "Lurking Like Thieves in the Night: Patriots, Publishers, and Hunters Respond to the Upper Canadian Rebellion and Patriot War, 1837-1841," surveys the reaction to the Upper Canadian Rebellion and Patriot War in Michigan. This chapter begins with recalling a number of rumors, the Patriot excursions at a number of islands in the Detroit River and in Lake Erie, the Battle of Windsor, and the founding of the Hunters' Lodges. Due to Michigan's proximity to Upper Canada, the excitement in the nearby British colony peaked the interest of many Michiganders. The Upper Canadian rebels and their American supporters made a number of excursions into Upper Canada; however, were summarily and symbolically defeated at the Battle of Windsor. Aside from the threat of the Patriots, the U.S. and British governments dealt with the threat of the Hunters' Lodges – a secret society that continued agitating for Upper Canadian liberty after hostilities subsided in the west.

Chapter six, "Politics, Paranoia, and a Printer: The Upper Canadian Rebellion and Other Lingering Issues with the British into the 1840s" examines Mackenzie's life in the United States after he was found guilty by a New York State court of violating American neutrality laws. The events that follow are a downward spiral of sorts with minimal success for the former rebel. This chapter also considers the effects of the Aroostook War

(1838-1839) and the trial of Alexander McLeod (1796-1871) on U.S.-British foreign relations. American and British diplomats prevented war between the two nations. A relative degree of peace and stability along the border U.S. and the Canadas followed until Fenian Raids occurring shortly after the American Civil War.

Archival Research

I travelled throughout the United States and Canada to complete this project. In Michigan, a great deal of material was (to my surprise) located in the Burton Historical Collection of the Detroit Public Library (DPL). Research trips to the Motor City proved fruitful. Archived microfilm rolls of Detroit's nineteenth century newspapers – such as the *Free Press* – helped write and contextualize this project. Also, the Father James Whelan Collection at the DPL holds many invaluable letters to and from leaders of the Upper Canadian Rebellion and the Patriot cause. Travelling a bit southwest to the University of Michigan in Ann Arbor, the materials I located at the Bentley Historical Library (BHL) highlights the importance of the state of Michigan and Michigan history to this project. The BHL holds a number of local interest items. Perhaps the most important item I located at the BHL is a copy of the mysterious single-issue newspaper, *The Canadian*.

The archives at the Buffalo History Museum were filled with material related to the Upper Canadian Rebellion and the Patriot War. One such example is a letter from Thomas Love to members of the Townsend family which supports the Buffalo connection to William Lyon Mackenzie and Navy Island. Also, while at the archives, I accessed a number of newspapers from upstate New York. These newspapers were especially important as daily and weekly papers were the means by which information –

such as celebrations, public meetings, and news from Upper Canada – was published and transmitted to the masses.

In Toronto, Ontario, Canada at the Toronto Reference Library I found a number of documents all of which strengthened this project. The most important set of document I found were two almanacs William Lyon Mackenzie produced under the pseudonym Patrick Swift. The Patrick Swift almanacs are key examples of Mackenzie's writings that praise American institutions. The other key piece found in Toronto was a broadside with Hunters' Lodges' oaths of initiation. The Hunters' Lodges destroyed most of their documents. The mere existence of this ephemera provided this project with a great deal of information on a secret society that was nearly lost to time.

A Note on Terminologies

Geography: Throughout this project, I refer to the historical geography of Canada. Some of these terms, may seem unclear without proper elaboration – especially to American historians (among others) unfamiliar with Canadian geography. Today, Canada is a nation comprised of ten provinces and three territories. Although, throughout its history, Canada was not always a united Canada (or even Canada). After the Seven Years or French and Indian War (1756-1763), Britain and the American colonists defeated France and the French colonial empire in North America, New France, ceased to exist. This land was reorganized into the British-administrated Province of Quebec. In 1791, the Constitution Act divided the larger province into two colonies: Upper (present day Ontario) and Lower (present day Quebec) Canada. Later, in 1840, after the Upper Canadian Rebellion and Patriot War, the Act of Union created the United Province of Canada. Lower Canada became Canada East and Upper Canada became Canada West.

Confederation occurred in 1867 and other colonies joined the United Province of Canada to create the Dominion of Canada.[31]

Language: Throughout this project, I use the terms English terms "patriot" and "rebel" interchangeably to indicate the individuals who either (a) took arms against the Crown and Family Compact or (b) were American supporters of Upper Canadian liberty. Most of these individuals I referred to are either: Anglophone Canadians, U.S.-born Americans, and immigrants to North America. In Francophone Canada, where a similar rebellion occurred, the term "*patriotes"* referred to a separate group who agitated for reform with politicians such as Louis-Joseph Papineau (1786-1871) at the helm of the reform efforts. Moreover, the American and Upper Canadian Patriot War was separate conflict from the Lower Canadian *Guerre des Patriotes* (1837-1838). Although interconnected, these are two different conflicts that resulted in a united Canadian colony.

[31] This section was compiled after studying the Upper Canadian Rebellion and Patriot War for most of my time as a PhD student. This was also supplemented by a very helpful course (History of Canada) taught by Dr. Rebecca Mancuso while I was a graduate student at Bowling Green State University. For further elaboration, see: "Canada" in the *Encyclopedia Britannica* online at https://www.britannica.com/place/Canada.

Chapter Two

Fear and Loathing in North America: The Transformation of the United States and Upper Canada, 1770s-1830s

In the midst of war between the U.S. and England, on July 12, 1812 U.S. General William Hull (1753-1825) issued a proclamation to the inhabitants of the Canadas. Due to the lack of a formal U.S. policy on Britain's two Canadian colonies, Hull improvised. From his headquarters at Sandwich, Upper Canada, Hull's dispatch pandered to the emotions of Anglophone Canadians. In Hull's Proclamation, he dutifully assumed the role of a hero who would liberate the (seemingly) docile Upper Canadians from the British and vanquish all who stood in his way. Hull claimed he was in Upper Canada not looking to make enemies, instead, he was there to "find them." Hull and his troops sought to protect peaceful noncombatants, not to harm them. Aside from protecting the Upper Canadians from harm, Hull reminded the Anglophone Canadians they were an "immense ocean and an extensive wilderness from Great Britain." Like the United States, Upper Canadians had "no participation in [British] councils, no interests in her conduct. You have felt her tyranny, you have seen her injustice, but I do not ask you to avenge the one or redress the other." According to Hull, the United States was powerful enough on its own to expel the British from North America. Pushing the British out of Upper Canada would usher in a new era of liberty in Upper Canada. [32]

Historically, the United States has been unable to convince Canadians to join American causes (particularly during times of war). From Benjamin Franklin's (1706-1790) failed mission to Montreal (1776) to a number of unsuccessful American invasions

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[32] "General Hull's Proclamation" in Hugh S. Eayrs, *Sir Isaac Brock* (Toronto: The Macmillan Company of Canada, 1918), 103-105.

in the eighteenth and nineteenth century, the Canadian response to the United States – ranging from offers to join the Union to joining forces with the Americans to thwart the British - has been that of indifference or rejection. Resisting offers to join the U.S. and staving off American incursions into Canada was in large part a result of allegiance to their Canadian identity and British institutions or as "David Bell, a political scientist, has suggested… [an] attachment to place … and loyalism, or attachment to the parent." However, despite the relative lack of American success past its northernmost boundary, the Canadas were unattainable for the U.S. throughout the antebellum period.[33] Although the U.S. could not conquer the Canadas, over the late-eighteenth and early-nineteenth centuries, the U.S. and Upper Canada became increasingly intertwined. The Upper Canadian Rebellion of 1837 and the Patriot War that followed was a new opportunity for American-involvement in the Canadas. These events allowed some Americans to participate in a logical means to a historical end: to solidify that the U.S. (and by extension the Canadas) is a bastion of liberty free from British tyranny and a model of republicanism – something in which the world would see as sublime and attempt to emulate or provide as a model for other nations abroad.[34]

This chapter has two purposes. The first, it serves as an introduction to an international history between the United States, Great Britain, and the Canadas through a

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[33] What would become the Canadas has been something in which American politicians and policymakers sought from the nation's (Thirteen Colonies/U.S.) inception. One such example (among others) is Article XI of the Articles of Confederation that essentially gives Canada the right to join the U.S. if 9 out of 13 states voted for it to do so. Canada, however, was an exception as it was the only British colony in the so-called New World to be afforded that right. For more, see: Articles of Confederation: March 1, 1781, Yale Law School: The Avalon Project, accessed June 4, 2019, http://avalon.law.yale.edu/18th_century/art conf.asp.

[34] David Mills, *The Idea of Loyalty in Upper Canada, 1784-1850* (Kingston & Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1988), 3.

cultural lens. This story begins in the decades surrounding the American Revolution and the War of 1812. After the fighting between the United States and Britain subsided, a series of sweeping changes transformed North America. These transformations affected the Canadas and the United States and, by 1837, almost pushed the U.S. and Great Britain to the brink of war. The second purpose of this chapter is to establish the contextual bedrock of this dissertation: a historic American desire to conquer Canada, land issues (i.e., allocation of land and its use), and an expanding democratic ethos, which included the formation of pro-rebellion secret organizations. The former two issues are causes of the Upper Canadian Rebellion and Patriot War while the latter of the three issues is a consequence.

This chapter argues the region of Upper Canada and the Northern United States that surrounded the Great Lakes formed a culture area. By paying particular attention to this area its environs, the motivations as to why some Americans risked their lives to liberate Upper Canada from the British becomes clear. The historian of emotions Peter N. Stearns suggests, during times of great changes and transitional periods in history "fear [and a slew of other emotions] overcame reason."[35] This chapter further argues that in the years surrounding the buildup to the Upper Canadian Rebellion (1837) and the Patriot War (1838-1840s) antebellum Americans experienced a wide variety of emotions – particularly fear and anxiety – that motivated them to seek opportunities in Upper Canada. The emotional and psychological landscape of the United States in the late 1830s and into the 1840s was largely the result of a generational crisis brought on by the social, political, and economic changes from the American Revolution. These circumstances

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[35] Peter N. Stearns, *American Fear: The Causes and Consequences of High Anxiety* (New York & London: Routledge, 2006), 5.

caused many Americans to question their place in the world and wonder if they lived up to the standards of the founding generation.[36] The fallout from this virulent outbreak of doubt challenged the nation and its progress in a rapidly changing world.

Why Canada? Americans Coming Up Short from the Revolution to the War of 1812

During the American Revolution, the revolting American colonists could not conquer the hearts and minds of Francophone Canadians. The Americans failed to gain French-Canadian support for their independence movement. Benjamin Franklin (1706-1790) and a commission of Patriot diplomats attempted to procure Canadian support during the Revolution. In exchange for French-Canadian support, the Continental Congress authorized Franklin to promise the French-Canadians an independent printing press and a number of freedoms. Some of the rights promised to the Canadians included the freedoms of press and religion, representation in Congress, mutual defense, and the right to self-government. The response from the Upper Canadians was tepid at best.[37]

Aside from Franklin's failed diplomatic mission, in 1795 American forces, led by Benedict Arnold (1741-1801) unsuccessfully invaded Quebec during a rather unforgiving snowstorm. Despite the stinging fact the American colonists were unable to successfully

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[36] The idea of antebellum Americans questioning their status after the death of the founding generation was a cause of a great deal of anxiety in the nineteenth century. In 1838, future president Abraham Lincoln (1809-1865) offered a catharsis (the purifying or purging of emotions) in the form of his Lyceum Address. Lincoln reassured Americans that the founders were "pillars of the temple of liberty" and the generations that followed "their decedents, supply their places." For more see, Abraham Lincoln, "The Lyceum Address," Springfield, Illinois, January 27, 1838, www.abrahamlincolnonline.org/lincoln/speeches/lyceum.htm, accessed June 5, 2019. Holly Jackson explains that Lincoln's address also makes a paternal claim about "uncertain or severed inheritance." For more, see: Holly Jackson, *American Blood: The Ends of the Family in American Literature, 1850-1900* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2014), 48.

[37] Gene Procknow, "Franklin's Failed Diplomatic Religion" Journal of the American Revolution, January 27, 2015, accessed September 29, 2018, https://allthingsliberty.com/2015/01/franklins-failed-diplomatic-mission/.

occupy Canada during the Revolution itself, the Treaty of Paris (1783) and the negotiation process posed the question: What if the United States gained Canada? Franklin advocated that Great Britain cede control of Canada to the United States. Franklin proposed that if Canada could be ceded to the United States, selling this newly acquired American land as well as the profit from the lucrative Canadian fur trade might help to pay for the Revolution's expenses. The land would also serve as fertile land for Americans who lost their homes during the Revolution to settle in and populate. Franklin also suggested due to proximity, it would be less-expensive and easier for the U.S. to control Canada than for Great Britain to do from afar. Franklin's proposal also strengthened American borders while lessening the need for diplomatic ties with France. These negotiations, however, fell apart and in the end, the United States failed to acquire Canada.[38]

The Treaty of Paris also defined what land in North America would become part of the United States, and clarified the U.S. boundary with Great Britain's North American imperial holdings. After the war, the United States gained the Old Northwest; and, Americans, over the course of the late eighteenth and early nineteenth century, crowded to this newly-acquired American territory. To further complicate Anglo-American geopolitics, as the American Revolution drew to a close, a refugee crisis suddenly plagued the British Empire. Loyalists feared persecution from Americans – and perhaps rightfully so – as the wounds from the Revolution were still rather fresh in the American zeitgeist. While Americans from the United States settled throughout the North American

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[38] Walter Isaacson, *Benjamin Franklin: An American Life* (New York and London: Simon & Schuster, 2003), 401.

continent, Loyalists not wishing to remain in the United States resettled in other locations throughout the British realm. On November 25, 1783 – otherwise known as "Evacuation Day" in New York City – British troops under the command of Guy Carleton (1724-1808) and a number of other Loyalists left New York City for Canada.[39]

About eight years after Upper Canada was gradually peopled by Loyalists fleeing the new United States, British colonial officials penned the Constitutional Act of 1791 which formally established the province of Upper Canada as a political entity. The Constitutional Act divided the former – and much larger – British administered Province of Quebec into the smaller, more manageable, provinces of Upper and Lower Canada. Dividing the larger province into two had the lofty goal of alleviating tensions between French Canadians and Anglo-Canadians. This historical feud between the British and French was rooted in a centuries-long rivalry for Western European hegemony. The British used legislative measures, such as the Quebec Act, to appease French citizens living in the now British-administered Province of Quebec. Britain attempted to assimilate the French Canadians into Britain's North American empire. However, the British, in turn, alienated some English-speaking Canadians and American colonists who found the terms of the act unfavorable .[40]

The loyalists who settled in Upper Canada between the American Revolution and the signing of the Treaty of Paris were called the "United Empire Loyalists." Those who

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[39] Treaty of Paris article 2, September 30, 1783. The Avalon Project, accessed November 7, 2017. http://avalon.law.yale.edu/18th_century/paris.asp; Jennifer Steenshorne, "Evacuation Day," in *The Best of the New York Archives: Selections from the Magazine, 2001-2011*, New York State Archives Partnership Trust (Albany: University of New York Press, 2017), 81.

[40] For more on the historical context of the Constitutional Act, see J.G. Bourinot, *A Manual of the Constitutional History of Canada from the Earliest Period to 1901* (Toronto: The Copp. Clark Company, Limited, 1901), 15.

settled after 1783/4 were dubbed the "late Loyalists." The late Loyalists were essentially Americans ("Yankees") who settled in Upper Canada after the war. Many became frontier settlers and Peter C. Newman writes, for these men and women, Canada "became a land of second chances." Upper Canada was the North American Old World alternative to a newfangled concept of American republicanism.[41]

In the British tradition, Upper Canadians established a number of institutions that emulated the mother country. The feeling of loyalty, especially to place and, by extension, mother country, according to David Mills, is what made Upper Canada a viable entity. Mills writes, "the Tories used loyalty as both the means to distinguish those of Loyalists origin from the American late-comers and as the means to differentiate those who supported the political status quo from those who did not." The individuals who did not played a major role in future tensions in the province that culminated with calls for reform, which occurred throughout the nineteenth century.[42]

While Upper Canada was gradually peopled by Anglophone Canadians, the United States military and a British-Canadian-Native American confederacy collided at the Battle of Fallen Timbers (1794) in Northwestern Ohio. The conflict was a part of the larger Northwest Indian Wars (1785-1795) – which caused a great deal of anxiety for settlers and the U.S. government. The American race-based anxiety over the Native American "other" that remained in land claimed by the United States caused President Washington to dispatch troops to remove the Wyandotte and Lenape Tribes from the

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[41] Norman James Knowles, *Inventing the Loyalists: The Ontario Loyalist Tradition and the Creation of Usable Pasts* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press,1997), 32; Newman is quoting Will Ferguson's characterization of Canada. For more, see Peter C. Newman, *Hostages to Fortune: The United Empire Loyalists and the Making of Canada* (Toronto: Simon & Schuster Canada, 2016), 2

[42] Mills, *The Idea of Loyalty in Upper Canada*, 6.

Northwest. These two tribes threatened white, colonial aspiration in the region, national security, and domestic tranquility – especially as the British antagonistically supplied the Native Americans in the region with munitions and other supplies.[43] President George Washington (1732-1799) appointed General "Mad" Anthony Wayne (1745-1796) to defend American interests in the area. Historian and author Alan D. Gaff writes, "Wayne was given authority to fire upon British troops stationed on American soil, even if that action provoked a second war with Britain." According to Gaff, this second war almost occurred because the governor of Canada ordered the creation of a British post, which "was a clear violation of international law." The fighting was short-lived and over 80 men died; however, American success at the Battle of Fallen Timbers established the United States control of the Ohio Country and a year later Native Americans and the United States signed the Treaty of Greenville (1795). The Treaty of Greenville "established a new boundary between Indian and white lands" and began the gradual process of forcing Native Americans out of much of present day Ohio as well as the area surrounding the Great Lakes.[44]

After the Treaty of Greenville, the U.S. intensified its effort to push Native Americans out of the Ohio Country. The American policy was similar to Britain's Indian

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[43] Note: there were a number of groups removed from the Northwest Territory. In Northwest Ohio, Nevin Otto Winter suggests the Wyandot were the most powerful tribe in the region. For more, see Winter, *A History of Northwest Ohio* (Chicago and New York: Lewis Publishing Company,1917), 175-176. Chris Flook suggests the Lenape had a rather difficult time relocating from the Northwest after Anthony Wayne's conquest. Some bands relocated and remained together in western territories (i.e., Indiana), but most bands of the Lenape were fragmented, never to be reunited, after the Treaty of Greenville. For more, see: Flook, *Native Americans of East-Central Indiana* (Charleston, SC: The History Press, 2016), 106-108.

[44] Alan D. Gaff, *Bayonets in the Wilderness: Anthony Wayne's Legion in the Old Northwest* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 2004), xvii; Mary Beth Norton, *In the Devil's Snare: The Salem Witchcraft Crisis of 1692* (New York: Vintage/Random House, 2003), 10-12; R. Douglas Hurt, *The Ohio Frontier: Crucible of the Old Northwest, 1720-1830* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1996), 136-140.

Department in Upper Canada. Americans, like their British counterparts in Upper Canada, "acquired land for [white] settlers by making land purchase treaties with Indians." The American "peace and purchase" policy was an attempt by the U.S. to quickly populate land in the Old Northwest. The effects on the Native American population was damning. Witnessing the effects of white settlement, the Native American leader Tecumseh (1768-1813) urged Natives to resist white settlement and form a Native American confederation. By 1812, Tecumseh's political aspirations and British support led Native Americans in the Old Northwest and Upper Canada into war against the United States.[45]

Jay's Treaty, signed on November 19, 1794, began the gradual process of pushing Native Americans out of the Old Northwest. The treaty's chief negotiators, John Jay (1745-1829) and Lord William Wyndham Grenville (1759-1834) avoided conflict through diplomatic channels as Britain refused to comply with the terms of the Treaty of Paris (1783) until American debt to the Crown was paid. Two sources of tension between the U.S. and Great Britain were British troops refusing to leave their fortifications throughout the Old Northwest and the British routinely violating American shipping rights in the Atlantic Ocean. These two issues led to future conflict in 1812.[46]

In the U.S., Jay's Treaty was controversial. Aside from avoiding war, Jay accomplished nothing. The British remained in military installations throughout the Old Northwest and disrupted American shipping. The Federalists understood some members

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[45] Peter H. Russell, *Canada's Odyssey: A Country Based on Incomplete Conquests* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2017), 74-76.

[46] James Roger Sharp, *American Politics in the Early Republic: The New Nation in Crisis* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1993), 114. Walter Stahr, *John Jay Founding Father* (New York: Hambleton and London, 2005), 330, 338.

of the American public opposed ratifying Jay's Treaty. Jeffersonian Republicans denounced the Federalists for supporting the British rather than the French. Allies of Thomas Jefferson believed supporting the British threatened the U.S. And, by the late eighteenth century, the ramifications of this treaty were clear: aside from some Americans wanting to maintain close ties to the British, two political parties (the Federalists and the Democratic- Republicans) emerged from this turmoil and this two-party system became a defining feature of American politics.[47]

At the time of the treaty's ratification, the country, according to Fisher Ames (1758-1808), a Federalist politician and congressional representative from Massachusetts, was calm "but pains will be taken to inflame it." On the topic of Jay's Treaty, Oliver Wolcott Jr. (1760—1833), an American politician, wrote that although many Americans were angry at the treaty, the "reason of the people will prevail." This sort of anger, especially these public outbursts of anger, according to historians Carol Stearns and Peter Stearns, were commonly interpreted as manly and a common masculine trait. Despite the anger and anxiety, President Washington righted the nation's collective angst and suggested that if Americans sought their own truth about the treaty and wanted to form an opinion on the political process, they would do so in a sober and temperate manner.[48]

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[47] James H. Broussard, *The Southern Federalists, 1800-1816* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1978), 12-13. William Earl Weeks, *Building the Continental Empire: American Expansion from the Revolution to the Civil War* (Chicago: Ivan R. Dee, 1996), 23.

[48] Todd Estes, *The Jay Treaty Debate, Public Opinion, and the Evolution of Early American Political Culture* (Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press,2006), 81; 91-92; Carol Zisowitz Stearns and Peter N. Stearns, *Anger: The Struggle for Emotional Control in America's History* (Chicago London: The University of Chicago Press, 1986),1.

Cooler heads and sober thought did not prevail. Nearly thirty years after the American Revolution, the War of 1812 pitted the United States and Great Britain against one another for the second time. Characterized by historian Donald Hickey as "our most obscure war," the War of 1812 and its causes are still debated by scholars. The War of 1812 is a story of tragedy and heroism. The triumph and tragedy is episodic; such examples include: British troops burning Washington D.C. (1814), First Lady Dolley Madison (1768-1849) heroically saving the painter Gilbert Stuart's "Lansdowne portrait" of George Washington (1796) and other priceless early American ephemera from the White House, and Andrew Jackson (1767-1845) honing his penchant for violence against the British at the Battle of New Orleans (1815). However, aside from these noteworthy events, the warfront in the Old Northwest and the U.S-Upper Canada frontier was particularly active. The success of American forces in this area led to an increase in white settlement and the rapid development of the American Midwest. And, following the war's conclusion, relative peace between the United States, Upper Canada, and Great Britain. [49]

During the war, the United States was particularly successful in building military forts in the Old Northwest and around Lake Erie. The two most notable American triumphs in the region included General, and future president, William Henry Harrison's (1773-1841) construction of Fort Meigs (1813) in present-day Perrysburg, Ohio and Oliver Hazard Perry's (1789-1819) success on Lake Erie (1813). American fortifications in the Old Northwest needed improvement. Due to the condition of the forts, and as a sign to improve optimism and defense along the frontier, during the winter months of

[49] Donald R. Hickey, *The War of 1812: A Forgotten Conflict* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 2012), 1.

1812-1813, Harrison requested the erection of two new forts. Both of the forts Harrison ordered occupy strategic positions with access to water: Fort Stephenson was on the Sandusky River while Fort Meigs is located near the Maumee River. The winter of 1812-1813 was disastrous to the United States. Quite possibly, American morale was at an all time low. General James Winchester's (1752-1826) army was defeated at Frenchtown (near present day Monroe, Michigan) and injured American troops were slaughtered by Native Americans at River Raisin (1813). This loss of American life "dashed America's hopes of a winter invasion of Canada" and perhaps with history as a judge, it was the best course of action as another failed invasion of Canada could have been devastating for the United States and the American psyche.[50]

Over the course of the war, General Harrison gained command of American forces in the Old Northwest. Harrison was the next logical choice to lead American troops as General Hull's incompetence, questionable leadership, and military strategy became a liability to the United States. On July 17, 1812, Fort Mackinac (Michilimackinac) a U.S. military fortification in Northern Michigan fell to British forces. After Mackinac fell, the British then set their sites on the small town of Detroit. During the War of 1812, Detroit, according to historian Anthony Yanik, was a city of "800 people living on the very edge of the frontier." The closest white settler community to Detroit, with a sizable population, was Urbana, Ohio and Urbana was nearly 200 miles

[50] Robert P. Watson, *America's First Crisis: The War of 1812* (Albany: State University of New York Press, Albany, 2014), 126.

away. Regardless of the geographic isolation from American settlements this was not a major issue as Detroiters routinely relied on Upper Canadians during times of trouble.[51]

The British Major General Isaac Brock (1769-1812) manipulated deep-seated fears of General Hull. The fear of Native American attacks plagued Anglo settlers throughout North America since the colonial period. Aside from *actual* attacks, such as those chronicled in English war histories, Natives were "identified with demonic or barbaric qualities that led Indians to rub and burn English settlements and to kill and roast the English themselves."[52] Natives were oftentimes the sanguinary antagonists of colorful childhood stories. Playing off this longstanding fear of Natives, an enemy other to generations of Anglo settlers, Major General Brock, according to historian Alan Taylor, "knew how to make Hull crack: with Indians." Hull was already in a fragile mental state as on August 15, 1812, the British began shelling Detroit from Sandwich, Upper Canada. Citizens of Detroit flocked to the fort, men's "brains and blood [was] scattered against the walls," and cannon fire "dismembered three officers." The bloodshed and chaos sent Hull over the edge; he was, in short, a nervous wreck. Officers found Hull cowering in a bunker instead of leading the soldiers under his command, his clothing was covered in tobacco juice and he was "drinking heavily."[53]

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[51] David Curtis Skaggs, *William Henry Harrison and the Conquest of the Ohio Country: Frontier Fighting in the War of 1812* (Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2014), 82; Anthony J. Yanik, *The Fall and Recapture of Detroit in the War of 1812: In Defense of William Hull* (Detroit: Wayne State University Press, 2011), 10.

[52] Kristina Bross, "'That Epithet of Praying:' The Vilification of Praying Indians during King Philip's War," in *Fear Itself: Enemies Real & Imagined in American Culture* edited by Nancy Lusignan Schultz (West Lafayette, IN: Purdue University Press,1999), 53-54.

[53] Alan Taylor, *The Civil War of 1812: American Citizens, British Subjects, Irish Rebels, & Indian Allies* (New York: Vintage, 2010), 162-165; 205.

Later on August 15, Brock sent a letter to Hull outlining the chaos that would ensue if Hull did not surrender Fort Detroit. In this letter, Brock wrote:

> The force at my disposal authorizes me to require of you the immediate surrender of Fort Detroit. It is far from my intension to join in a war of extermination, but you must be aware, that the numerous body of Indians who have attached themselves to my troops, will be beyond control the moment the contest commences. You will find me disposed to enter into such conditions as will satisfy the most scrupulous sense of honour. Lieut.-Colonel McDonnell and Major Glegg are fully authorized to conclude any arrangement that may lead to prevent the unnecessary effusion of blood.[54]

The threat of Native Americans running roughshod over the Americans at Fort Detroit terrified not only Hull, but Upper Canadians who joined American forces. When word of Hull's letter reached these men, they fled "to Brock rather than face an Indian attack." The number of Natives is disputed in contemporary accounts and by historians and was likely exaggerated by Brock, but he successfully used white fears to manipulate Americans at Fort Detroit. Nonetheless, it was the moment when Hull faced a possible Native American onslaught, Taylor writes, that he recalled "I determined to surrender on the best terms I could obtain," which led to the fall of the city.[55]

The once American-held Michigan Territory and Fort Detroit was now under British control. The United States took a major blow losing Michigan Territory and U.S. officials condemned Hull following his surrender. The American public ridiculed and labeled him a coward. The threat of the Native American attack at Detroit was a fear for settlers in Detroit and along the frontier. Americans fearing Natives constrained their decision-making. When the British and the Natives bombarded the city, chaos ensued.

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[54] General Brock's Letter to General Hull from *Select British Documents of the Canadian War of 1812, vol. 1* (Toronto: Champlain Society, 1926), 461.

[55] Taylor, *The Civil War of 1812*, 164-167.

The Native American other supplanted the British as the enemy. The real enemy of the Americans at Fort Detroit, however, was the British. Numerous Detroiters, however, feared the Natives. This localized fear along with Hull's incomparable incompetence, which nearly cost him his life as he was court marshaled and pardoned, caused a great deal of psychological collateral damage. The British had the upper hand which led to occupation. American forces did not reoccupy Detroit until 1813. [56]

Despite Hull's unmitigated political quagmire at Detroit, Oliver Hazard Perry and detachment of the American Navy accomplished a notable feat on the waters of Lake Erie. On September 10, 1813 an American fleet under the command of a 27-year-old Perry defeated the British fleet patrolling Lake Erie. The British loss forced Major General Henry Proctor to retreat. As historian Jon Latimer notes, "The Battle of Lake Erie was a defining engagement of the war; it made Perry an American national hero and earned him and his men considerable prize money… it isolated Proctor's Right Division from the Centre, and Perry could now starve it of supplies: retreat was inevitable."[57] After the British retreat, Perry was quoted "We have met the enemy and they are ours."

Despite the heroism exhibited by Perry and his forces on Lake Erie, the victory had a sweeping effect. While one could argue the feat was rather individualistic, cultural critics such as Jason Horsley opine that heroism has a deindividualzing effect. American studies scholar Jayson Baker summarizes Horsley's thoughts on heroism and writes,

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[56] Yanik, *The Fall and Recapture of Detroit,* 3; 126; Slavoj Zizek, *The Sublime Object of Ideology* (New York & London: Verso, 1989), 48-49; Silas Farmer, *History of Detroit and Wayne County and Early Michigan: A Chronological Cyclopedia of the Past and Present* (Detroit [New York]: Silas Farmer & Co. [Munsell & Co.], 1890), 286.

[57] Jon Latimer, *1812: War With America* (Cambridge and London: Harvard University Press, 2007), 184.

"heroism deindividualizes by encouraging members of society to work toward a goal that precludes any self-interest so that heroic behavior is not a function of individualism but expresses commitment to the collective." While flawed in a contemporary sense (Baker addresses heroism and its effects on postindustrial capitalism), this idea is quite apropos in times of war as soon after Perry's monumental victory on the water, on September 29, 1813, General William Henry Harrison and American forces regained Detroit. After Detroit was firmly in American hands, fighting in the Old Northwest was largely over and the war effort focused on the East.[58]

In Upper Canada, at the Battle of the Thames, Native Americans' military? resistance in much of the Old Northwest was dealt its deathblow. Tecumseh and his Native American confederacy battled a detachment of the American military in Upper Canada near present day Chatham-Kent, Ontario. On October 5, 1813 the British line – Tecumseh's military ally – collapsed. This forced Tecumseh's men to engage with the Americans in a violent "melee-style of warfare." In this barrage, U.S. troops mortally wounded Tecumseh. For Native Americans in the Old Northwest and Upper Canada, Tecumseh was more than a military leader. He was the spiritual and intellectual leader of Native resistance in the region. The death of the Native American leader served as a blow to the morale of Tecumseh's confederacy and the Natives soon retreated. Following

[58] Marc Leepson, *What So Proudly We Hailed: Francis Scott Key, A Life* (New York: Palgrave-Macmillan, 2014), 39; Jayson Baker, "Waking Up the Mythic American Neo," in *Heroes of Film, Comics and American Culture: Essays on Real and Fictional Defenders of Home* edited by Lisa M. DeTora (Jeffesron, NC & London: McFarland & Company, Inc., Publishers, 2009), 274.

Tecumseh's defeat, Native Americans were no longer a major threat to American forces in the War of 1812.[59]

On the Niagara Frontier, following the American victories on Lake Erie and the death of Tecumseh at the Battle of the Thames, British, Canadians, and Native American allies captured the American-held Fort Niagara. Historically, Fort Niagara was as historian Colin G. Calloway writes, "One of the 'upper posts,' along with Detroit and Michilimackinac." Calloway continues, "Fort Niagara in the Revolution was a military trading post, a supply depot, a diplomatic hub, and a multiethnic, multiclass society." Located in present-day Youngstown, New York, Fort Niagara – like other fortifications throughout the Old Northwest – was strategically important to the French and British Empires as well as the United States. The British captured the fort on December 19, 1813. The British overwhelmed American forces on the frontier. The British only lost 6 soldiers and 5 men were wounded. In 1814, the U.S. attempted to invade Canada once more during General Winfield Scott (1786-1866) and General Jacob Brown's (1775-1828) Niagara Campaign. Brown was in command of American forces at key battles including Lundy's Lane, Sacket's Harbor, and Fort Erie. As John D. Morris writes, despite logistical and communications errors, Brown was one of the most effective generals of the war. The Niagara Campaign also served as a morale boost for Americans as it "rescued the honor and fighting capabilities of the army from inept leadership of Hull, Dearborn, Smyth, and Wilkinson." After the war, Brown and Scott remained in the

[59] Guy St. Denis, *Tecumseh's Bones* (Montreal and Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2005), 8.

military. Brown died in 1828 while Scott became a key member of the American military until the Civil War.[60]

On Christmas Eve 1814 in Ghent, Belgium (then part of the United Kingdom of the Netherlands), agents of the United States and Great Britain negotiated the end of the War of 1812. The war was costly on both sides of the Atlantic. National debt in the U.S. and Britain nearly doubled. More importantly, when the terms of the treaty were agreed upon, British forces were forced out of the United States. Other than British troops leaving the U.S., relations between the United States and Great Britain returned to status quo, antebellum. Peace between the United States and Britain followed the War of 1812 and launched a so-called "Era of Good Feelings" in the U.S. The relative peace and prosperity in the United States allowed the United States to rapidly industrialize.

To Upper Canadians, Americans were invaders during the War of 1812. In Anglophone Canada, a myth circulated of a "popular resistance" to the invading U.S. forces. According to historian J.I. Little, no such myth circulated in the Lower, Francophone province. However, in the Canadas, there was a growing sense of regionalism and resistance to serving in a militia outside one's home region. In Upper Canada, some late Loyalists may have had a lingering sense of loyalty to the United States as many were declared "non-resident aliens" by government officials. These Loyalists felt a sense of resentment toward the British and their sense of cultural and ethnic superiority. "Yankee settlers [refused] to demonstrate suitable deference" and

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[60] C. Edward Skeen, *Citizen Soldiers in the War of 1812* (Lexington: University Press of Kentucky, 1999), 110; Colin G. Calloway, *The American Revolution in Indian Country: Crisis and Diversity in Native American Communities* (Cambridge and New York: Cambridge University Press, 1995), 129; Leepson, *What So Proudly We Hailed*, 39; John D. Morris, *Sword of the Border: Major General Jacob Brown, 1775-1828* (Kent: Kent State University Press, 2000), 158-159.

some went as far during the war, to flee to the south to the U.S. Those who remained were "accused of being American collaborators or sympathizers… but the evidence does not suggest a broad-based desire to return to life under the American flag."[61]

Land, Canals, and Competition: The North American Economic Transformation of the 1830s

After the War of 1812, Buffalo, New York became an important center of trade that linked the Midwest of the U.S. with the East Coast. Aside from growing populations and emerging urban centers, cities like Buffalo had a common denominator – access to navigable bodies of water. On October 26, 1825 the Erie Canal was formally opened. Championed by then New York governor DeWitt Clinton, and lampooned as "Clinton's Ditch" or "Clinton's Folly," the commercial success of the Erie Canal lowered the cost of shipping goods in some parts of the United States by 90 percent.[62] The Erie Canal connected the Hudson River to Lake Erie. This path was purposeful. Sociologist Jason Kaufman writes that it was easier for northern North American farmers to send goods to Montreal. Clinton was well aware of this and to syphon as much profit from the project, made sure "its western terminus did not link Lake Ontario."[63]

The Erie Canal made it possible to travel from New York City to the Great Lakes. Excitement surrounding the opening the Erie Canal manifested itself in Buffalo as a series of grand festivities, pomp, and celebration. As historian Charles Brooks writes,

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[61] J.I. Little, *Loyalties in Conflict: A Canadian Borderland in War and Rebellion, 1812-1840* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2008), 55-56, 61-62.

[62] Kevin F. Kern and Gregory S. Wilson, *Ohio: A History of the Buckeye State* (West Sussex: Wiley Blackwell, 2014) 167-168.

[63] Jason Kaufman, *The Origins of Canadian and American Political Differences* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2009), 147-148.

"The official ceremonies began in Buffalo amid a flurry of speechmaking and booming cannons and ended in New York City, where a keg of water was taken from Lake Erie and carried aboard the canal boat *Seneca Chief* was poured into the harbor symbolizing the 'wedding of the two waters.'"[64]

On the surface, the celebration commemorated the completion of the Erie Canal. The canal was something *new* which transformed American life, something that did not get "subsumed back into the existing paradigm," the status quo. The completion of the Erie Canal meant more to the nation than finishing a rather significant engineering feat. It allowed the last living member of the revolutionary generation to witness American technological progress and proved to the world that the United States was an entity destined to transform North America cementing Anglo colonialism and conquest. Completing the Erie Canal was only the beginning, life in the United States was drastically altered and the nation would never be the same. [65]

The technological, economic, and cultural changes occurring in the United States effected the nation's northern neighbors as well. Despite being a part of the British Empire, due to geographic proximity, Upper Canada became economically interconnected and later dependent upon the United States. By the eve of the American Civil War, canals became increasingly obsolete, and as John Bukowczyk writes, "Rail lines would connect Canadian producers and consumers to New York and Chicago capital, but they still left Upper Canada with a dependent economy, still on the economic

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[64] Charles E. Brooks, *Frontier Settlement and Market Revolution: The Holland Land Purchase* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1996), 149.

[65] Marcus Pound, *Zizek: A (Very) Critical* Introduction (Grand Rapids, MI & Cambridge, U.K.: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 2008), 36; Rex Butler, *Slavoj Zizek: Live Theory* (London: Continuum, 2005), 68.

periphery, though now the periphery of an American core." This rapidly growing American core came to dominate the North American economy. Upper Canadians, writes Nora Faires, began moving to the American Midwest despite Upper Canada pursuing "its own ambitious plan to improve transportation, completing the Rideau Canal from Lake Ontario to the Ottawa River in 1832 and the Welland Canal across the Niagara peninsula." These changes made it easier for Upper Canadians to travel to the U.S. and help populate the growing Midwest. [66]

In the United States, the boom in internal improvements and changing land policy allowed the Old Northwest to become populated by white settlers in a number of decades rather than a number of centuries. The rapidly changing economy transformed American life. Jeff Crane writes, "Americans strived to find their place in the burgeoning economy. Businessmen, farmers, and laborers alike had to be nimble, flexible, and aware of and responsive to change as the world transformed around them… they were compelled to quickly grasp and respond to both opportunities and threats." These changes, most notably the economic turmoil after the Panic of 1837, were disruptive toward everyday life in the United States and Upper Canada. As Donald Ratcliffe writes, "The mid-1830s saw a crisis in the Anglo-American economy that had a disruptive effect on political alignments throughout North America: in Upper and Lower Canada it produced armed

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[66] John J. Bukowczyk, "Migration, Transportation, Capital, and the State in the Great Lakes Basin, 1815-1819," in *Permeable Border: The Great Lakes Basin as Transnational Region, 1650-1990*. Edited by John J. Bukowczyk (Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press, 2005), 50. Nora Faires, "Leaving the 'Land of Second Chance,': Migration from Ontario to the Upper Midwest in the Nineteenth and Early Twentieth Centuries," in *Permeable Border: The Great Lakes Basin as Transnational Region, 1650-1990*. Edited by John J. Bukowczyk (Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press, 2005), 89.

agrarian rebellion; in the United States, it provoked political realignments, which varied according to the existing structure of political loyalty."[67]

Throughout the first-half of the nineteenth century, major economies throughout the Atlantic World – including the United States, Great Britain, and its colonial landholdings– suffered through a number of economic panics and depressions. During the Jacksonian era, perhaps the most prominent of these events occurred in 1837. Historians estimate the U.S. economy collapsed between March 4 and May 10 of that year. Uncertainty swept the masses and reactions ranged from "excitement, anxiety, terror [and] panic" and this effected "all classes and ranks." Beginning in March, banks throughout the United States stopped issuing payments in gold and silver (specie) coins. As Jessica Lepler writes, this event effected life in major cities. Some of the cities hit hardest by the economic turmoil associated with the Panic of 1837 include New York, New Orleans, and London, England. Lepler continues, writers and newspapermen did not have a term to describe what was going on around them. In "newspaper columns, letters, novels, songs, poems, and diary entries" writers of all sorts "began to describe a single event defined by a single term: panic." The Panic of 1837 also effected the British Isles and the British Empire abroad. By late 1837, the world's major economies suffered through a global depression. While Americans blamed political differences between

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[67] Jeff Crane, *The Environment in American History: Nature and the Formation of the United States* (New York: Routledge, 2015), 123. Donald J. Ratcliffe, "The Crisis of Commercialization" National Political Alignments and the Market Revolution, 1819-1844" in *The Market Revolution in America: Social, Political, and Religious Expressions, 1800-1860.* Edited by Melvyn Stokes and Stephen Conway (Charlottesville: University of Virginia Press, 1996), 178.

"King Andrew's" Democrats and the Whig opposition, the British blamed financial institutions.[68]

While in office, President Martin Van Buren (1782-1862) did nothing to ameliorate the economic issues that plagued the nation. Due to his political ineptitude and unwavering loyalty to Andrew Jackson, Van Buren, the so-called "red fox of Kinderhook (NY)," was by no means sly or sneaky. Van Buren told congress that Americans should not look to the government for relief. Frugality and a "strict economy" was all they would find in Washington D.C. Van Buren, as historian Daniel Walker Howe writes, warned Americans not "to substitute for republican simplicity and economical habits a sickly habit for effeminate indulgence." Van Buren attempted to mold his presidency in Jackson's image and did so haphazardly. Van Buren's endeavor to govern the in Jackson's image failed. And, as a result of the Panic of 1837, Van Buren earned the moniker: "Martin Van Ruin" among other nicknames.[69]

Despite the various political and financial ramifications of this economic downturn, the Panic of 1837 effected individuals on a more personal level. Manufacturers and factory owners shuttered their businesses leaving many Americans unemployed. Historian Philip Gura writes, for "those who could still find work… wages plummet[ed], sometimes in half." Housing costs and basic necessities were inflated. Thousands of

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[68] Jessica M. Lepler, *The Many Panics of 1837: People, Politics, and the Creation of a Transatlantic Financial Crisis* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2013), 3-4.

[69] Daniel Walker Howe, *What Hath God Wrought: The Transformation of America, 1815-1848* (Oxford & New York: Oxford University Press, 2007), 505.

Americans became homeless and as Gura explains "bankruptcies were everywhere." The so-called American dream had effectively "gone up in smoke." [70]

Consequently, due to the panic, failure was widespread and abound. Historian Matthew Osborn explains that it was common knowledge in antebellum America, especially after 1837 and prior to the Civil War, that "ninety-five out of a hundred business ventures ended in bankruptcy." This aura of failure in the business world showed Americans that "failure was an endemic part of the market economy." The cornucopia of stress associated with failure effected individuals in all walks of life. Numerous medical professionals witnessed the "arbitrary nature of failure, disease, and death" in American urban centers and studied individuals who "had brought on their own destruction."[71]

The Upper Canadian economy suffered due to a poor harvest in 1836. The "wet harvest" of the wheat devalued the valuable staple crop. Uncertainty surrounded the availability of wheat. This led to a great deal of angst and political turmoil. To make matters worse for the Upper Canadians, agricultural trade favored the U.S. and Lower Canada. Insufficient harvests led to an economic recession. Pecuniary issues aside, the influx of poor immigrants from the U.S. and throughout the British Empire stressed the colonial infrastructure. The British-appointed Upper Canadian bureaucracy aided these settlers and provided many of them with land. Numerous Upper Canadian reformers condemned the actions of these appointed officials, the lieutenant governor and executive

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[70] Philip F. Gura, *Man's Better Angels: Romantic Reformers and the Coming of the Civil War* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2017), 65-66.

[71] Matthew Osborn, *Rum Maniacs: Alcoholic Insanity in the Early American Republic* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 2014), 102-103.

council. A Scottish-born newspaperman and Upper Canadian transplant William Lyon Mackenzie led the charge against what came to be known as the Family Compact.[72]

Financially, the Panic of 1837 effected Upper Canada as its economic well-being was dependent upon both England's and the U.S. economy. When New York financial institutions ceased issuing specie payments, Upper Canadian banknotes were no longer secure. Without bank notes being backed by gold and silver coins, paper money would be deemed nearly worthless. Banking officials in Upper Canada hoped to cease the exchange of banknotes for specie but this did not happen. Instead, Lieutenant Governor Colborne sent £50,000 worth of copper coins to Upper Canadian banks. However as A.B. McCullough writes, few of these coins were in circulation. In Toronto, Upper Canada's financial center, a single bank – the Agricultural Bank – failed. The Panic throughout the Atlantic World caused widespread dejection.[73] Nora Faires writes, "The Panic of 1837 led to hard times in Canada too, with farmers especially hurt by falling prices, constriction of British capital, and continued competition from American farm products."[74]

Throughout communities across the United States, Americans effected by the Panic of 1837, according to historian Martin J. Hershock, "found it increasingly difficult

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[72] Roeliff Morton Breckenridge, *The Canadian Banking System, 1817-1890* (New York: Macmillan and Company, 1895), 89; Barbara Williams, "Introduction" in Anne Langton, *A Gentlewoman in Upper Canada: The Journals, Letters, and Art of Anne Langton* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press,2008), 36.

[73] A.B. McCullough, *Money and Exchange in Canada to 1900* (Toronto: Dundurn Press, 1984), 99. Fred H. Armstrong, *A City in the Making: Progress, People & Perils in Victorian Toronto* (Toronto & Oxford: Dundurn Press, 1988), 46.

[74] Nora Faires, "Leaving the 'Land of Second Chance:' Migration from Ontario to the Upper Midwest in the Nineteenth and Early Twentieth Centuries," in John J. Bukowczyk, et al., *Permeable Border: The Great Lakes Basin as Transnational Region, 1650-1900* (Pittsburgh: university of Pittsburgh Press, 2005), 89.

to assert their independence in the face of economic downturn."[75] Many of these men and women experienced the highs and lows of the new, capitalism-infused American economy. The (white) men in these communities gained a sense of political and financial agency during the so-called Age of Jackson. They, however, and perhaps, "more importantly – faced its ramifications."[76] Nonetheless, the Panic of 1837 caused a great deal of anxiety in North America. Longstanding tension in Upper Canada and a number of crises in the United States led to rebellion and reform efforts in Upper Canada in the late 1830s.

The Ascension of Old Hickory, A Growing Democratic Ethos, and The Toledo War

Andrew Jackson became a national hero following his victory over the British at the 1815 Battle of New Orleans. With "Old Hickory's" ascent to the national stage a new sense of equity came about in what some historians have deemed the era of the common man. Robert Remini characterized Jackson as a "hero" of the age. Jackson, according to Remini, embodies the 1830s; particularly the decade's "positive and negative aspects, its democratic spirit and its driving and greedy ambition. His life and accomplishments typified American striving for improvement." Recent scholarship, according to Kathleen McCarthy, argues the contrary. Citing Jean Baker, a historian of the pre-Civil War Democratic Party, McCarthy astutely notes that during the Age of Jackson, the political system excluded about sixty percent of Americans. The forty percent of Americans that Jacksonian era political culture did include were white men. David Roediger utilizes

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[75] Martin J. Hershock, *The Paradox of Progress: Economic Change, Individual Enterprise, and Political Culture in Michigan, 1837-1878* (Athens: Ohio University Press, 2003), 48-49.

[76] Ibid., 49.

Baker's scholarship as well. Roediger adds, the Democratic party "reinvented whiteness in a manner that 'refurbished their party's traditional links to the People and offered political democracy and an inclusive patriotism to white male Americans."[77]

Andrew Jackson's and the Jacksonian Era's populist appeal permeated across the U.S.-Upper Canada border. As Robert Lloyd Kelley writes, reform-minded Upper Canadians "looked to Jacksonian American in admiration and worked hard to introduce elective institutions and republican simplicity and austerity in government." Like Jackson, his followers, and the Democratic Party, these reform-minded Upper Canadians "attacked the aristocratic governing system" and hoped to emulate the way in which the United States was governed. Canadians – particularly those following William Lyon Mackenzie and Louis-Joseph Papineau – took the Jacksonian creed to its limits pushing for reform and rebellion against the British monarchy which culminated in 1837.[78]

Tragically during the Jacksonian period, Native Americans living in lands east of the Mississippi River were removed from their land and forced west. Although this process and the Trail of Tears (1830s-1850s) normally refers to the forced migration and genocide of Cherokee and the other "civilized tribes" found throughout the American South, tribes in the Old Northwest suffered a similar fate. Following the American acquisition of the Old Northwest, policymakers sought white settlement in this land. Throughout the nineteenth century, the states of Ohio, Indiana, Illinois, Michigan, and

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[77] Robert V. Remini, *Andrew Jackson: The Course of American Democracy, 1833-1845* (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1984), 7; Kathleen D. McCarthy, *American Creed: Philanthropy and the Rise of Civil Society, 1700-1865* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 2003), 124; David R. Roediger, *The Wages of Whiteness: Race and the Making of the American Working Class* (London and New York: Verso, 1991), 4.

[78] Robert Lloyd Kelley, *The Transatlantic Persuasion: The Liberal-Democratic Mind in the Age of Gladstone* (New Brunswick and London: Transaction Publishers, 1990), 359.

Wisconsin were carved out of the Old Northwest. Land was plentiful and cheap to white settlers and sold through land agents working in Washington D.C. Treaties with Native Americans were negotiated by territorial governors. These treaties favored Americans and drastically weakened Native Americans through establishing weak tribal leaders. Although there was some resistance as Jill E. Roe writes, "they were eventually steamrolled by the irresistible force of westward expansion."[79]

Peace after the War of 1812 signaled the end of large-scale fighting in the Old Northwest. Although, throughout the 1830s, some land disputes became politically hostile. In 1835, the state of Ohio and Michigan Territory engaged in a relatively bloodless dispute over a swath of land known as the Toledo Strip.[80] The governments of Ohio and Michigan Territory both laid claims to the area. Despite the validity of both claims, the state of Ohio maintained a major advantage over their northern neighbors: Ohio had been admitted to the Union in 1803 while Michigan remained a territory. Lucius Lyon (1800-1851), an early Michigan senator, attempted to lobby Washington D.C. for statehood. Lyon attempted to convince lawmakers that the Toledo strip was indeed a portion of Michigan and the land was vital toward the territory's economic

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[79] Jill E. Rowe, *Invisible in Plain Sight: Self-Determination Strategies of Free Blacks in the Old Northwest* (New York: Peter Lang, 2017), 38-39.

[80] During the Toledo War, the only account of bloodshed was when a Sheriff Joseph Wood of Monroe, Michigan was sent to the home of Major Benjamin Stickney of Toledo, Ohio. The sheriff was sent to arrest Major Stickney and extradite him back to Michigan Territory. There was a bit of an altercation and Stickney's surprisingly-named son, Two (Two's brothers were named One and Three), stabbed the sheriff in the leg with a pen knife. For more, see: Karl Wittke, "The Ohio-Michigan Boundary Dispute Re-examined," *Ohio Archaeological and Historical Quarterly* 45 (1895), 299.

interests as the city of Toledo and its harbor was a desirable port with shipping access to Lake Erie.[81]

During what came to be known as the Toledo War (1835-1836) – an exercise in envy and exaggeration – Governors Robert Lucas (1781-1853) of Ohio and Stevens T. Mason (1811-1843) of Michigan Territory assembled their respective state militias at the disputed Toledo Strip. Newspapers played a major role in exacerbating this conflict and stirring public opinion. Political scientist Christopher Fettweis writes, when fear (and most certainly other emotions) "is generated in great quantities, when it is out of proportion to extant threats, that it can lead to unhealthy paranoia and counterproductive policies." Ohio newspapers made the Toledo border conflict seem as if it was a full-blown war. Journalist and local historian Don Faber writes, "The *Cleveland Whig* said that Ohio women had been treated with violence." While a Michigan paper, The *Detroit Journal,* attacked Governor Lucas's credibility. The *Detroit Journal* opines, Lucas's "accounts are filled with exaggerations and false conclusions. With such an opponent our governor can measure skill and wisdom." The rumor mill in Michigan Territory and Ohio was quite active. Tensions between Michigan and Ohio cooled in late 1836 into early 1837 as the federal government and Andrew Jackson stepped in to answer the Toledo question.[82]

President Andrew Jackson himself allayed the conflict between Michigan Territory and the State of Ohio. Jackson first removed Governor Mason from office.

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[81] Joe Grimm, *Michigan Voices: Our State's History in the Words of the People Who Lived It* (Detroit: Wayne State University Press, 1987), 44-47.

[82] Christopher J. Fettweis, *The Pathologies of Power: Fear, Honor, Glory, and Hubris in U.S. Foreign Policy* (New York & Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2013), 26; Remini, *Andrew Jackson: The Course of American Democracy, 1833-1845*, 376.

Following Mason's ouster, Jackson and the federal government then moved to rule on the issue of who got the Toledo Strip. Jackson and the federal government established a compromise, the terms of the agreement to end the boundary dispute between Ohio and Michigan were as follows: in order for Michigan to become a state, Michigan would have to cede its claim to the Toledo strip. In return, the Michigan would be given land in what would become Michigan's Upper Peninsula (UP). Michigan's legislature initially rejected the compromise, but the legislature was in a bind. If Michigan failed to become a state, it was going to lose about $500,000 as a treasury surplus was only allocated to states. So, on January 26, 1837 Jackson signed a bill admitting Michigan into the Union. Despite discontent with Michigan losing the Toledo War, the state profited in the long run as the UP was rich with natural resources which, in turn, stimulated the growth and development of the state throughout the nineteenth century.[83]

Michigan's statehood depended upon the outcome of the Toledo War. The idea of expanding Michigan's border – especially after losing the valuable Toledo Strip – stoked the expansionist desires of some living in Detroit and the surrounding area. In December 1837 when the rebellion occurred in Upper Canada, some Michiganders believed it was the perfect opportunity to acquire land across the Detroit River.[84] These American-based proto-filibusters foreshadowed the exploits of individuals who invaded nations for

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[83] Don Faber, *The Boy Governor: Stevens T. Mason and the Birth of Michigan Politics* (Ann Arbor: The University of Michigan Press, 2012), 62.

[84] Patrick R. Carstens and Timothy Sanford, *The Republic of Canada Almost* (Bloomington, IN :Xlibris,2013), 157.

personal gain and followed what colonists had been doing in the Americans for several centuries.[85]

Conclusion

North America was divided after the American Revolution and further divided after the War of 1812. If the United States successfully acquired the Canadas and expanded its border northward, the nation would rewrite a turbulent chapter in late eighteenth and early nineteenth century North American history. The United States would have completed a North American Revolution. The North American presence of Great Britain and the British Empire, the mother country and the imperial power from which the U.S. and both Canadas were born, would come to a close. With Britain free from the Western Hemisphere, an American empire of liberty could span from the Atlantic Ocean to the Pacific, from the Canadian North to the American South.

Wars and economic development drove a wedge between the United States and the Canadas. Although some Americans, on numerous occasions, would risk everything to try to gain the Canadas, ultimately nothing came of the endeavor. Prior to the War of 1812, for the United States and Canada areas of mutual cooperation – like the Great Lakes – were seen as an economic frontier. With the United States and Great Britain declaring war in 1812, this area of opportunity, particularly for Upper Canadians, dried up and Americans dominated the Great Lakes. After the war, transportation infrastructure – such as the Welland and Rideau Canal in Upper Canada and the Erie Canal in the United States allowed – allowed Upper Canadians and American to interact with one

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[85] Filibusters were groups of Americans who violated the sovereignty of a foreign power during peacetime, not the lively longwinded speeches delivered in Congress – a la *Mr. Smith Goes to Washington* (1939) – to delay the political process.

another. On the one hand, this interaction was economic as Upper Canada's economy was dependent on the United States' economy. On the other, this interaction between Americans and Upper Canadians was that of a population exchange: Upper Canadians settled in the Midwestern United States while some Americans settled in Upper Canada.

By the late 1830s, the United States and Upper Canada did not resemble their late-eighteenth and early-nineteenth century forms. In the American and Upper Canadian borderland that surrounded the Great Lakes, American citizens and British subjects were interconnected as a culture area. In this bi-national region, ideas spread like wildfire. Geographically, this region was being very different entities, they had more in common than one would imagine – specifically a shared interest in the memory of the American Revolution. Both nations originated from a shared Anglo origin; and, on the eve of the rebellions in the Canadas, those (including the Upper Canadians and their American sympathizers) who believed in William Lyon Mackenzie and other Upper Canadian reformers, felt liberation from British tyranny in Upper Canada was indeed a worthy and necessary endeavor.

Chapter Three

The Reporter's Rebellion: William Lyon Mackenzie, the Memory of the American Revolution, and the Upper Canadian Rebellion

On July 31, 1837, William Lyon Mackenzie and a group of Toronto reformers published a document outlining their grievances against the Crown. The document, ostensibly inspired by the American Declaration of Independence (among other Enlightenment-inspired revolutionary documents), was a laundry list of injustices committed by the Crown and the Family Compact in the British colony of Upper Canada. Mackenzie and the reformers' manifesto presented a case for reform in Britain's North American possession of Upper Canada. Mackenzie and the reformers hoped peaceful methods would resolve a menagerie of longstanding issues between Upper Canadians and their conservative, Tory counterparts. Some of these problems for which Mackenzie and the Toronto reformers advocated included: heavy and unfair taxation, the infringement of religious rights, military interference in public elections, and hindering naturalization for foreign settlers in Upper Canada. The Mackenzie-Toronto reform declaration was directed toward their fellow Upper Canadians, the already rebelling Lower Canadians, their Yankee neighbors to the south, and the Crown. Importantly, it reified an ideological bridge between the Canadas, their rebellions, and the United States.[86]

William Lyon Mackenzie – an advocate and admirer of American institutions – used American history in his press, and this laid the foundation of an imagined, united front linking Upper Canada and the United States. This union was an emotional union which implied Upper Canadians and Americans shared a common Anglo heritage and a

[86] "The Declaration of the Reformers of the City of Toronto to their Fellow-Reformers in Upper Canada," *The Constitution*, August 2, 1837.

collective history dating back to the revolutionary and colonial periods. Aside from linking themselves to the United States and the celebrated memory of the American Revolution, the Mackenzie-Toronto reformer declaration also aligned the Upper Canadian reformers with the interests of their already rebelling Lower Canadian brethren. Together, these two groups inhabiting the Canadas collectively agitated for reform, responsible (representative) government, and freedom from British tyranny.

During the American Revolution, in 1776, the group of American men tasked with drafting the Declaration of Independence formally condemned British rule in the Thirteen American colonies. A little over fifty years later, Mackenzie and the Toronto Vigilance Committee echoed America's Revolutionary generation and argued the following:[87]

> The right was conceded to the present United States at the close of a successful revolution, to form a constitution for themselves; and the loyalists, with their descendants and others now peopling this portion of America, are entitled to the same liberty without the shedding of blood — more they do not ask; less they ought not to have. But, while the revolution of the former has been rewarded with a consecutive prosperity unexampled in the history of the world, the loyal valour of the latter alone remains amidst the blight of misgovernment to tell them what they might have been, as the not less valiant sons of American Independence.[88]

As a result of their loyalty to Britain, the Toronto reformers believed they earned their freedom. The independence Americans earned after the Revolution left the U.S. – in a comparative sense – prosperous, as their Upper (and Lower) Canadian counterparts

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[87] This group who drafted the Declaration included: future presidents John Adams and Thomas Jefferson; perhaps the most famous American – other than George Washington – of the Revolutionary era, Benjamin Franklin; Roger Sherman, an American politician who signed a number of founding documents; and Robert Livingston, who helped negotiate the Louisiana Purchase and served as a diplomat to France.

[88] "Declaration of the Reformers of the City of Toronto," *The Constitution*, August 2, 1837.

suffered through a number of injustices at the hands of the Crown and the governing oligarchy known as the Family Compact.

In the decades following the founding of Upper Canada, some Upper Canadians, particularly those aligned ideologically with William Lyon Mackenzie and the Toronto reformers, grew disenchanted with the Family Compact. Mackenzie and the other reformers clamored together and claimed the Family Compact abused its power for financial gain. Aside from being economically disadvantageous for the people of Upper Canada, the ruling oligarchy centered in Toronto was politically negligent. Mackenzie argues these transgressions contributed to a lack of social, economic, and political agency for Upper Canadians. Thus, Mackenzie and the Toronto reformers demanded change in the form of responsible government – a step in the right direction toward self-government.[89]

This chapter argues that William Lyon Mackenzie's career as an Upper Canadian journalist and newspaperman was intertwined with developments in the United States. Mackenzie regularly "tapped into" American cultural currents as he disseminated his work to his readers throughout North America – especially those living the U.S.-Upper Canadian culture area that surrounded the Great Lakes. On a number of occasions, Mackenzie utilized popular culture, the memory of the American Revolution, and celebrated a general sense of social, political, and technological progress that emanated throughout North America in the 1820s and into the 1830s. Beginning with the American Revolution and expedited by the sea change ushered in with the U.S. embracing

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[89] In the context of Canadian history, responsible government is essentially a government that is responsible to the people. This government should not be reliant on the whims of an imperial power – such as the Crown.

capitalism, these changes were "an inexorable tectonic force" which was found throughout in U.S.-Upper Canadian borderland in the early decades of the nineteenth century and erupted in the Canadas in the 1830s.[90]

Historian Rosemarie K. Bank suggests, the two major events that led to Americans celebrating this sense of progress were General Lafayette's return to the United States "as the nation's guest" and the opening of the Erie Canal. Although exclusionary, individuals, such as Mackenzie, celebrated "universal American values."[91] With a touch of dramatic flair coupled with the power of the burgeoning antebellum press, Mackenzie manipulated the emotions of antebellum Americans and Upper Canadians and situated the plight of the Canadas and the outbreak of the Upper Canada Rebellion within the context of the of the memory of the American Revolution. Despite his rebellion's ultimate failure, Mackenzie successfully used these images and convinced hundreds (if not, thousands) of Upper Canadians and Americans to join his cause. Capitalizing on these tropes of progress found throughout antebellum American culture, Mackenzie was aware of his audience which challenged the Crown and its authority in an attempt to free Upper Canada from British thralldom.

Playing off the anxiety, anger, and uncertainty his readers faced in their everyday lives , Mackenzie, along with his sympathizers formed, an imagined

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[90] Despite Pinker being trained as a psychologist who specialized in linguistics, he now writes rather optimistic tomes arguing the world is getting better which include *Better Angels of Our Nature* (2011) and *Enlightenment Now* (2018). For more on Pinker's concept of progress as a driver of history, see: Steven Pinker, *Enlightenment Now: The Case for Reason, Science, Humanism, and Progress* (New York: Viking, 2018), 55, 109, 214.

[91] According to Bank, "universal" refers to "Euro-American Enlightenment values" as well as "the many ('American' democratic refinement of these.)" For more, see: Rosemarie K. Bank, *Theatre Culture in America, 1825-1860* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997), 5

community.[92] Mackenzie's imagined community linked together Anglophone "Yankee" North Americans – Upper Canadian and American – in a fictive international brotherhood. This binational Anglo (English)-American union rekindled a continental crusade for liberty which began in 1776. In addition to their shared Anglo heritage and mutual disdain for the Crown, Upper Canadians and American spoke a common English language and now, because of Mackenzie and his press, were part of an transnational national mythology.

Using William Lyon Mackenzie's biography as a case study in antebellum celebrity culture and sensationalism illustrates how Mackenzie harnessed current events and the popular culture to sway public opinion by appealing to his readers' emotions in his publications. The page-turning articles in Mackenzie's work inspired a number of readers to take up his cause to free Upper Canada from British despotism. This also shows how Jacksonian era ideas about republicanism was by no means exclusive to the United States as Mackenzie was a conduit in which Jacksonian ideology sept into Upper Canada.

This chapter examines the context and early Upper Canadian portion of the 1837-1838 rebellion. The chapter is somewhat biographical in nature and specifically about Mackenzie's literary endeavors, failed political career, his interactions and impressions of the United States, and his botched rebellion at York (Toronto).[93] Although the rebels and

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[92] In 1839, when he published out of Rochester, New York, Mackenzie claimed he had more than 2000 subscribers. For more, see: *Mackenzie's Gazette*, February 23, 1839.

[93] The biographical portion(s) of this chapter is absolutely necessary – especially as most American historians who would read this project are more than likely not familiar with William Lyon Mackenzie or the Upper Canadian Rebellion. What knowledge most individuals have on either topic is marginal at best.

their American supporters were separated by an arbitrary border and a series of wars, the Upper Canadians and Americans who banded together in the late 1830s shared a common goal: to reform the Upper Canadian political system and to allow republicanism and democracy to thrive in North America unabated by the hierarchies, social structures, and the governmental systems of the Old World.

The Firebrand's Biography: William Lyon Mackenzie's Early Life

William Lyon Mackenzie, the firebrand responsible for the Upper Canadian Rebellion, was a Scottish born, Canadian-American journalist, newspaper editor, publisher, and politician. In United States historiography Mackenzie is an unknown figure, mostly relegated to the footnotes of monographs and may (if one is lucky) make sporadic appearances in select survey-level early American history textbooks. Conversely, Mackenzie is a quite prominent figure in Canadian historiography. In the nineteenth century, especially after Mackenzie's rebellion, commentators, among other learned individuals, characterized Mackenzie as either a reform-minded politician or a treasonous rebel. His reform efforts, however, were an instrumental step on the path to responsible government. Mackenzie's reform efforts ushered in Upper Canada's transition from colony to dominion. Mackenzie's story is woven into the social and political history of Canada. Since at least the 1950s, Canadian scholarly interest in Mackenzie's life has "undergone a virtual resurrection." In his short piece on Mackenzie, historian Anthony Rasporich writes, "[Fred] Armstrong has recently predicted: 'One fact appears to be certain: Mackenzie will remain the persistent hero; he and his rebellion are just too colourful to be shunned aside… and probably his remaining as a hero is as it should be; our very constitutional, generally peaceful, somewhat

alcoholic and quite sexless history needs some Mackenzies to keep it alive in the classrooms."[94]

William Lyon Mackenzie was born near Dundee, Scotland, in the United Kingdom on March 12, 1795. William Lyon belonged to the Mackenzie Clan – a family of Scottish Highlanders – who were according to Mackenzie family lore, among the last Scotsmen to wage war against an English king.[95] This particular uprising, one in which both of William Lyon's grandparents participated in, occurred in 1745 commonly referred to the Forty-Five ('45). The '45 was the last of a series of English Jacobite rebellions in the eighteenth century.[96] The Jacobites capitalized on a tidal wave of political instability throughout Europe, which was a direct result of the War of the Austrian Secession.[97] The Jacobites goal was to overthrow the reigning monarch – George II – and restore the English throne back to the House of Stuart. The Jacobites

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[94] The "firebrand" label comes from the title of William Kilbourn's seminal work on William Lyon Mackenzie. For more, see *The Firebrand: William Lyon Mackenzie and the Rebellion in Upper Canada* (1956); Frederick H. Armstrong, "William Lyon Mackenzie: The Persistent Hero," *Journal of Canadian Studies* 6 no.3 (1971), 34. Anthony W. Rasporich, "William Lyon Mackenzie," in *Readings in Canadian History: Pre-Confederation*, eds. R. Douglas Francis and Donald B. Smith (New York: Hold, Rinehart, and Winston, 1982), 296.

[95] According to Duayne Meyer, Scottish Highlanders inhabited an area "north and west of a line formed approximately by the foothills of the Grampian Mountains." In the eighteenth century, the Scots lived in a feudal society. These men and women were the descendants of Irish Gaels. Due to geographic isolation, Scottish Highlanders spoke a different language, maintained different cultures, and, to the chagrin – or perhaps "amazement" – of English observers, lived in a world with different gender roles. For more, see Meyer's *The Highland Scots of North Carolina, 1732-1776* (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 1961), 4-10.

[96] The Jacobites (or the Jacobite Movement) were a group of Catholic Englishmen that attempted to restore a Catholic monarch to England's throne. They believed the rightful English king was from the House of Stuart – not the House of Hanover.

[97] During the eighteenth century, the War of the Austrian Secession was one of many global wars plaguing the British Empire. The North American theater of the War of the Austrian Secession is better known King George's War. This conflict saw the British invade and capture the French fortress Louisbourg. The British, however, to the chagrin of many North American colonials returned the fortress to the French ant the conclusion of the conflict. For more see: Howard H. Peckham, *The Colonial War, 1689-1762* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1964), especially pages 97-120.

claimed a number of small victories, such as taking Edinburgh, but they eventually were outmatched by Crown forces. After the Highlanders' defeat, the Bonnie Prince Charlie (Charles Edward Stuart) – the leader of the rebellion – fled in exile to France. Both of Mackenzie's grandparents, two esteemed Scottish Highlanders who fought alongside the Jacobites during the '45, loved engaging with the past. According to William Kilbourn, both of Mackenzie's grandparents "with a precision in historical calculation then commonly practised, traced their story to the Flood and derived their pedigree from our common parent Noah."[98] Mackenzie's proclivity for the past – and perhaps manipulating aspects of -- was hereditary and rooted in what was essentially an invented familial tradition.[99]

Tragedy plagued Mackenzie's early life. Daniel, William Lyon's father, died shortly after his birth. Another unfortunate story is an account of Mackenzie's early years in Scotland. One of Mackenzie's earliest memories was of his mother. Sometime around 1801, Elizabeth Mackenzie, William Lyon's mother, sold a Mackenzie family tartan for food – a tartan is a bolt of cloth, usually plaid patterned, which represents a Scottish family or clan. When Mrs. Mackenzie sold the tartan, she purchased a paltry breakfast of barley to feed her young son. In retrospect, taking Mackenzie's humble, yet tragic, upbringing into consideration, Sir Francis Bond Head, the Lieutenant Governor of Upper

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[98] Geoffrey Plank, *Rebellion and Savagery: The Jacobite Rising of 1745 and the British Empire* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2008), 1-8; 125; William Kilbourn, *The Firebrand: William Lyon Mackenzie and the Rebellion in Upper Canada* (Toronto: Dundurn Press, 2008), 35.

[99] According to the historian and sociologist Eric Hobsbawm, invented tradition refers to "a set of practices, normally governed by overtly or tacitly accepted rules and of a ritual or symbolic nature, which seek to inculcate certain values and norms of behavior by repetition, which automatically implies continuity with the past." For more, see: Eric Hobsbawm, "Introduction: Inventing Traditions" in *The Invention of Tradition,* edited by Eric Hobsbawm and Terence Ranger (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1983): 1.

Canada and one of the antagonists in Mackenzie's Upper Canadian melodrama of the 1830s, described Mackenzie as a "pedlar's lad."[100]

[**Figure 2: Etching of William Lyon Mackenzie in Charles Lindsay, *The Life and Times of William Lyon Mackenzie*, 1862**]

As a young adult, Mackenzie left the United Kingdom in 1820 to sail for Upper Canada. In the aftermath of the Napoleonic era, Mackenzie left the U.K. because a business venture –specifically his general store – was unsuccessful leaving him bankrupt and jobless (something that happened quite a bit in Mackenzie's life). Upon reaching

[100] Quoted in Henry Ferns and Bernard Ostry, *The Age of Mackenzie King* (Toronto: James Lormier & Company, Publishers, 1976), 7.

York, Upper Canada, Mackenzie worked as a mercantile. Then, in 1823, he partnered with John Lesslie and established the eponymously named firm Mackenzie and Lesslie and opened a general store. Reportedly, later that year, the Mackenzie-Lesslie partnership was amicably dissolved. Mackenzie then relocated to Queenstown, Upper Canada. While in Queenstown, Mackenzie opened another store. However, relocating to Queenstown led to an epiphany. This was the point in Mackenzie's life, according to Lindsey, Mackenzie's son-in-law and the writer who used many of Mackenzie's private papers and compiled the first biographical account of Mackenzie's life, was when he "had abandoned commerce for politics; and as a journalist, made the first step in the eventful career which opens with this period of his life." One year later, Mackenzie began his first of many North American newspapers, the *Colonial Advocate* (1824).[101]

Prior to Mackenzie's *Colonial Advocate*, the radical, free press in Anglophone Canada was virtually non-existent. Paul Nesbitt-Larking writes, "Until the early 1800s, most newspapers were fundamentally the official organs of the [Tory] establishment." Even when there was a dissenting voice found in the press – normally though editorials or letters written to the paper's editor – there was usually a paper or journal supporting the ruling, colonial elite. One such example, according to Nesbitt-Larking, was Bartimus Ferguson's "radical *Niagara Spector*" which opposed the "official *Upper Canada Gazette*" – the mouthpiece of the Family Compact in Upper Canada. As Mackenzie gained his editorial pulpit, he attacked the Tories in Upper Canada and their paper, the

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[101] Charles Lindsey, *The Life and Times of William Lyon Mackenzie with an Account of the Canadian Rebellion of 1837, and the Subsequent Frontier Disturbances, Chiefly from Unpublished Documents* (Toronto, P.R. Randall, 1862), 28-38; Ferns and Ostry, *The Age of Mackenzie King*, 7.

Gazette. The editor of the *Gazette*, Charles Fothergill, was a member of the the Upper Canadian elite.[102]

Aside from editing the *Gazette*, Fothergill was a wealthy landowner, "the King's printer and at the same time a member of parliament." Mackenzie suggested that Fothergill and the *Gazette* were not representative of the political climate in Upper Canada in the 1820s – his was. Mackenzie's statement rang particularly true as the *Gazette* was an organ for the Crown and the Family Compact in Upper Canada. Mackenzie then adds the following provocative statement: while Upper Canada is "languishing in stupor and inactivity, our enterprising neighbours [the United States] are laughing at us to scorn." Despite ruffling the feathers of Upper Canada's elite ruling class, Mackenzie's publishing career had only begun and his tenure in publishing was by no means a humdrum affair. Mackenzie was well aware of the power of the press. With his ear to the ground and firmly behind *The Colonial Advocate,* Mackenzie agitated for change in Upper Canada. He looked to the distant past and compared Upper Canada to the United States, from its infancy in the colonial period to its adolescence as a growing republic during the early nineteenth century.[103]

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[102] Paul Nesbitt-Larking, *Politics, Society, and the Media* (Peterborough: Broadview Press, 2006), 35.

[103] *The Canadian Newspaper Directory: A Gazetteer* (Montreal: A. McKim & Co., 1892), 41; "The Editor's Address to the Public," *The Colonial Advocate*, May 18, 1824.

Mackenzie: A U.S.-Inspired Newspaperman

Before venturing any further, it is important to establish the parameters of Mackenzie's literary style. Some scholars labeled Mackenzie as fiery and tempestuous.[104] Others suggest "Mackenzie was not a competent writer" and Mackenzie's articles have been described as crosses between "Old Farmer's Almanac and a threadbare Ciceronian rhetoric."[105] While the notable Marxist scholar, Margaret Fairley equates Mackenzie to the celebrated revolutionary era writer, Thomas Paine. To Fairley, Mackenzie, like Paine, was an active writer when "journalism was still to a great extent a literary art" and had a great deal of political influence which later became a cog in twentieth century political movements.[106]

In the 1830s and 1840s, Americans living in large urban centers, such as New York City, had access to a wide-variety of newspapers. For example, in New York City, citizens of Gotham could choose between forty to fifty publications. The papers found in New York City were mostly commercial and oftentimes political in nature. The more politically-oriented dailies reported news through a Whig, Democratic, (or other party) perspective. Some, however, "took a more religious or reform slant, while others were primarily literary or cultural" in tone. These periodicals featured more than stories from

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[104] Marian B. McLeod, "Establishing a Canon of Commonwealth Public Address," in *Canon of Commonwealth Literature: Essays in Criticism*, edited by Alan Lindsey McLeod (New Delhi: Sterling Publishers Private Limited, 2003), 109.

[105] James Doyle, *Progressive Heritage: The Evolution of a Politically Radical Literary Tradition in Canada* (Waterloo, Ontario: Wilfrid Laurier University Press,2002), 19.

[106] Ibid., 18-19.

Europe and other, more exotic locales; they served as a tool to communicate ideas to the masses and validated the American political process.[107]

For much of the nineteenth century, newspapers were the only form of mass communication. Through a political lens, reporting the news and other key events was important. Historian Jeffrey Pasley writes, "the newspaper press was the political system's central institution, not simply a forum or atmosphere in which politics took places." Newspapermen and editors were "purposeful actors in the political process." Newspaper coverage legitimized live events. The press also manufactured and helped stoke "public opinion" and "was a legitimating force" behind politics in the U.S. A series of new innovations in printing helped spread ideas found in the press to an increasingly "plebian and street-smart crowd."[108]

Beginning in the 1830s, the penny press flooded city streets with cheaply printed alternatives to bi-weekly papers and larger, more traditional, daily newspapers A new, more efficient means to print papers changed the printing industry and journalism itself. The new penny newspapers were much smaller than their bulkier predecessors. More importantly, these papers were affordable and drew a wider and more diverse audience. As a result of the penny press's commercial appeal, journalists reported sensational

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[107] Patricia Cline Cohen, Timothy Gilfoyle, and Helen Lefkowitz Horowitz, *The Flash Press: Sporting Males Weeklies in 1840s New York* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press,2008), 1-2.

[108] Jeffrey L. Pasley, *"The Tyranny of Printers:" Newspaper Politics in the Early American Republic* (Charlottesville & London: University Press of Virginia, 2001), 3-6, 41; Cohen, Gilfoyle, and Horowitz, *The Flash Press*, 1-2.

stories which oftentimes embellished the truth. These papers "took hold of the public's imagination and stimulated an interest in newspapers that hand not been there before."[109]

The term "sensationalism" when applied to antebellum American print culture describes an exaggerated or hyperbolic writing style that appealed to the reader's emotions. As a term, sensationalism usually has a negative connotation; it is associated with low culture and the practice of yellow journalism that occurred in the U.S. later in the nineteenth century following the Spanish-American War (1898). The stories found in penny papers, historian of communications John D. Stevens writes, are "guilty pleasures." Sensationalism in American newspapers expanded the typical human interest story "to report gossip and scandal about individuals that had formerly been regarded as private." This blurring of public and private events allowed journalists and newspaper publishers to acquire a considerable amount of influence in antebellum America.[110]

Journalists and newspapermen, such as Mackenzie, knew that the press held a great deal of power. The wide availability of newspapers created a written vernacular. Some of the ideas, and most certainly the stories, in these nineteenth century newspapers were frequently shared by their readers. The vernacular, historian Thomas Leonard adds, is "unplanned and adaptable" and its meaning "can be taken for granted." Perhaps, more importantly, these newspapers sated a psychic desire for information which provided

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[109] John D. Stevens, *Sensationalism in the New York Press* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1991), 19; George H. Douglas, *The Golden Age of the Newspaper* (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 1999), 3.

[110] David M. Stewart, "Sensationalism" in *The Oxford History of Popular Print Culture: Volume 6 US Popular Print Culture, 1860-1920*, edited by Christine Bold (Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press, 2012), 375; Stevens, *Sensationalism in the N.Y. Press*, 5-6.

readers with a sense of order in a rapidly changing and interconnected nineteenth century world.[111]

Mackenzie, the U.S., and the Memory of the American Revolution – Pre-1837

In the United States, particularly during the early republic (1780s-1830s), public interest in the American Revolution and "celebrating its key figures" was commonplace. During the antebellum period – particularly after the social and economic transformations associated with the rise of capitalism – a generation of Americans questioned their place in a rapidly changing nation. To remedy the psychic trauma of drastic change, many Americans looked to the past. As historians Gregory Nobles and Alfred Young assert, "The meaning of the American Revolution… has always been a measure of the ways the United States has progressed as a society." During the nation's transition to capitalism, day-to-day life in the U.S. became less isolated. Men and women moved to burgeoning urban centers from rural areas. These changes occurred swiftly and affected nearly every American in the antebellum North. These widespread changes in American life led to a sense of doubt and some Americans questioned if the United States had fulfilled the promises of the founders. Others, such as the cantankerous frontier lawyer-turned-military hero and future politician, Andrew Jackson, attempted to emulate them.[112]

Mackenzie actively engaged with the antebellum U.S. press. Through the office of his newspaper, *The Colonial Advocate*, Mackenzie purchased American newspapers

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[111] Thomas C. Leonard, *The Power of the Press: The Birth of American Political Reporting* (New York and Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1986), 4-6.

[112] Thomas A. Chambers, *Memories of War: Visiting Battlegrounds and Bonefields in the Early American Republic* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2012), 87; Gregory H. Nobles and Alfred F. Young, introduction to *Whose American Revolution Was It? Historian Interpret the Founding* (New York and London: New York University Press, 2011), 1.

and distributed them throughout Upper Canada – particularly in York and its environs via Queenston, Upper Canada and in the U.S., Lewiston, New York. In addition to consuming and redistributing American newspapers, Mackenzie interacted with American topics quite regularly. American papers were easier to circulate throughout Upper Canada as American papers (unlike Canadian papers) did not have to have pre-paid postage to circulate throughout the colony.[113]

As a newspaperman, Mackenzie knew his audience. One notable instance led to Mackenzie venturing throughout the Northeast as a beat reporter for the *Colonial Advocate*. During his journalistic adventure, Mackenzie chronicled a series of stunts performed by the infamous antebellum daredevil, Sam Patch (1807-1829).[114]

Sam Patch was the nineteenth century's Robert "Evel" Knievel (1938-2007). Patch's daring feats were at the heart of antebellum American popular culture. The growing media gave him Patch great deal of exposure. Historian LeRoy Ashby writes, Patch's name "surfaced in newspapers, books, shows, and even a cigar brand." The expression "'What the Sam Patch?' became a popular phrase and President Jackson named his horse after the falls jumper."[115] By covering Patch, Mackenzie linked the U.S. and Upper Canada. Mackenzie's paper soothed "feelings of disconnectedness" among his readers – especially in a time period of rapid change and geographic isolation.[116] By

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[113] Lindsey, *William Lyon Mackenzie*, 55.

[114] *The Colonial Advocate*, January 12, 1836.

[115] LeRoy Ashby, *With Amusement for All: A History of American Popular Culture Since 1830* (Lexington: The University Press of Kentucky, 2006), 9.

[116] Trevor J. Blank, *The Last Laugh: Folk Humor, Celebrity Culture, and Mass-Mediated Disasters in the Digital Age* (Madison: The University of Wisconsin Press, 2013), xxv.

including Patch in the *Colonial Advocate*, Mackenzie tailored his newspaper to cater to the masses. Mackenzie writing about characters such as Patch, allowed his "readers [to empathize] with the characters…thanks to the working of the narrative form itself."[117]

The eccentric Sam Patch was the prototypical archetype of an antebellum celebrity. Patch was born in Pawtucket, Rhode Island in 1807. As a child he worked as a cotton spinner. According to Ruth Rosenberg-Naparsteck, Patch began stunt jumping for purses of money. Patch eventually became a falls-jumper after his business partner abandoned him leaving him penniless. His first jump was on September 30, 1827 at Passaic Falls, New Jersey. Patch stripped down to his undershirt and underwear then jumped over the Passaic Falls. Patch's heroics led to a degree of success. Due to his newfound celebrity and notoriety he jumped over the falls three more times. [118]

About two years later on October 22, 1829, Mackenzie ventured to Niagara Falls to take in the spectacle of Patch's daring and quite dangerous feat. Historian Paul Johnson writes, "William Lyon Mackenzie witnessed Sam's leap from below Table Rock and greeted the jumper that evening, when Sam ferried to Canada." After witnessing Patch's jump, Mackenzie, according to Johnson, "armed with his eyewitness experience of the leap, and with a firm grounding of the literary sublime, Mackenzie wrote his

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[117] Lynn Hunt, *Inventing Human Rights: A History* (New York: W.W. Norton,2007), 38-39.

[118] Ruth Rosenberg-Naparsteck, "The Real Simon Pure Sam Patch," *Rochester History* vol. 52 no.3 (1991), 4; Vivian Nun Halloran, "Biting Reality: Extreme Eating and the Fascination with the Gustatory Abject" in *Iowa Journal of Cultural Studies* Vol. 4 no.1 (2004), 29.

story." Mackenzie was firmly in control of the story. Exciting stories in media, according to Pinker is addicting. Covering Patch exposed Mackenzie to a wider readership.[119]

Mackenzie described Patch's daring 118-foot leap over the American side of Falls into the raging Niagara River. In this story, Mackenzie provides a brief biographical vignette on Patch: he characterized Patch as no more than thirty years old, a respectable man (by nineteenth century and Mackenzie's own standards), and someone who consumed alcohol with restraint. In Mackenzie's piece, he continued and described, in detail, the dangerous nature of the Falls and the Niagara River. In Mackenzie's *Sketches of Canada and the United States* he concludes Patch's story with recounting the jump that led to Patch's demise.[120]

At Genesee Falls, located near Rochester, New York, Sam Patch jumped over the falls into the water nearly 120-feet below. Mackenzie eluded to his readers that Patch was well aware of the Genesee Falls jump being his last, yet, knowing his fate, he continued this fatal endeavor. In a Shakespearean manner, Patch made his grand exit. The famed stuntman bid farewell to the crowd. A friend of Patch's was present and Patch conveyed to him that he wanted to give his wife the earnings from this final jump. The daredevil, Mackenzie writes, "fell sidelong into the water… disappeared in the gulf below, to rise no more." Despite this story being sold as a nineteenth century celebrity fluff or human interest piece, antebellum newspapermen understood that newspapers were sold and

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[119] Paul E. Johnson, *Sam Patch, the Famous Jumper* (New York: Hill and Wang, 2003), 122-123; Steven Pinker, "Mind over Mass Media," *New York Times*, June 10, 2018. Accessed on October 20, 2018, https://www.nytimes.com/2010/06/11/opinion/11Pinker.html.

[120] William Lyon Mackenzie, *Sketches of Canada and the United States* (London: Effingham Wilson, Royal Exchange, 1833), 97-101.

circulated in "political, not economic terms." Through the publishing and circulation of newspapers, American politics in the antebellum era was, according to scholar David Haven Blake, "a kind of emerging public theater, with war heroes and politicians being made into national celebrities." Mackenzie was most certainly aware of this. With a mastery of prose and an ability to captivate his readers' imaginations, Mackenzie willfully exploited and understood the power of the press and used it to his advantage.[121]

By the early 1820s, Mackenzie was firmly established behind the printing press of his first newspaper, The *Colonial Advocate*. Mackenzie's *Colonial Advocate* was a dissenting political voice in Upper Canada. Due to Mackenzie's alleged radicalism, his allegiance to the (British) Crown was called into question by members of the Family Compact. According to the June 3, 1824 edition of the *Colonial Advocate*, The *Upper Canada Gazette*, published and edited by Charles Fothergill – attacked Mackenzie, his paper, and the integrity of the *Colonial Advocate*'s readers. Fothergill and Mackenzie were effectively engaged in a bout of journalistic fisticuffs. Mackenzie published a lengthy rebuttal to Fothergill in an effort to defend his reputation. In this article, Mackenzie defends his Canadianess against the *Gazette's* attack on the *Colonial Advocate* and Mackenzie himself.[122]

Mackenzie's address titled "To The Canadian People," published in the June 10, 1824 edition of the *Colonial Advocate,* attempted to clear his name. In Mackenzie's rebuttal to Fothergill, he refers to the United States at length. Mackenzie elucidated a

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[121] *The Colonial Advocate*, October 22, 1829. Mackenzie, *Sketches of Canada and the United States*, 97-10; Halloran, "Biting Reality," 29; David Haven Blake, *Walt Whitman and the Culture of American Celebrity* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 2006), 54-55.

[122] *The Colonial Advocate*, June 3, 1824.

number of similarities comparing the current conditions in Upper Canada to the tumult in the thirteen American colonies during the period leading to the American Revolution. Some of the more interesting examples Mackenzie draws parallels to are related to the "rights of Englishmen."[123] The Founders believed their rights as Englishmen – both natural and legal rights – were routinely violated by the Crown. The violations of these rights is what ultimately led to the American Revolution. Echoing Patrick Henry's immutable utterance, "No taxation without representation," the first right Mackenzie mentioned was the notion of taxation and the lack of colonial parliamentary presence in London. Mackenzie claimed to be loyal to the Crown. He quoted Lord Camden who claimed "taxation without representation are inseparable." Mackenzie continued to make a few more curious assertions. One of the more notable (and rather ironic) claims is that Mackenzie could not imagine then General Andrew Jackson – a man he would later speak highly of – would "sit in the illustrious Washington's chair, nor ever be chosen to fill the highest and most honoured seat in the gift of a free people." Mackenzie then addressed the individual liberty of leaving one's country, particularly Englishmen leaving the United Kingdom and relocating to the United States.[124]

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[123] The "rights of Englishmen" were a series of reforms and rights granted to citizens of what was England and later the United Kingdom. These rights date back to the Magna Carta in 1215. This document – so essential to civil rights – promised a number of civil liberties which were guaranteed to English people.

[124] "To The Canadian People," *Colonial Advocate*, June 10, 1824. Lord Camden was born as Charles Pratt. Throughout his notable legal career, Lord Camden was considered a champion of "English liberty." Some notable highlights of Camden's career include: rallying against the Stamp Act and arguing the American colonies should not be taxed without representation. For more, see Edward Foss, "Pratt, Charles, Earl Camden" in *Judges of England; with Sketches of Their Lives*, vol. VIII (John Murray: London, 1864), 357-363.

Mackenzie's controversial *Colonial Advocate* made quite a splash in Upper Canada, when on May 4, 1826 he announced his retirement. In a bulletin addressed to his readers, Mackenzie writes, "The subscriber having determined to retire from the management of the *Colonial Advocate* at the conclusion of the next number, respectfully informs its numerous patrons that his successors will pay their respect to them." This perhaps was a ploy to lure his readers for subscriptions, or as Mackenzie was gaining his political voice, allowing for as Žižek suggests "enjoyment in sense." a well-planned publicity stunt that reinforced his identity as the voice of the politically disenfranchised in Upper Canada. Regardless of Mackenzie's motivation for prematurely ending the run of the *Colonial Advocate,* his leave from the newspaper was temporary and the paper continued publication.[125]

By the mid-1820s, Mackenzie presence and agitation disrupted the social and political hegemony of the Family Compact in Upper Canada. Because of Mackenzie's literary threat, a select group of individuals believed they needed to take action. On June 8, 1826 twelve Tories raided the offices of Mackenzie's *Colonial Advocate*. As the Sons of Liberty boarded the *Dartmouth, Eleanor*, and *Beaver* in December of 1773, these men, who were Upper Canadian lawyers and law students disguised themselves as Native Americans and destroyed the *Colonial Advocate's* press. Dressing as a Native was by no means uncommon and as historian Philip Deloria notes that doing so was a direct challenge to "the social and political configuration of the Republic." To add insult to injury, while harkening back to the Boston Tea Party, these raiders threw some of the pieces of the press into a nearby body of water. As the Boston Tea Party was one of the

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[125] *Colonial Advocate*, May 4, 1826; Slavoj Žižek, *The Sublime Object of Ideology* (New York and London: Verso, 1989), 43-44.

sparks leading to the American Revolution, the Types Riot has a similar importance in Canadian history. The Types Riot, as historian Albert Schrauwers suggests, could be examined as a stand-alone event, but it was "a first step, 'the Germ of the Rebellion'" which would occur over a decade later in early December 1837.[126]

A year after the Types Riot, Mackenzie published a tell-all account describing the event: *The History of the Destruction of the Colonial Advocate Press* (1827). At first glance, Mackenzie's publication seems to be a collection of documents and editorials written by Mackenzie himself. Other documents include transcribed newspaper clippings and accounts from witnesses and collaborators that established a legal defense for Mackenzie. Aside from losing his editorial pulpit at the *Colonial Advocate*, Mackenzie believed he and the people of Upper Canada lost something greater: the freedom of the press. The *Canadian Freeman*, another radical, dissenting Upper Canadian newspaper, described the Types Riot and its effects. According to the *Canadian Freeman*, the destruction of Mackenzie's press was "a conspiracy against THE LIBERTY OF THE PRESS [sic]" … the Native American dressed perpetrators who destroyed the *Colonial Advocate* press committed a "conspiracy against the public peace." The *Canadian Freeman* then proposed the following: "What would the enlightened people of the United States say – what will the world say – when they hear that emissaries from the very offices of the Governor… broke open the private house of a British subject in open day [in York] and laid waste to his property, in the presence of two British magistrates?"

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[126] Carol Wilton, "'Lawless Law:' Conservative Political Violence in Upper Canada, 1818-41." *Law History and Review* 13 no. 1 (Spring 1995), 111; Philip J. Deloria, *Playing Indian* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1998), 69; Albert Schrauwers, *Union is Strength: W.L. Mackenzie, The Children of Peace, and the Emergence of Joint Stock Democracy in Upper Canada* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2009), 71.

Agents of the Family Compact had resorted to vigilantism and a cadre of Tories loyal to the Crown acted in an extrajudicial manner to silence Mackenzie's press. Following the Types Riot, Mackenzie made a considerable amount of money because of it. As a part of a settlement to recover his losses, Mackenzie was awarded $2,500 and court costs from the defendants.[127]

The legal turmoil and financial gain that followed the Types Riot did not silence Mackenzie and the press of the *Colonial Advocate*. In *Union is Strength*: *W.L. Mackenzie*, *The Children of Peace and the Emergence of Joint Stock Democracy in Upper Canada*, historian Albert Schrauwers reiterated an argument made by historian Paul Romney who suggested that the Types Riot was the tipping point that led to Upper Canadians agitating for reform. Schrauwers writes, in Romney's appraisal of the Types Riot, Romney used an archaeological approach which traced "the 'outrage' [that] highlighted 'our collective oblivion from the climate of social discontent that gave it meaning.'" As a result of the Types riot, the harassment and personal loss Mackenzie experienced pushed this newspaper editor with political aspirations into a revolutionary. [128]

For many Upper Canadians, his story "served as a lightning rod of discontent because so many Upper Canadians had faced similar endemic abuses and hence identified their political fortunes with his."[129] The Types Riot galvanized Mackenzie. In late 1827, Mackenzie announced his intentions to run for office. Mackenzie declared his candidacy for the Provincial Parliament of Upper Canada. Mackenzie's public proclamation

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[127] William Lyon Mackenzie, *The History of the Destruction of the Colonial Advocate Press* (York, Upper Canada: Colonial Advocate Office, 1827), 3-4, 6.

[128] Schrauwers, *Union is Strength*, 72.

[129] Ibid., 72.

outlining his intent to run for public office stated his reformist intentions. Mackenzie was against the "ecclesiastical domination" of the province and argued the "nations which have bowed to its yoke, are become the dark abodes of ignorance and superstition – oppression and misery." He vowed to the people of Upper Canada to selflessly support and advocate for their rights and pursue the development of Upper Canada as an entity free from British subjugation.[130]

As a politician, one of the first issues Mackenzie advocated for was the rights of U.S. -born residents of Upper Canada. The status of Americans who migrated to Upper Canada after the Treaty of Paris was signed in 1783 had been a controversial a political issue since the early nineteenth century. In 1804, colonial officials passed the Alien Act. In a rather tyrannical fashion (and *very* similar to laws passed in the United States during the Adams administration), the Alien Act "made it possible to arrest any person, who had not been an inhabitant of the province for six months [and]not taken the oath of allegiance," or any suspicious activity that was disruptive to the Crown. In extreme cases, individuals who refused to leave after being asked could be put to death. Americans living in Upper Canada ignored these statutes and they were rarely enforced. However, in many cases, as Mackenzie's son-in-law and biographer, Charles Lindsey, opines, these men "who cleared the country of forests, who had carried civilization into the wild… found themselves aliens, without any legal security for their property." [131]

Mackenzie and U.S. -born residents of Upper Canada believed they were rightfully outraged. In advocating for the rights of U.S. -born Canadians, Dr. John Rolph

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[130]"To the Electors of the County of York," *Colonial Advocate*, December 27, 1827.

[131] Charles Lindsey, *The Makers of Canada: William Lyon Mackenzie* (Toronto: Morang & Co. Limited, 1909), 88-89, 141.

(1793-1870) introduced the so-called "Alien" or "Naturalization Bill" to allow them to become citizens. The legislation Rolph proposed was put before Upper Canada's legislative assembly in late 1827. Born in England, Rolph was a Cambridge educated physician who ventured into Canadian politics in the 1820s. Rolph represented a number of Americans living in his district. Rolph saw the Family Compact's attacks on the United States and dismissal of anything remotely related to Americans as a "popular cause." Rolph made a steadfast effort to persuade his fellow Upper Canadians that the Americans living in Upper Canada were not a nuisance. In a biographical entry on Rolph, historian G.M. Craig writes, that Rolph argued, Upper Canadians should "'give over indulging in worthless slander of our neighbours and friends." Upper Canada had nothing to fear from its American settlers. These Yankees had not fled from "a bad government and a barren soil" but had come willingly and developed a "deep personal interest" in the province and its institutions." These Americans became just as Canadian as their Upper Canadian counterparts. These concerns, from more conservative Upper Canadians, however, had credence. The Americans who settled in Upper Canada were not Canadian or British citizens. These men and women grew up in what became the United States. The American republican form of government and the Spirit of '76 did not mesh well the constitutional monarchy that governed Britain and the British Empire. [132]

Dr. Rolph and Mackenzie became reluctant allies during the Upper Canada Rebellion and its aftermath. On January 3, 1828, Mackenzie published an editorial that

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[132] G.M. Craig, "John Rolph" in *Dictionary of Canadian Biography Volume IX (1861-1870)*, accessed March 8, 2018, http://www.biographi.ca/en/bio/rolph_john_9E.html.

condemned the Alien Bill. In his fiery literary takedown of the bill published in his *Colonial Advocate*, Mackenzie condemned a number of the resolutions passed. He wrote:

> Their determination in respect to the supporters of the Alien Bill ought to become universal throughout Upper Canada, for never was an intended status in the English language more fraught with shame and dishonor to the British name; it was a high-handed open measure of oppression, and if there is that noble and chivalrous spirit in the people of this colony which we give them credit for, there will very few indeed of the YEAS on the alien bill.[133]

Despite Mackenzie's rabblerousing in the *Colonial Advocate*, later in 1828, after sessions of debate, the Upper Canadian legislative assembly passed a series of resolves ameliorating the Yankee citizenship question. Americans and foreign born Upper Canadians would be subject to a naturalization process if they were to enjoy the same rights and privileges of British citizens. In his article, "Model Farmers, Dubious Citizens: Reconsidering the Pennsylvania Germans of Upper Canada, 1786-1834" historian Ross D. Fair outlines this process. First, U.S. -born landowners or public office holders who took an oath of allegiance or settled in Upper Canada before 1828 were "admitted and confirmed in all the privileges of British birth." Second, those who lived in Upper Canada in 1828 and had not taken an oath of allegiance of the Crown had to do so under the new law. Finally, if U.S.-born Upper Canadians were citizens of the province on March 1, 1828, did not own land and have not taken an oath of allegiance were required to do so. After taking the oath of allegiance, and after seven years of residence, these Americans could become naturalized citizens of Upper Canada. This, coupled with Mackenzie's growing dissatisfaction with the way in which Britain and the Family Compact governed Upper Canada, was one of the points where Mackenzie looked toward American and

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[133] *Colonial Advocate*, January 3, 1828.

American institutions more favorably and the later rebellion became a viable means to an end.[134]

Parabellum: Mackenzie's Political Shortcomings and The Push Toward Rebellion

From 1830-1834 Mackenzie served a member of Upper Canada's legislative assembly. In 1832, Mackenzie travelled abroad to London in order to appeal to Britain's Colonial Office for reform in Upper Canada. While in London, Mackenzie attempted to convince the imperial government "that there was something rotten and dangerous in the system of government adopted in Canada." Somehow, Mackenzie hoped to convene a conference of Britain's North American colonies. While in London, Mackenzie opined that perhaps his idea was a bit too lofty. He saw the hellish schedule of the people who worked in a parliamentary setting and equated it to slave labor. He wrote, "I became sensible that it would be the height of cruelty to attempt converting these persons into a congress for the larger half of the North American Continent, and thus confine them to London all the year round." The restrained, masculine efforts of the Toronto Reformers and William Lyon Mackenzie gained significant traction in Upper Canadian political culture.[135]

The News-Boys of Upper Canada, an organization of young men essential to distributing newspapers in the nineteenth century, published an 1834 New Year address that praised the efforts of the Toronto Reformers. According to the News-boys' address,

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[134] Ross D. Fair, "Model Farmers, Dubious Citizens: Reconsidering the Pennsylvania Germans of Upper Canada, 1786-1834" in *Beyond The Nation?: Immigrants' Local Lives in Transnational Cultures* edited by Alexander Freund (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2012), 97.

[135] "Good News From London," *Advocate*, January 4, 1834. Mackenzie, *Sketches of Canada and the United States*, xxiii.

the Canadian "patriot" Reformers forwarded "a brotherhood of affection, a community of rights, an identity of interests, and a union of power among Canadians of every religious persuasion, as the only means of promoting the chief good of Canada." Even this discourse by the News-Boys echoed Mackenzie's sentiment and referenced the conditions of Upper Canada. From their address on New Year's Day, 1834, the York Reformers used their "manly fortitude" to peacefully resist "measures of oppression so open and violent that had they occurred in Russia its serfs would have been awakened from the slumbers of a slavery of ages." The peaceful resistance displayed by the York Reformers was only a step toward long-lasting reform. For lasting reform, Mackenzie looked toward the United States.[136]

Throughout the 1830s, Mackenzie, who already suffered through Tory censorship, published a number of satirical and somewhat humorous attacks on the Family Compact. Mackenzie, however, published these under the pseudonym "Patrick Swift" to perhaps indicate his suggestions were "modest proposals." Mackenzie's character, Patrick Swift, was allegedly the grand-nephew of the Irish writer and satirist, Jonathan Swift (1667-1745). The elder Swift is known for writing *Gulliver's Travels* and "A Modest Proposal." On the other hand, Swift's "grand-nephew," Patrick, wrote a number of almanacs and editorials published in Mackenzie's *Colonial Advocate*. Mackenzie, or Swift, rather, borrowed the title of Benjamin Franklin's almanacs; Swift's almanacs were titled *Poor Richard, or the Yorkshire Almanac*. These allusions to Franklin's infamous journals drew his readers to the distant past and the revolutionary generation.

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[136] "From the News Boy's Annual Address for 1834," *The Advocate*, January 4, 1834.

Mackenzie's almanacs were quite informative. Writing as Swift, Mackenzie, compiled a list of members of the colonial government and summarized much of the colonial infrastructure of Upper Canada. Mackenzie also noted that the equation to determine colonial representation was quite odd. He writes, there are "a greater number of natives of the United States [i.e., the late Loyalists] in the present than in the last parliament." Swift then attacked the Crown and the Family Compact and listed a number of rights "demanded by the Canadians, but [were] actually withheld by the government." Some of these rights included:

> (1) The entire control of the whole provincial revenue to be vested in the representatives of the people in parliament. (2) The independence of the Judges… their appointment not be from among men not intimately connected with the political business of the province. (3) An independent Legislative Council or Senate instead of the assemblage of priests, placemen, and pensioners, now employed as lawgivers. (4) An administration or Executive Government responsible to the province for its action. (5) Equal rights to every religious denomination.[137]

Other issues Swift outlined are (6) making polling places more accessible and allowing Upper Canadians the right to vote by ballot. Mackenzie and sympathetic Upper Canadians also wanted to (7) "amend the constitution and laws, so that the representatives of less than one-third" of the Upper Canadian people be able to enact laws on the other two-thirds. Finally, (8) To exclude men from governing who "depended on

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[137] The numbers (in parenthesis) were found in the original. Patrick Swift (William Lyon Mackenzie), *No. II, Of "Poor Richard," or The Yorkshire Almanack for the Year of Our Lord 1831* (York, Upper Canada: Office of the Colonial Advocate, 1831), 9, in *Letters on Responsible Government by Legion* (Toronto: Examiner Office, 1844.) Baldwin Collection, Toronto Reference Library, Toronto, Ontario.

the executive for their daily bread and liable to be removed from office at pleasure." [138] Swift/Mackenzie's demands sought to democratize Upper Canada. A leveling of the political playing field would give Upper Canadians greater control of their lives and whittle away at the Family Compact's oligarchy. These demands seemed very American by design.

Mackenzie briefly left Upper Canada and travelled to the United States. Mackenzie toured the U.S., and visited major American cities including Philadelphia, Washington D.C., Rochester, and New York City among other antebellum urban areas. Mackenzie travelled the Erie Canal and outright praised numerous American institutions. Prior to this trip, Mackenzie had mixed feelings, or at times, was dismissive of the United States and American institutions. In the first issue of his *Colonial Advocate*, Mackenzie wrote: "We like American liberty well, but greatly prefer British liberty. British subjects, born in Britain, we have sworn allegiances to a constitutionality and we will die before we violate that oath." Another instance: in the U.S., "under a republican government, it in many places prospers; there it has no distinguishing feature of temporal power. If we doubt whether in that country its proselytes would be likely to increase." Mackenzie's passages note that he and other Upper Canadians like the idea of the United States, but do not want to lose their "Britishness." [139]

Nearly a decade later, Mackenzie's identity in *Sketches of Canada and the United States* is that of a radical. Mackenzie painted himself into the menagerie of ideas,

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[138] Ibid., 4; 9

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[139] Mackenzie's admiration of the Untied States and American institutions was a known fact after the publishing of *Sketches of Canada and the U.S.* In a review of his work, the editor of the (Edinburgh) *Scotsman* notes "The author of the volume before us, is an ardent admirer of American institutions…" For more, see *The Advocate* of January 4, 1834; *The Colonial Advocate*, May 18, 1824.

radicals, and figures that comprise the idea of the U.S. The penultimate paragraph of the introduction to his *Sketches of Canada and the United States* paints a vivid picture of what is to come. Mackenzie notes that the London *Morning Chronicle* wrote that its readers should engage in the great moments of British history. Mackenzie actually applauds that effort. In fact, he suggests that advisers of the crown "employ a leisure hour in comparing the history of the era preceding the revolution in North America, with events which are passing before their eyes on that interesting continent." Mackenzie was hopeful and as historian James W. Fraser suggests, "hope… is a rational choice and an essential element for building a better future." Nonetheless, Mackenzie's suggestion in *Sketches* may be pomp and gesturing to a number of Upper Canadians that grew tired of injustices inflicted upon them by the Crown. However, the conditions in Upper Canada Mackenzie referenced– particularly in the late 1820s into the 1830s – do resemble, at least slightly, the tumult in the American Colonies in the decade leading to the American Revolution.[140]

In 1833 and into 1834, Mackenzie, as "Patrick Swift," published another almanac. *A New Almanack for the Canadian True Blues* was similar to his earlier *Poor Richard's or the Yorkshire Almanack*. In this almanac, Mackenzie publicized the corrupt actions of the Family Compact. Mackenzie printed the names of prominent government officials and argued these Crown officials siphoned their wealth from the peoples of Upper Canada. These individuals included judges, clergy, tax collectors, and other officials. "Swift" writes, "Look up reader and you will see the branches… [as] the farmer toils, the

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[140] *The Colonial Advocate*, May 18, 1824; Mackenzie, *Sketches of Canada and the United States*, xxiv; James W. Fraser, *A History of Hope: When Americans Have Dared to Dream of a Better Future* (New York: Palgrave-Macmillan, 2002), xi.

mechanic soils, the labourer toils, and the family compact reap the fruit of their exertions."[141]

On March 6, 1834, York was renamed Toronto. On April 3, the Reform Party aldermen governing the city voted to appoint Mackenzie the Mayor of Toronto. This was unexpected. The governing elite expected Dr. Rolph, Mackenzie's confidant, and a more experienced politician, to become mayor. Mackenzie became mayor by party vote "to set-off to the wrongs he had endured both at home and abroad, and as a triumphant reply to the contumelious assertions of his enemies." This stems from the Legislative Assembly expelling Mackenzie in 1830 for publishing slanderous material about the Family Compact in the *Colonial Advocate*. He was re-elected, expelled, re-elected, and then expelled. He was re-elected in November 1832 and in February 1833, Mackenzie was found unfit to take his vote and not permitted to take his seat.[142] On a vote of ten-to-eight, Mackenzie went from political pariah to the "highest position in the gift of the city."

During his tenure as mayor, Mackenzie was proven ineffective. His appointment was essentially a novelty. Mackenzie served the remainder of his original term until 1835. Mackenzie failed in his bid to be re-elected. After his failed re-election bid, on July 4, 1836 Mackenzie published another newspaper, *The Constitution.* Mackenzie chose July 4 – Independence Day or the Fourth of July in the United States – for a rather clear and symbolic reason. In the nineteenth century, the Fourth of July and the rhetoric

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[141] Patrick Swift, *A New Almanack for the Canadian True Blues* York, Upper Canada: Office of the Colonial Advocate, 1831), 18, in *Letters on Responsible Government by Legion* (Toronto: Examiner Office, 1844.) Baldwin Collection, Toronto Reference Library, Toronto, Ontario.

[142] Charles P. Mulvany, Graeme M. Adam, and Christopher B. Robinson, *History of Toronto and County of York Ontario* (Toronto: C. Blackett Robinson Publisher,1885), 254-255; "Expulsion of Mr. Mackenzie," *Colonial Advocate*, January 4. 1834.

surrounding the promise of the American Revolution, "provided reassurance and guidance" to revolutionary figures such as Mackenzie. This imagery, flush with the heroic iconography of George Washington crossing of the Delaware River on Christmas, 1776; the Founding Fathers courageously signing their death warrants by sending their Declaration of Independence to George III; and the so-called "shot heard around the word" ignited hostilities between the Thirteen American Colonies and the Crown. However, perhaps the most unique and quite enduring legacy of the Revolutionary period used by revolutionaries and individuals with revolutionary aspirations – like Mackenzie – was the heroic prospect of an oppressive colonizer being overtaken by the colonized. [143]

In Mackenzie's new paper, the *Constitution,* he published overtly revolutionary material critical of the Family Compact and the Crown. Taking his contempt of Crown affairs one step forward, in the July 19, 1837 edition of the *Constitution*, Mackenzie published Thomas Paine's *Common Sense.* In less than 50-pages, *Common Sense*, Paine's revolutionary-era pamphlet, was a direct challenge to British rule in North America. Paine, as political scientist John Kortansky, suggests was America's radical. Before the release of *Common Sense*, Paine was a relatively unknown, new migrant to Britain's American colonies. With the support of Benjamin Franklin, then an American colonial agent working in London, Paine gained passage to the Pennsylvania colony settling in Philadelphia. There Paine worked as a writer-editor for the *Pennsylvania Magazine*. As historian Gordon Wood notes, Paine's thoughts were "often filled with the conflict going on between England and the colonies." Wood continues writing that the so-called "shot

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[143] Gerd Hurm, "The Rhetoric of Continuity in Early Boston Orations" in *The Fourth of July: Political Oratory and Literary Reactions, 1776-1876* ed. Paul Goetsch and Gerd Hurm (Tubingen: Gunter Narr Verlag, 1992), 65.

heard around the world" at Lexington and Concord led to Paine writing "Surely the ministry are all mad; they will never be able to conquer America." Paine became ingrained in the American cause. As a champion of American liberty and a friend to many leaders of the Revolution, Paine wrote and published *Common Sense*. Copies of *Common Sense* sold an estimated 150,000 copies and ignited a fire in the American collective consciousness during the initial stages of the Revolution.[144]

Mackenzie, like Paine, was a newspaperman who emigrated from Great Britain to North America. Both men were relatively unknown, relative economic failures, and later sympathetic to the plights of their (new) fellow countrymen. For Paine, the presence of the written vernacular and the circulation information proved effective to transmit ideas during the American Revolution. Mackenzie's writing emulated other revolutionaries during the Upper Canadian struggle for independence. In the age of print culture, Mackenzie's writing linked readers in Upper Canada to the United States. This concept, according to Benedict Anderson, is simultaneity. This phenomenon is when a "contemporaneous community" experiences an event at the same time usually thorough print vernacular such as a newspaper. As Anderson writes, "the very conception of the newspaper implies the refraction of even 'world events' into a specific imagined world of vernacular readers; and how important to that imagined community is an idea of steady, solid simultaneity through time. This leads to the creation of nationalism within the confines of the nation state. Mackenzie's readers experienced events at the same time

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[144] "Common Sense," *The Constitution*, July 19, 1837; John Kortansky, "Thomas Paine: The American Radical" in *History of American Political Thought.* Edited by Bryan-Paul Frost and Jeffrey Sikkenga (Lanham, MD: Lexington Books, 2003), 63; Gordon S. Wood, "Introduction to *Common Sense*" in *Common Sense and Other Writings* edited by Gordon S. Wood (New York: Random House, 2003), 3-4.

through his newspapers and almanacs. The presence of the written word made the struggles of Upper Canadians and the parallels to the U.S. more visceral, more real. And the realness of the struggle for freedom in Upper Canada reached its apex by late 1837.[145]

On Yonge Street: The 1837 Rebellion at Montgomery's

1837 was a tumultuous year in much of North America. 1837 was the year according to historian Allan Greer, that "Canada came as close to revolution as it ever would." Beginning in Francophone Lower Canada, the agitation of Louis-Joseph Papineu and others associated with the *patriote* cause stirred unrest. [146] The French-Canadian government ceased to function. The patriots protested the British and these demonstrations "provoked repression which in turn led to deeper popular alienation." In the context of revolutions, for the Lower (and eventually Upper) Canadians to overcome this alienation, there is a lack in an Other (i.e., the British). According to Slavoj Žižek, the other is "inconsistent, traversed by antagonisms, structured around impossibilities." [147] The anger of the Lower Canadians spread to Upper Canada. By November and into December 1837, tensions in the two geographic Canadas reached a boiling point. Reform-minded cadres of both Anglophone and Francophone Canadians saw peaceful means of accomplishing change as ineffective. The only alternative was rebellion.

By the autumn of 1837, Mackenzie opined publicly that force might be required to accomplish change in the Canadas. In November, Mackenzie and some members of

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[145] Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and the Spread of Nationalism* (London and New York: Verso, 2006), 65, 149.

[146] Allan Greer, *The Patriots and the People: The Rebellion of 1837 in Rural Lower Canada* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1993), 3.

[147] Slavoj Žižek, *Disparities* (London & New York: Bloomsbury Academic, 2016), 37.

the Toronto Reformers planned to meet on Thursday, December 7, 1837 at Montgomery's Hotel to raid government positions in Toronto. Montgomery's Hotel, located about three miles outside the city limits of Toronto at Yonge Street and Eglinton Avenue, is better known historically as Montgomery's Tavern. According to *Mackenzie's Own Narrative of the Late Rebellion*, the rebels were set to meet between the hours of six and ten at night at Montgomery's Tavern. If everything went well at Montgomery's Tavern, Mackenzie's men would then seize 4,000 weapons stored at Toronto's city hall to furnish themselves to withstand an onslaught by British troops and Upper Canadian regulars. In a gallant fashion, Mackenzie and the rebels would then march onto Toronto to depose the despotic figure most closely associated with tyranny and the Family Compact: Sir Francis Bond Head. The Toronto Reformers would then take Head and other members of the Family Compact into custody. Mackenzie and his men would then turn over the city to the liberals, declare the province of Upper Canada independent, write a constitution, and appoint Dr. Rolph the head of government. After laying out his plans, Mackenzie boasted in his narrative of the rebellion that the Tories and government officials in Toronto should have expected something was going to happen. Moreover, government officials and Upper Canadian civilians knew "the rebels were assembling." Mackenzie expected the seizing of power from the Loyalists to be a bloodless affair. Rebellion and the shedding of blood was the last thing Mackenzie and the reformers wanted. [148]

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[148] William Lyon Mackenzie, *Mackenzie's Own Narrative of the Late Rebellion* (Toronto: The Palladium Office, 1838), 7, fn7.

In organizing the march on Toronto, Mackenzie wrote to the Dutch general, Anthony Van Egmond (1778-1838). General Van Egmond allegedly served in Europe during the Napoleonic Wars. Mackenzie hoped the endeavor would be successful in the hands of skilled veterans like Van Egmond. However, Van Egmond was captured during the rebellion and died at the city hospital in Toronto. Prior to the outbreak of the rebellion, Mackenzie rode around the countryside in an attempt to gather a critical mass of Upper Canadians to march on Toronto with the goal to overthrow the government of Sir Francis Bond Head and the Family Compact. Most of these men Mackenzie gathered were poor farmers. These farmers were later armed with primitive weaponry and collided with well-armed British regulars and Loyalists along the treacherously muddy Yonge Street. To Mackenzie's surprise while he was away traversing what would become the Ontario countryside, Dr. Rolph changed the date of the strike on Toronto. All the while, there was a warrant issued for the arrest of Mackenzie among other Toronto reformers. However, despite the very unfortunate combination of poor planning and a lack of communication between the reformers, Dr. Rolph, and Mackenzie (among others) to discuss said planning, the rebellion still occurred. Dr. Rolph changed the date of the attack on Toronto due to being concerned that the government in Toronto was reinforcing the city, distributing weapons, and filling the garrison to stave off the coming rebellion.[149]

What became the rather infamous Battle of Montgomery's Tavern happened on December 7, 1837. Mackenzie argued in his retelling of the rebellion that the 200 men at Montgomery's, despite being miserably armed, displayed "manly courage" in the face of

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[149] Ibid., 8, 17, fn. 37; Lindsey, *The Life and Times of William Lyon Mackenzie,* 72-73.

about 1200 "strong first rate European officers."[150] Prior to the attack, Dr. Rolph fled to the United States. Among all the tumult, because of Rolph's departure, Mackenzie and Van Egmond held elections to choose new officers. The new officers and Mackenzie heeded Van Egmond's advice to attempt to hold off a Loyalist attack on Montgomery's until nightfall as Van Egmond expected reinforcements to arrive in the meanwhile. Mackenzie's rebels attempted to disrupt the march of Loyalist forces. However, Sir Francis Bond Head dispatched an "overwhelming force" under the command of Colonel Fitsgibbon, the Adjutant General of the Militia, Colonel McNab, Mr. Justice McLean among others set out to squash the rebellion at Montgomery's before the rebellion boiled over further into the colony.[151]

After the loss at Montgomery's Tavern, Mackenzie and nearly 2,000 of his followers fled toward the United States border. Despite Mackenzie's claims of being outnumbered – which was *very* true – he praised gallantry and heroics of his men at Montgomery's. Sir Francis Bond Head proclaimed nearly 10,000 men rushed to Toronto to help quell the treasonous activities that were afoot. In Mackenzie's *Own Narrative of the Rebellion*, essentially a compilation of newspaper clippings, he claimed this was nothing but a fabrication; however, in the editor's notes, the editor – loyal to the Family Compact and the Crown – writes that the troops count was "so far from being a fabrication all America now knows it to be fact."[152] Mackenzie then ominously

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[150] Mackenzie, *Mackenzie's Own Narrative*, 18.

[151] Lindsey, *The Life and Times of William Lyon Mackenzie*, 88-94.

[152] The numbers for the rebellion are unclear – especially as Mackenzie had a way with words. What is certain, though, is that there were more Loyalist Upper Canadians in York/Toronto to squash the rebellion than Mackenzie's rebels.

threatened the crown after the burning of David Gibson's (1804-1864) home and farm. The loss of a great deal of Gibson's property, along with the theft of livestock, foodstuffs, and private property, Mackenzie wrote that "Sir Francis' advisers may live to see this example followed more extensively than they desire." Gibson was a pawn for Mackenzie and the rebellion. Gibson, like Mackenzie, was a reform politician and Gibson only learned of the rebellion a few days prior to it occurring. [153] The editor of *Mackenzie's Own Narrative of the Rebellion*, once again, adds that these attempts were "abetted by thousands of rascally *Yankees*" were nothing more than abortive and they have no promise for the future.[154]

Conclusion

Nearly a decade of agitation by a Scottish-born Upper Canadian immigrant was largely responsible for a failed rebellion in the British colony of Upper Canada. The "firebrand" William Lyon Mackenzie's rebellion pitted him and his ill-equipped supporters against the Family Compact, the Crown, and the militia of Upper Canada. The abject failures at Montgomery's Tavern characterized the shortcomings of an ill-planned insurrection. Mackenzie's revolt failed to win over the hearts and minds of a critical mass of Upper Canadians. The critical mass of Upper Canadians Mackenzie needed, as

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[153] David Gibson was a moderate, reform politician representing York. Gibson learned of Mackenzie's rebellion only days prior to it occurring. When it occurred, Gibson reluctantly joined Mackenzie as he believed needed the rebellion – although unnecessary – could lead to reform. Gibson shielded Loyalists imprisoned by the rebels, however, despite his humanitarianism, Sir Francis Bond Head called for his farm and home to be burned. Mackenzie later referred to Gibson as a coward. Gibson later fled to the United States to evade arrest settling near Lockport, New York. He was later acquitted. For more, see Ronald J. Stagg, "David Gibson," in *Dictionary of Canadian Biography*, vol. 9, University of Toronto/Universite Laval, 2003 -- , accessed April 5, 2018, http://biographi.ca/en/bio/gibson_david_9E.html.

[154] Mackenzie, *Mackenzie's Own Narrative*, 18-20; fn 42, fn 44.

Anthony Di Mascio explains, made sure to "oppose new forms of radical thought" while remaining loyal to Britain and the Crown.[155]

Despite Mackenzie's characterization as a charlatan by colonial officials and, in some cases, fellow Upper Canadian reformers, enough of his former constituents and readers took his clamoring for reform in Upper Canada seriously. Mackenzie utilized the reach of the antebellum period's burgeoning print culture. Americans in the U.S. read about the struggle of the Upper Canadians. This melodrama, within an earshot, led some to engage in unauthorized expeditions into Upper Canada to liberate their Upper Canadian brethren from the confines of British tyranny. Mackenzie attempted to make history repeat itself within the pages of his oeuvre. As the Americans were unsuccessful in gaining Quebecois support for the U.S. Revolution, Mackenzie was largely unsuccessful in gaining widespread support for his rebellion in Upper Canada.

North America drastically changed from the revolutionary period to the 1830s. For example, the common shoemaker such as the subject of Alfred Young's series of essays, George Hewes, lived in a "society that no longer bestowed the deference once reserved for old age and had never granted much respect to poor old shoemakers." During the Revolution, Young writes, "the shoemaker won recognition as a citizen; his betters sought his support and seemingly deferred to him."[156] However, by 1837, the United States was a drastically different place than it was in the latter portion of the eighteenth century. The United States was in the process of industrialization, major urban

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[155] Anthony Di Mascio, *The Idea of Popular Schooling in Upper Canada: Print Culture, Public Discourse, and the Demand for Education* (Montreal & Kingston: McGill-Queens University Press, 2012), 104.

[156] Alfred F. Young, *The Shoemaker and the Tea Party: Memory and the American Revolution* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1999), 13.

centers emerged, and the U.S. was on the verge of becoming the very thing Mackenzie was fighting against, an empire. Aside from undergoing an experiment in confirmation bias on somewhat of a grand scale, Mackenzie's literary machine helped fuel tensions between the Upper Canadian rebels, American sympathizers, the Loyalists defending the government of Upper Canada. Mackenzie's rebellion was historically driven as he linked his movement to the promises of the Founders and the promises of 1776.

Arguably by 1838 the main, violent aspects of the Upper Canadian Rebellion were all but concluded. Mackenzie, the Upper Canadian, and U.S. rebels (discussed in the next chapter) avoided the legal ramifications of committing treason against the Crown and the Family Compact. While in exile, Mackenzie published newspapers, pamphlets, almanacs, and visited towns in the American Northeast to agitate support for an Upper Canada free from British tyranny. However, while Mackenzie toured the Northeast and rekindled his career in journalism, a secretive paramilitary organization – the Hunters Lodges – emerged and continued to agitate the Crown and, later, U.S. officials. Competing American, British, and Upper Canadian nationalisms collided in the coming weeks, months, and years following Mackenzie's defeat at Navy Island. From an American perspective, particularly those sympathetic to Canadian liberty, the mere prospect of colliding with the British once more galvanized a number of Americans living throughout the Northeast and the Midwest to force the British out of North America once and for all.

Chapter Four

The Joy of Rebellion:
Mass Gatherings, Upstate New York, and the Upper Canada Question

Following his logistical quagmire at Montgomery's Tavern, William Lyon Mackenzie – a newspaperman-turned-politician – found himself at the heart of an international predicament. Mackenzie fled Upper Canada and sought refuge among his supporters in the United States. He reached Buffalo, New York on December 11, 1837. According to the *Buffalo Patriot*, Mackenzie's escape through "the royal lines" was "hazardous… in the extreme." To get to safety, Mackenzie, the so-called "firebrand," donned a disguise, and traversed the Upper Canadian countryside on horseback. Over the course of two nights, the poorly dressed fugitive slept inside barns among livestock and hid in haystacks. In his escape, the ill-clothed Mackenzie rode a horse too expensive for someone so poorly dressed. Because of this, a sheriff thought Mackenzie stole his horse. The lawman then detained Mackenzie. Mackenzie, the accused horse thief, talked his way out of the arrest. Coincidentally, the sheriff sympathized with Mackenzie and the rebellion in Upper Canada. The sheriff did not believe the man he apprehended was William Lyon Mackenzie until Mackenzie showed him "his name marked on his linen." The sheriff released Mackenzie from his custody and Mackenzie continued to the U.S.[157]

Mackenzie arrived in Buffalo, the so-called "City of Good Neighbors," where a sizeable crowd gathered to greet him at the Buffalo Theater. According to contemporaries, and perhaps with a degree of exaggeration and eagerness, the Mackenzie meeting was one of the "largest public meeting(s) ever seen in that city." On the night of

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[157] "Public Meeting of the Friends of Canada," Reprinted from the *Buffalo Patriot, Jamestown Journal, December* 20, 1837.

the Mackenzie meeting, Dr. Cyrenius Chapin (1769-1838), a longtime resident of Buffalo, and veteran of the War of 1812, took charge of the night's proceedings. Chapin housed Mackenzie and protected him from British and American authorities. Chapin sheltering Mackenzie prevented third parties from collecting the sizable bounty placed on his head by the Lieutenant-Governor of Canada, Sir Francis Bond Head.[158]

In this chapter, due to the cultural area maintained by the Americans and Upper Canadians in the Great Lakes region of North America, I argue that Americans in the U.S. sympathetic to Upper Canada's plight for liberty from British tyranny gathered in public places to support William Lyon Mackenzie and the Upper Canadian Rebellion. The Upper Canadian Rebellion and the forthcoming Patriot War interrupted private lives and served as a form of popular culture. Americans gathered in public spaces to act on the Canada question. The spaces in which these mass meetings occurred were public parks, theaters, and lecture halls. These assemblies used the legacies of the American Revolution and the War of 1812 to shape the outbreak of rebellion in Upper (and Lower) Canada as an idealistic means to a historical end: to excise the last remnants of the British Empire from North America. Ideally, with the British vanquished, republicanism could finally spread from the U.S. to the Canadas. An imagined community emerged in the United States. These individuals, inspired by the page turning melodrama of Mackenzie's ordeal in Upper Canada, aroused the curiosity of men and women throughout the

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[158] Charles Lindsey, *The Life and Times of William Lyon Mackenzie* (Philadelphia: J.W. Bradley, 1862), 124-125. The Buffalo Theatre was the first theatre built in Buffalo. The theatre was built between 1821 and 1822. The theater was across the street from the Eagle Tavern. The theatre was used for different purposes ranging from a classical English school to putting on plays throughout the 1820s and 1830s. For more on Buffalo's early theatres see volume II of Henry Perry Smith's, *A History of the City of Buffalo and Erie County* (Syracuse, NY: D. Mason & Co., Publishers, 1884), especially pages 542-545.For more on Dr. Chapin and his family history, see *Memorial and Family History of Erie County, New York Volume One: Biographical and Genealogical* (New York and Buffalo: The Genealogical Publishing Society,1906-08), 51-54.

lacustrine land surrounding Lake Erie. Those who gathered supporting the Upper Canadian rebels gained a level of enjoyment from these proceedings as they evoked the American revolutionary tradition which translated to continued support for the Canadian rebels until the 1840s.

Unity and Patriotism: Nineteenth Century Celebrations and Mass Gatherings

Prior to the Civil War, celebrations and public gatherings – particularly those centered around holidays and patriotic or nationalistic causes – followed a similar pattern. According to historian Scott Martin, these fetes, such as the Fourth of July, hailed American republicanism while "emphasizing the values of unity, communal spirit, and patriotism." These celebrations, Martin continues, "brought Americans together without reference to their differences."[159]

Public gatherings often had political undertones. Oftentimes these events employed historical folklore. Historian Andrew Whitmore Robertson writes, "historical folklore can strike a chord in collective memory that can last for decades." These allegories, Robertson continues, "served a legitimizing function (e.g., Washington as Cincinnatus)." Organizers of the various gatherings frequently utilized these tropes. For example, in Northern cities, street processions, as described by historian David

[159] Scott C. Martin, "The Fourth of July in Southwestern Pennsylvania, 1800-1850," *Pittsburgh History* 75 no. 2 (Summer 1992): 59; David Glassberg, *Sense of History: The Place of the Past in American Life* (Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 2001), 63-65. Pinkster is a Dutch import to North America. Enslaved and free African Americans celebrated this festival as a means of escapism. These celebrations occurred mainly in New York and New Jersey until legislation was passed restricting African Americans congregating in public space. Moreover, The spirited and egalitarian nature of nineteenth century public celebrations was quite different than their late-eighteenth century counterparts. Older celebrations in the United States were directly imported from Africa and Europe. Puritans, for example, were disinclined to celebrate holidays such as Christmas. Conversely, celebrations found in German immigrant communities and African American populations in the North were more spirited than the Puritans. German immigrants and African Americans celebrated a number of events throughout the year. For example, during the Christmas season, some German-Americans dressed as Belsnickel, a companion of Saint Nicholas, and participated "in New Years shooters brigades." Enslaved and free African American populations celebrated Election Day and the Pentecostal celebration of Pinkster among other occasions.

Glassberg, "were ideologically charged with historical references." These historical themes were used during holidays or to commemorate "a visiting dignitary such as Lafayette." The city dwellers would "march together in lengthy, elaborately planned processions celebrating the development of the new nation." In many cases, these parades and street processions brought a sense of order to the antebellum public sphere. [160]

During the Jacksonian period (1820s-1840s), civic leaders and politicians used public processions and celebrations to unify white males partitioning who could participate in political culture. Historian William Pencak writes, these events were organized around secular, federal holidays – such as the Fourth of July – and exposed antebellum Americans to the national government. This was unique, as Pencak explains, because most Americans did not experience the "federal government directly except through the post office." During the Early Republic (1780s-1830s), these celebrations became increasingly political. Federalists ritualistically celebrated Washington's birthday and Jefferson's Democratic-Republicans courted French diplomats such as the infamous Edmond Charles Genet (1763-1834)– the French Ambassador to the United States from during the French Revolution.[161]

Antebellum Americans referenced the past to justify the U.S.'s place in a rapidly changing world. From the 1820s to the eve of the Civil War, the Spirit of '76 reified links between the republican institutions in the United States with a number international

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[160] Andrew Whitmore Robertson, *The Language of Democracy: Political Rhetoric in the United States and Britain, 1790-1900* (Charlottesville: University of Virginia Press, 1995), 73; Glassberg, *Sense of History*, 63-65.

[161] William Pencak, "Introduction: A Historical Perspective," in *Riot and Revelry in Early America* edited by William Pencak, Matthew Dennis, and Simon P. Newman (University Park: The Pennsylvania State University Press, 2002), 11.

efforts to emulate the American experiment. Many Americans fundraised; this included the staging of plays, charity drives, and formed volunteer organizations to show solidarity with ongoing freedom struggles such as the Greek War of Independence (1821-1830), the November Uprising in Poland (1830-1831), and later, the rebellions in Upper and Lower Canada.[162] Although some Americans heeded the wisdom of George Washington and his call to steer clear of "permanent alliance with any portion of the foreign world," and Thomas Jefferson's inaugural address which promised peaceful coexistence and commerce with foreign nations "but entangling alliances with none," some Americans supported these revolutions. Pledging support to these revolutionaries abroad proved the American experiment was indeed a success and many of these men and women eagerly wished to spread republicanism abroad.[163]

At the time of Mackenzie's arrival in Buffalo, participants in nationalistic displays gleefully aided these revolutionaries. For example, large crowds packed into the Buffalo Theater to hear Chapin's oration on the Upper Canadian Rebellion supporting William Lyon Mackenzie. Others formed mutual aid committees to support the Canadian rebels.

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[162] The Greek War of Independence lasted from 1821-1830. Greek revolutionaries defeated the Ottoman Empire which led to the birth of modern Greece. For more, see a series of essays in *The Making of Modern Greece*, edited by Roderick Beaton and David Ricks (Surrey and Burlington, VT: Ashgate Publishing, 2009) and Douglas Dakin's *The Greek Struggle for Independence, 1821-1833* (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1973). From 1821-1831 Poland and other Eastern European nations rebelled against the Russians. This rebellion was unsuccessful as Russia defeated Poland and the nation was integrated into the Russian Empire. For more, see Donald Pirie's essay "The Agony in the Garden: Polish Romanticism" in *Romanticism in National Context* edited by Roy Porter and Mikulas Teich (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1988), 317-345.

[163] All of these efforts, though, were not treated equally. One such example is that of Haiti and the Haitian Revolution. And, in the case of Haiti, the United States offered aid to France to help quell the revolution to prevent slave uprisings in the American south. For the complete addresses see: George Washington: "Farewell Address," September 19, 1796. Online by Gerhard Peters and John T. Woolley, *The American Presidency Project*. http://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/ws/?pid=65539; and Thomas Jefferson: "Inaugural Address," March 4, 1801. Online by Gerhard Peters and John T. Woolley, *The American Presidency Project*. http://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/ws/?pid=25803.

Supporting the rebels led to a sense of excitement. There is also an element of fantasy that follows this feeling. The political philosopher Jodi Dean explains that these fantasies – such as a free Upper Canada – serves as a "framework through which some empirical content, an object, person, experience, or practice comes to function for us as 'it' as what we desire." The excitement from the rebels' supporters en masse coupled with fantasy performed in mass meetings and showcased in print culture led these Americans who sympathized with the Upper Canadian patriots to create a very idealistic memory of the American Revolution which fueled an international rebellion that was, unfortunately, doomed from the start. However its efforts pushed the Crown to grant responsible government and the colony of Upper Canada closer to confederation.[164]

Aside from celebrating holidays, public spaces also functioned as a symbolic meeting place to defend the idea of "America," its ideals, and defined who supported the nation and its institutions. In Amy S. Greenberg's *Manifest Manhood and the Antebellum American Empire* Greenberg writes, these and similar meetings served a number of functions. The first was "to support American's Manifest Destiny, and America's honor, and make it clear that participants were ready to fight for both." These meetings also were important as they raised money to support the rebels. The third function of these meetings, Greenberg writes, was to "provoke violence abroad." Many supporters exercised a great deal of restraint as it was illegal to commit acts of violence abroad. Regardless of the legality of these actions, the Americans who participated in these mass gatherings performed American democracy and encouraged Manifest Destiny. For many,

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[164] Jodi Dean, "Why Zizek for Political Theory?" *International Journal of Zizek Studies* vol. 1 no. 1 - *Why Zizek?* (2007): 20 http://"Žižek studies.org/index.php/ijzs/issue/view/2. Slavoj Zizek, *The Sublime Object of Ideology* (London: Verso, 1989), 118.

this act may not have been much more than speaking publically. While others participating in these events may have taken up arms joining the ranks of the rebels and violated American neutrality laws.[165]

Like A Good Neighbor, Mackenzie is There: William Lyon Mackenzie and Buffalo, New York

The military historian Ernest Alexander (E.A.) Cruikshank noted that a group of 13 prominent Buffaloanians formed a committee to aid the rebels in Upper Canada. The meeting that later took place at the Buffalo Theater was quite sizable and allegedly of the largest public gatherings in the city's history. When the Buffalo meeting convened December 11, Chapin announced that the firebrand himself, William Lyon Mackenzie, was his houseguest. The crowd erupted in a chorus of "wild enthusiasm" upon hearing the news that William Lyon Mackenzie had arrived in Buffalo. And, as the city's very own Chapin supported Mackenzie, an honor guard composed of young men living in Buffalo formed to ensure the safety of Mackenzie and Chapin.[166]

Rumors surrounding the Upper Canadian Rebellion enveloped Buffalo and Upstate New York. As Chapin's meeting trickled out of the Buffalo Theater, the men and women exiting the venue exclaimed three cheers for Mackenzie, three for Lower Canada's Louis-Joseph Papineau, and three for Dr. Rolph. According to the *Livingston Republican*, these men and women formed a procession and marched to music through the streets of Buffalo. These crusaders for liberty ritualistically marched to Chapin's

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[165] Amy S. Greenberg, *Manifest Manhood and the Antebellum American Empire* (Cambridge and New York: Cambridge University Press, 2005), 190-191.

[166] Ernest Alexander Cruikshank, *The Origin and Official History of the Thirteenth Battalion of Infantry* (Hamilton, Ontario: E.L. Ruddy, Publisher, 1899), 25. Lindsey, *The Life and Times of William Lyon Mackenzie,* 124-125.

home. When this benevolent mob of Buffaloanians reached Chapin's home, they gave three cheers for Mackenzie and Chapin himself, Mackenzie's gracious host.[167]

Mackenzie spoke the next night. The *Livingston Republican* suspected Mackenzie would speak to an audience at maximum capacity. Speculation surrounding Mackenzie's speech was reprinted in several newspapers throughout New York. At this public meeting featuring Mackenzie, the *Livingston Republican* opined, the public "shall learn why McKenzie has left his co-patriots at this critical juncture" and to hear "what he thinks of the present prospects of his party." When Mackenzie spoke, his oratory lasted around two hours. According to Cruikshank, Mackenzie's speech was with "his habitual fluency and vigor of invective."[168]

Mackenzie's mass meeting however had its share of skeptics. One critic of Mackenzie in the U.S. was Thomas C. Love (1789-1853). When war broke between the Americans and British in 1812, the British captured Love and held him at Quebec until the war's conclusion. After the war, Love studied law. He was later admitted to the bar and practiced law in Upstate New York. Love, in a letter to I and J Townsend, believed these popular ideas, when introduced to the masses had the potential of being rather dangerous. Love writes, if a war is "induced by no national cause and consequently sustained by no national feeling – I shall be fearfully confident the history of republicks

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[167] *Livingston Republican*, December 19, 1837.

[168] Ibid; Cruikshank, *The Origin and Official History of the Thirteenth Battalion of Infantry*, 25; Lindsey, *The Life and Times of William Lyon Mackenzie,* 124-125.

[sic] will be closed – the great problem of the capacity of men for self government will be fatally solved – and forever."[169]

The *Poughkeepsie Eagle* painted a different picture of Mackenzie's Buffalo meeting. In an article titled "Combustion" the editors of the *Eagle* depicted Chapin's Buffalo meeting as quite the humdrum affair. According to the *Eagle*, about 200 individuals attended the meeting. These men gave "patriotic speeches, but it does not appear that any enrolled" in *actually* assisting "the revolting Canadians against the British government." The *Eagle* advised "the patriotic spirits to hold on before they go too far." Using an Anglocentric argument, the *Eagle* reminded its readers that "Fighting British regular troops in Canada is very different business from contending with Mexican drones in Texas." At the time of writing, the *Eagle* believed the rebellion was confined to Lower Canada. The editors of the *Eagle* took another cheap shot - but this time, it was aimed at the French Canadian population in Lower Canada. As the *Eagle* noted the rebellion was "confined to the Lower [province] and to the French population – who are notes for little but their ignorance, and inefficiency in everything that requires action." The *Eagle* ended its attack on the Francophone Canadians by noting the Americans living in the Lower Province, as well as the Upper Province, Nova Scotia, and New Brunswick are loyal to the crown.[170]

The *Eagle*'s take on the Buffalo meeting was quite unsupportive of the ongoing struggle in the Canadas and used somewhat of a cautious yet, nationalistic, turn. The

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[169] "Thomas Cutting Love," in *Biographical Directory of the American Congress, 1774-1949: The Continental Congress and the Congress of the United States* (Washington D.C., United States Government Printing Office, 1950), 1477-1478. Thomas Love to I. and J. Townsend, Buffalo, NY, January 17, 1838. (Research Library, Buffalo History Museum: MSS-A00-279).

[170] "Combustion," *Poughkeepsie Eagle*, December 9, 1837.

Eagle reminded its readers, some of whom supported the Canadian rebellions, that the Crown was not at war. More importantly, Canadian independence would come at a hefty price. The *Eagle* wrote, "those engaged in the road to glory… [is] a very rough one… if those engaged with the revolters happen to be taken prisoner or are subdued, they will be tried for high treason, and then the gallows will terminate their unfortunate career." The *Eagle* ends "Combustion" article with following warning:

> When a people revolt against tyranny or despotism, they are entitled to the sympathy, countenance and aid of the American people, but when those who are in the full enjoyment of liberty itself, take arms against a government that subjects them to no restraints beyond those required by law and order, for our part, we view the question in a different light.[171]

The *Eagle* took a more conservative, whiggish approach to the rebellions in the Canadas and America's foreign relations with Britain. This ideology coincided with, as historian Daniel Walker Howe explains, a series of larger changes which occurred in Great Britain and the larger British Empire. Throughout the early decades of the nineteenth century, Howe writes, violence, "legal and illegal" declined in Great Britain. This pattern was reflected in the United States as well. The Second Great Awakening (1790s-1840s) led to a similar decline. "Feeling accordingly rose against [various forms of violence]" and these acts included: "lynching, corporal punishment, … particular wars, and warfare in general." This move away from violence and conflict did not effect the entire population. Regardless of the trend, men and women still assembled in public spaces and supported freedom in Upper and Lower Canada.[172]

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[171] Ibid.

[172] Daniel Walker Howe, *The Political Culture of American Whigs* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1979), 127.

An Island Stuck in the Middle of the Niagara and the so-called Republic of Canada

A throng of Buffalonians responded to a rebellion in arms reach. Historian Michael Woods writes, indignation meetings "formalized the public expression of emotion in a ritual consistent with the ideals of represented democracy and local self government." These meetings expressed more than public emotion. Woods writes, these meetings also:

> Achieve[d] tangible results – to devis[e] means to correct an alleged or real public abuse. Antebellum indignation meetings thus served two purposes. They ritualized the articulation of politically relevant feelings, and they channeled shared emotions into practical, collective responses to diverse "public abuses."[173]

A number of factors connected participants in these meetings. Individuals who are drawn to crowds often do so as their common interests (in the form of material goods, necessities, or spiritual or philosophical ideas) are somehow averted. In many of these groups, there is a lack of planning. This, coupled with a frisson of emotions lead to individuals to not regulate their emotions and are "incapable of moderation" and many individuals quite often express their feelings through venting "through action." Members of these groups are equal and are governed by a leader or a common cause. In the case of Upper Canada, these leaders were very real and their quest for liberty led them to an island in the Niagara River and the birth of a short-lived Republic of Canada.[174]

On December 13, 1837 under the command of the reduplicately named Rensselaer Van Rensselaer, William Lyon Mackenzie, and 24 rebels took control of

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[173] Michael E. Woods, *Emotional and Sectional Conflict in the Antebellum United States* (New York: Cambridge University Press,2014), 128.

[174] Ruth Golan, *Loving Psychoanalysis: Looking at Culture with Freud and Lacan* (London: Karnac Books, 2006), 192; Sigmund Freud, *Group Psychology and the Analysis of the Ego*, translated and edited by James Strachey (New York: W.W. Norton & Company, 1989), 68-71.

Navy Island. The Van Rensselaer's were an elite New York family. The Van Rensselaer's traced their family's origin, to De Heer Killian Van Rensselaer, a director of the Dutch West India Company. The family established its landholdings, and amassed significant wealth through a patroonship settling near the Dutch fort of Fort Orange - the present location of Albany, New York.[175]

According to patriot leader, amateur lawyer, and writer Thomas Jefferson Sutherland (c.1801-1852), Rensselaer Van Rensselaer allegedly graduated from the military academy at West Point, New York and fought alongside Simon Bolivar in South America. In historian Orrin Edward Tiffany's *The Relations of the United States to the Canadian Rebellion of 1837-1838*, Tiffany debunks Sutherland's claims. In 1837, Van Rensselaer worked as a clerk in Albany. He travelled west for a local newspaper, the *Albany Advertiser.* During this trip to the west, Van Rensselaer "came in contact with the Canadian revolutionists [including Sutherland and] was offered and accepted the position of commander-in-chief of the rebel forces." The news of this elite New Yorker joining and commanding the Upper Canadian rebels spread quickly. The American revolutionary in Upper Canada send a shockwave through the aristocratic Dutch community in Upstate New York.[176]

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[175]A patroonship is a tract of land given to a member of the Dutch West India Company. The patroon, the landholder, was a powerful individual. The patroon controlled his own fiefdom and, in return, he was to encourage colonization. For more, see: Milton M. Klein, *The Empire State: A History of New York* (Ithaca & London: Cornell University Press, 2001), 32-36. Catharina Van Rensselaer Bonney, *A Legacy of Historical Gleanings: Volume I*, (Albany: J. Munsell Publisher, 1875), 7

[176] Lawrence J. Burpee and Arthur G. Doughty, editors, *Index and Dictionary of Canadian History* (Toronto: Morang & Co., Limited, 1912), 395; Orrin Edward Tiffany, *The Relations of the United States to the Canadian Rebellion of 1837-1838* (Buffalo: Buffalo Historical Society), 24-28.

In Upstate New York, the rumor-mill swirled when the rebellion broke out. Van Rensselaer was one of many New Yorkers who sympathized with the rebels. Van Rensselaer, according to Catharina Van Rensselaer Bonney's *A Legacy of Historical Gleanings,* a family-produced history published in 1877, possessed:

> "heroism, strong patriotic enthusiasm, and generosity; ever ready to unfurl the standard of liberty, he unfortunately was induced to engage in the 'Canada War' which he considered a just warfare as being based on practical and correctly enlightened principles." This enterprise was a great sorrow to both of his venerable parents, it caused the bitterest anguish and disappointment, for they confidentially supposed this idolized only son to be in Syracuse, [New York] with his affianced.[177]

Shocked by his son's actions, General Solomon Van Rensselaer (1774-1852), a hero of the War of 1812, wrote to his son. In a letter dated December 23, 1837, A disapproving father (Solomon) Van Rensselaer warned the younger Van Rensselaer, that he crossed the *Rubicon* and "there is now no returning with honor." This historical allegory harked back to Julius Caesar when he and his army crossed the Rubicon in Rome. For Caesar, his bold actions ushered in one of the world's great empires. For the younger Rensselaer, however, his efforts were not as memorable. Although there was one thing for certain; like Caesar in 42 AD, for Rensselaer Van Rensselaer there was no turning back.[178]

Solomon Van Rensselaer's letter to his son warned him if he returned from aiding the rebels, he would not do so with honor. The younger Van Rensselaer's actions entered

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[177] The section of the block quote in quotations was assumingly copied from a newspaper and reprinted in *A Legacy of Historical Gleanings* without proper attribution. For more, see: Catharina Van Rensselaer Bonney, *A Legacy of Historical Gleanings: Volume II*, (Albany: J. Munsell Publisher, 1875), 62.

[178] General Solomon Van Rensselaer to Rensselaer Van Rensselaer, December 23, 1837, in Catharina Van Rensselaer Bonney, *A Legacy of Historical Gleanings: Volume II*, (Albany: J. Munsell Publisher, 1875), 65-66.

the domain of fantasy. Van Rensselaer joined the rebels and removed himself from his original social environment. He feigned the identity of a well-travelled soldier-of-fortune seeking adventure and glory. The lack of a fixed identity, Zizek argues, will "exceed every positive symbolic identity: the moment the gap emerges we find ourselves in the fantasy domain of "experimentation, danger, poison, [and] obscenity." Van Rensselaer treaded into dangerous waters. His father condemned his actions as they brought shame upon his aristocratic family and put the young Van Rensselaer's life in jeopardy.[179]

Navy Island is a small, uninhabited island nestled in the (Upper) Canadian portion of the Niagara River. Navy Island is near Grand Island, the larger of the two islands, which is, today, a part of Erie County, New York. The island spans about 600 acres and is located three-quarters of a mile above the dangerous Niagara Falls. Navy Island was considered a safe location above American Fort Schlosser. For the rebels, Navy Island was a key meeting point for the Canadian patriots and their American supporters due to the island's proximity to Upper Canada and the United States. In a letter dated December 19, 1837 to the *Auburn* (New York) *Journal*, General Van Rensselaer and anywhere from 200 to 800 volunteers quickly reinforced more than half (about 340 acres) of the island. These men had a bounty of supplies at their disposal. Perhaps even more important, in the fortification's early months, these men had six cannons. At Navy Island's peak, the rebels maintained an arsenal with up to 30 pieces of artillery. Sympathetic citizens of Buffalo provided these weapons, coincidentally property of New York state, to the rebels

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[179] Slavoj Zizek, *Tarrying with the Negative: Kant, Hegel, and the Critique of Ideology* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 1993), 78-79.

illegally.[180] According to U.S. Representative Thomas C. Love's (1789-1853) correspondence with the Townsends, after Mackenzie's initial gathering in Buffalo, a cadre of citizens followed Rensselaer Van Rensselaer and Mackenzie to Navy Island. Citizens of Buffalo provided the rebels with food and supplied the rebels with various munitions.

After the rebels claimed Navy Island, Mackenzie issued a proclamation. Mackenzie's proclamation led to the birth of the short-lived state of Upper Canada. In Mackenzie's proclamation, he outlined the parameters of a free Upper Canadian state based on many republican principles. In his proclamation Mackenzie urged all Canadians to "rise as one man, and the glorious object of our wishes is accomplished." In Mackenzie's Canadian republic, free trade, open elections and a republican system one in which a "vote by ballot" would lead to "free and peaceful township elections."[181]

The new provisional Upper Canadian government was headed by William L. Mackenzie, Chairman, Pro. Tem, along with Samuel Lount, Nelson Gorham, Silas Fletcher, A.G. W.G. Van Egmond, and Charles Duncombe.[182] Mackenzie's proclamation utilized American history to legitimize the rebellion. Mackenzie claimed the good deeds

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[180] Ft. Schlosser was a French, British, then briefly American fort that guarded the portage area surrounding Niagara Falls. Catharina Van Rensselaer Bonney, *A Legacy of Historical Gleanings: Volume II*, 62; Letter to *Auburn Journal*, December 19, 1837, *Auburn Journal,* December 27, 1837. *Telegraph and Advocate Extra*, *Auburn Journal*, December 27, 1837.

[181] Thomas C. Love to I. and J. Townsend, January 17, 1838, Buffalo and Erie Historical Society Archives, Mss. A00-279; Lillian F. Gates*, After the Rebellion: The Later Years of William Lyon Mackenzie* (Toronto & Oxford: Dundurn Press, 1988), 17; William Lyon Mackenzie, "Proclamation by William Lyon Mackenzie," 1837, Baldwin Collection, Toronto Reference Library, Toronto, ON.

[182] Other members of the provisional government of the Republic of Canada included: Jesse Lloyd, Thomas Darling, Adam Graham, John Hawk, Jacob Rymall, William H. Doyle. According to Mackenzie, there were "two distinguished gentlemen, whose names there are powerful reasons for withholding from public view." For more, see Mackenzie, *Proclamation by William Lyon Mackenzie*.

of the ragtag band of men under the command of Van Rensselaer, who were described in a Buffalo paper as "a wretched rabble, ready to cut any man's throat for a dollar," had "proved to us the enduring principle of the revolution of 1776." These men furnished the newly proclaimed nation with money, ammunition, weaponry, and other supplies to survive the harsh winter, on an island nuzzled betwixt Upper Canada and New York. In a letter dated December 28, 1837 to Charles Grant, Lord Glenelg, and the Secretary of State for War and the Colonies Sir Francis Bond Head notes that in a matter of days, the rebels equipped 13 cannons on the island, were garrisoned and encamped upon it.[183]

Mackenzie outlined the role, organization, and function of government in his constitution. According to Mackenzie's son-in-law and early biographer, Charles Lindsey, when Mackenzie fled Toronto, he planed ahead. Mackenzie travelled with "a small press and printer… for the purpose of striking off copies of this document." In the new state of Upper Canada, Mackenzie's constitution protected the rights and freedoms of he and his followers. The United States Constitution directly influenced Mackenzie's document. The preamble of Mackenzie's constitution stated the rights of the citizens of Upper and Lower Canada "hath been continually violated by the British government." Mackenzie believed the Crown violated the social contract between Britain, the mother country, and its colony. Therefore, according to Mackenzie, forming his own government would "establish justice, ensure domestic tranquility, provide for the common defence, promote the general welfare." Mackenzie concluded his preamble by writing in his

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[183] Ibid. Francis Bond Head, "A Narrative by Sir Francis B. Head" in *Appendix to Journal of the House of Assembly of Upper Canada* Toronto: Robert Stanton, 1839), 108-109.

constitution, his new government would "secure the blessings of civil and religious liberty" to future generations.[184]

Mackenzie's constitution contained 81 clauses. Mackenzie claimed there were additional clauses excluded from the printing. Channeling the U.S. Bill of Rights, Mackenzie quickly established religious freedom (clauses one and two) and the separation of church and state (four). Other clauses included: the right to bear arms (eight), freedom of assembly (12), freedom of the press (13), trial by jury (14), and soldiers are not to be quartered in private residences without the consent of the owner (10). In a liberal fashion, Mackenzie banned slavery outright (seven) and later wrote the issue – non-existent in British North America - may push the U.S. to disunion.[185] In clause 17a, Mackenzie banned state lotteries. Later clauses established the parameters for responsible government as well as economic affairs such as regulating banking and businesses. To limit the reach of the federal government in Mackenzie's state, according to clause 78 of his constitution, "all powers not delegated by this Constitution remain with the people." He concluded his constitution by stating that any future debate should take place within in the confines of the public press.[186]

If Mackenzie's rebellion was successful, he promised his supporters "several hundred acres" of land. (In a later proclamation from Navy Island, Mackenzie specifically offered three hundred acres to each volunteer and one hundred dollars in silver.) Hypothetically, Mackenzie and his new government would distribute this land to

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[184] Lindsey, *Life and Times of William Lyon Mackenzie,* 344; *The Constitution,* November 15, 1837.

[185] Lindsay, *William Lyon Mackenzie*, 460.

[186] The clauses found in Mackenzie's constitution are indicated in parenthesis. For more on Mackenzie's constitution, see: Lindsay, *Life and Times of William Lyon Mackenzie*, 344-358. *The Constitution,* November 15, 1837.

"every Volunteer - to root up the unlawful Canada Company." Under the Crown, the way in which land in Upper Canada was used and distributed by John Galt's Canada Company infuriated Mackenzie. In Mackenzie's newspapers – especially the *Colonial Advocate* – Mackenzie frequently scrutinized the Canada Company.[187] In Mackenzie's state of Upper Canada, he would provide free deeds for those living on the Canada Company's land. He would also redistribute clerical lands among his supporters as well. In the Jeffersonian-Jacksonian spirit, the lands of the Church of England (Anglican Church) would be, according to Mackenzie, given to good citizens "so that the yeomanry may feel independent, and able to improve the country, instead of sending the fruit of their labour to foreign lands." This "rhetorical enthusiasm for the hardy yeoman" was a common Jeffersonian - and later Jacksonian - political ideology adapted by Andrew Jackson and other public official after he and his Democratic Party won the American presidency in 1828.[188]

The Caroline Affair

On December 29, 1837, British and Upper Canadian forces violated American sovereignty. Crown forces invaded the United States by boarding the *Caroline* while the ship was in American waters. There was a single casualty: Amos Durfee. Historians

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[187] William Lyon Mackenzie, "Proclamation," December 10, 1837, in Bonney, *A Legacy of Historical Gleanings: Volume II*, 1875; The Canada Company was a private British land grant company founded by John Galt in 1826. Galt was a Scottish-born novelist and colonizer of Upper Canada. Galt founded the city of Guelph in present day Ontario. Mackenzie was against the Canada Company because the company enabled Clergy and Crown land reserves to remain vacant. For more see Robert C. Lee, *The Canada Company and the Huron Tract*, *1826-1853: Personalities, Profits, and Politics* (Toronto: Natural Heritage Books, 2004), 5; 57. William Lyon Mackenzie, "Independence! There Have Been Nineteen Strikes for Independence from European Tyranny, on the Continent of America," 1837, Toronto Reference Library, Toronto Public Library, Toronto, Ontario, Canada.

[188] Kenneth Moore Startup, *The Root of All Evil: The Protestant Clergy and the Economic Mind of the Old South* (Athens, GA & London: The University of Georgia Press, 1997), 46.

Howard Jones and Donald Rakestraw write, this was the first time since the Battle of New Orleans "an American had been slain by a British soldier on American territory." The murder of an American by British soldiers on U.S. soil caused an uproar in Upstate New York – particularly in Erie and Niagara Counties.[189]

British officials believed the *Caroline* supported the Upper Canadian Rebels. On the night of December 29, the *Caroline* was "attacked, cut out, taken into the stream, and after taking from on board all that remained, was fired, and sent over the falls." A series of American court documents from the trial of sheriff Alexander McLeod charged McLeod, a law official from Niagara, Upper Canada, with the murder of Amos Durfee after his body washed up on a wharf near Schlosser in Niagara County. [190]

The steamer *Caroline* had been an ordinary ship by day. However, in late December 1837, it became perhaps the most significant ship traversing the U.S.-Upper Canada border. William Wells of Buffalo owned the *Caroline* and ferried Canadian patriots between Fort Schlosser and Navy Island. According to the *Buffalo Journal*, the men encamped on Navy Island were quite excited upon hearing of the "butchery on board the steamboat *Caroline*… A parade was ordered and each [man] took an oath 'never to

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[189] Howard Jones and Donald Rakestraw, *Prologue to Manifest Destiny: Anglo-American Relations in the 1840s* (Wilmington, DE: Scholarly Resources, Inc., 1997), 21; Robert W. Coakley, *The Role of Federal Military Forces in Domestic Disorders, 1789-1878* (Washington, D.C.: Center of Military History, United States Army [U.S. Government Printing Office], 1988), 113.

[190] Thomas Love to I. and J. Townsend, Buffalo, NY, January 17, 1838; for more on Alexander McLeod's trial, see Chapter 5.

sheath sword or bayonet until they had revenged the outraged." These men sealed the oath with a kiss upon the "naked steel" of their swords and bayonets.[191]

A day later on Saturday, December 30, 1837, District Attorney Henry W. Rodgers issued a bulletin addressed to the citizens of Buffalo. Rodgers's notice informed the general public of the local response to the British invasion and the razing of the *Caroline*. In the circular, Rodgers addressed the people of Buffalo as the United States Marshal assigned to Buffalo was away in Rochester. Rodgers "dispatch[ed] Judge McLean with a letter to Col. McNab, the commanding officer of the British forces at Chippewa, with instructions to remonstrate with him in strong and decided terms, against such as proceeding, at war with the peaceful relations existing between the two governments."[192]

The acting mayor of Buffalo, Pierre A. Barker (1790-1870), issued a proclamation at noon on December 30, 1837. Barker told Buffalonians to act only "under the direction of the proper authorities." Barker admonished the general public not to commit any extralegal actions. Barker asserted, "all legal measures will be promptly taken to prevent any further aggression." Citizens were asked to stay calm and act with discretion. Buffalo's Common Council established measures which ensured the security of the city's residents. One such measure armed a City Guard deputized to act by authority of the Common Council as a city patrol. To further prevent any unnecessary alarm, discharging firearms after sunset was also forbidden. Moreover, to prevent catastrophe in the event of a violent outburst, Buffalo's firemen were "requested to be on the alert, and see that their

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[191] Marcus T.C. Gould, "Trial of Alexander McLeod For the Murder of Amos Durfee" in *Gould's Stenographic Reporter: A Monthly Periodical* (Washington, D.C.: Marcus T.C. Gould, 1841), 19; "Upper Canada," *Buffalo Journal*, January 2, 1838.

[192] Henry W. Rodgers, "District Attorney's [of Buffalo, NY] Circular," reprinted in the *Toledo Blade*, January 17, 1838.

engines are in good order, though it is to be hoped that they will have no occasion to use them." Barker concluded his address and assured that Buffalonians would be vigilant and should be in contact with his office at all times.[193]

D.A. Rogers and Mayor Barker used their authority to keep order within the city of Buffalo. Rogers, Barker, and other officials could not suppress public interest in the rebellion. Public meetings and other celebrations occurred to support Mackenzie and the Upper Canadian rebels. This, however, was no easy task for local and state governments across the United States.

A few years after the *Caroline* affair, the very thought of another war with England livened the spirit of the ailing former President and General Andrew Jackson (1767-1845). War against the British invigorated an aging Jackson. Jacksonian historian Robert Remini writes, "… The very thought of defending his country had a beneficial effect on his general health. It exhilarated him." Jackson told Francis Blair, one of Jackson's closest advisers of his caustically dubbed "Kitchen Cabinet," defending his country resulted in an "enstrengthened appetite that another will cure me and if a British war should ensue which god forbid I will be able to face their army in the field."[194]

After the burning of the *Caroline,* the shock from this tragedy transcended the event itself. In the U.S., many focused on the loss of the ship rather than the death of Amos Durfee. The rallying cry of many of the U.S. -born supporters of the Upper Canadian rebels became "Remember the *Caroline*!" The phrase was a part of North

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[193] Pierre A. Barker, "Proclamation!," Buffalo, New York, December 30, 1837 in *State Journal and Register,* Columbus, Ohio, January 9, 1838.

[194] Robert V. Remini, *Andrew Jackson and the Course of American Democracy, 1833-1845* (New York: Harper & Row, 1984), 452.

American popular culture in the 1830s and 1840s. While Americans processed this catastrophe, Upper Canadian rebels and a group of American supporters established a short-lived republic on Navy Island.[195]

The Failed Republic of Canada

After the *Caroline* affair, a number of men joined Mackenzie and his allies on Navy Island. The second in command of the patriot forces on Navy Island– Thomas Jefferson Sutherland – a lawyer of "no mean ability" claimed the men encamped on the Niagara-nestled-island were "embarked on a glorious cause." Sutherland "implored the God of Battles to direct and prosper them." Despite Sutherland's evocation of the divine, there was dissent among the ranks on Navy Island. According to a transcription of Sutherland's cross-examination of Matthew Hayes, a former British foot soldier, Mackenzie was on unfriendly terms with Sutherland before he left Navy Island. Further in the cross-examination, it is revealed that Sutherland and Van Rensselaer downplayed Mackenzie's role as a (or perhaps *the*) martyr for Upper Canadian liberty. Mackenzie may have been the individual most closely associated with the rebellion, but Sutherland and Van Rensselaer, according to Hayes' testimony, considered themselves to be more intertwined with the event.[196]

Mackenzie was not necessarily the spark that led Americans to support the rebels taking up arms against the Crown in Upper Canada. According to historian Lillian Gates,

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[195] Steven Pinker, *The Better Angels of Our Nature: Why Violence Has Declined* (New York: Penguin, 2011), 352; Slavoj Zizek, *The Plague of Fantasies* (New York and London: Verso, 1997), 102-103.

[196] Donald McLeod, *A Brief Review of the Settlement of Upper Canada By the U.E. Loyalists and Scotch Highlanders in 1783* (Cleveland: F.B. Penniman, 1841), 197.Thomas Jefferson Sutherland, "Letter to Lord Durham," published in *A Letter to Her Majesty The British Queen with Letters to Lord Durham, Lord Glenelg and Sir George Arthur* (Albany: C. Van Benthuysen, 1841), 33.

Sutherland claimed there was already a rebellion in the works in Upper Canada. It was Sutherland, "not Mackenzie, who asked for volunteers." Van Rensselaer, according to Gates, corroborated Sutherland's claims. Van Rensselaer was adamant and claimed there was a plan in place for "an American expeditionary force of assistance" well-before Mackenzie's melodramatic arrival in Buffalo. If the planned American-invasion of Upper Canada was true, why did Mackenzie go through the trouble of penning a constitution and other theatrics in Buffalo? Was it a publicity stunt to sell more papers? Doubtful. Mackenzie was stubborn and set in his ways. More than likely, the "firebrand" rubbed Van Rensselaer and Sutherland the wrong way.[197]

In early 1838 in the dead of winter, the news of the Upper Canadian Rebellion brought a excited New Yorkers across the Empire State. Newspapers made a steadfast effort to chronicle the rebellion. Reported in the January 4, issue of various New York newspapers – including the *Broome Republican* of Binghamton, New York and originally printed in the *Rochester Daily Democrat* – Lieutenant-Governor of Upper Canada Sir Francis Bond Head travelled from Lewiston, New York to Chippewa, Upper Canada with 30 sleighs of men to increase the presence of Upper Canadian forces in the region. The *Buffalo Daily Commercial Advertiser* reported there was also an increased military presence near Navy Island while Head's 30 sleigh loads of men encroached upon the Niagara region.[198]

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[197] Gates, *After the Rebellion*, 18. Thomas Jefferson Sutherland, "Cross-Examination of Matthew Hayes," published in *A Letter to Her Majesty The British Queen with Letters to Lord Durham, Lord Glenelg and Sir George Arthur* (Albany: C. Van Benthuysen, 1841), 138. Mackenzie hated wrong-doers and advocated for what he believed was right. For more, see: Lindsay, *William Lyon Mackenzie*, 2-4.

[198] "The Canada War," *Rochester Daily Democrat*, January 4, 1838. "Affairs of Upper Canada," *Buffalo Daily Commercial Advertiser,* January 4, 1838. *Broome Republican*, January 4, 1838.

The Upper Canadian patriots and their American supporters on Navy Island were reported to be in "excellent spirits." The patriot force underwent measures to withstand an attack by the Crown. The men encamped upon Navy Island maintained a degree of goodwill and unity as Head's men closed in. Head sent General Van Rensselaer a flag of truce. According to the *Rochester Daily Democrat*, Van Rensselaer was not ready to leave Navy Island quite yet. Van Rensselaer "intended to dine with the Governor [Head] in a few days at Toronto." Van Rensselaer's bravado aside, the very presence of the American and Upper Canadian patriots on Navy Island remained a contested issue on both sides of the border.[199]

Nevertheless, the rebels possessed a sizable arsenal ranging from 13 to 16 cannons. The rowdy group of Upper Canadian and American volunteers were promised, if successful, tracts of land and hundreds of dollars of silver. According to the Mackenzie, Sutherland, and others, they had history and divine beings on side. However, the State of Upper Canada housed on Navy Island, was short-lived, and would fail. In a letter dated January 16, 1838 to the Lord Glenelg, Sir Francis Bond Head proudly reported British forces expelled what he called the pirates (the Canadian patriots) from Navy Island. In one fell swoop, Upper Canadian and Crown forces took Navy Island. After troops cleared the island of Mackenzie's rebels, they repatriated it back into Crown territory. Shortly after the fall of the patriot headquarters on Navy Island, The Upper Canadian militia captured a schooner with rebel leaders aboard off the coast of Malden (present day Amherstburgh, Ontario). During this raid, the Upper Canadian militia seized

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[199] Zizek, *Sublime Object*, 197; "The Canada War," *Rochester Daily Democrat*, January 4, 1838. "Affairs of Upper Canada," *Buffalo Daily Commercial Advertiser,* January 4, 1838. *Broome Republican*, January 4, 1838.

200 stand of arms and three pieces of artillery.[200] Sir Head hoped the militia victory served as a blow to the morale of the rebels; moreover, that this loss would quell any future plans of the Upper Canadian patriots and their American sympathizers to overthrow the government of Upper Canada.[201]

Upstate New York Reacts to the Rebellion

In the rural, upstate community of Fort Covington, New York, local officials called a public meeting to discuss the rebellions in the Canadas. Fort Covington, New York borders present day Sainte-Agnes-de-Dundee, Quebec, Canada. The citizens of Fort Covington convened at the Town House. The *Spirit of the Times* reported, inclement weather and nearly impassable roads made travelling to the meeting rather difficult. This meeting, however, was exceptional. According to the *Spirit of the Times*, the meeting was hastily organized and the Town House was filled to capacity [202]

Historian Mary Ryan explains that at public meetings, organizations, and mutual aid societies antebellum Americans exercised a degree of ceremonial citizenship. Ryan writes, these gatherings interrupted "their everyday, individual activities, they entered public time and space to represent themselves in a profusion of custom made

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[200] A schooner is a type of sailing ship. A stand of arms is a British term for a complete set of weaponry for a single soldier. This usually included (among other things) the ammunitions, the gunpowder, and the weapon (musket and bayonet) itself.

[201] *Broome Republican*, January 4, 1838; Head, "A Narrative by Sir. Francis B. Head," 109.

[202] The Fort Covington, New York - Sainte-Agnes-de-Dundee, Quebec border crossing has a rather interesting history. The Halfway House was built at this location in 1820. In a *New York Times* article from 1984, then owner, Paul-Maurice Patenaude described the border dissecting his bar as "the most free border in the world." For more, see Edward A. Gargan, "In Border Country, Nationality Seems to Blur," *New York Times*, December 27, 1984; *Spirit of the Times*, December 21, 1837.

identities."[203] In Fort Covington, townspeople created an organization named the Friends of Canada. The members of this group passed a resolution that declared persons of American heritage, "who have become subjects of a foreign Prince or State… have forfeited the proud privilege of speaking in the name of American people." The Friends of Canada opined that those who were subjects of a foreign government or have taken arms against the United States, the committee concluded, were not the "sentiments of Republican America." While the Fort Covington Friends of Canada did indeed support the republican activities in the two Canadas, the organization did not agree with non-nationals speaking on the behalf of Americans and the United States.[204]

In early 1838, the *Oswego Palladium* reported the city's seamen celebrated the new year. A series of toasts and the wishing of goodwill characterized this spirited occasion. The rebellions in the Canadas were a topic in which the men celebrating the new year dedicated a series of toasts. The first toast of the evening wished all freemen on both sides of the lake (Lake Ontario) could celebrate the new year in stride. The song that accompanied the first speech was *Hail, Columbia* - one of the unofficial national anthems of the United States. The sixth toast of the evening was dedicated to the patriots of Canada. The toast wished the patriots to "hear our guns, look at our liberties – then go and do likewise." And like a scene from Rick's Café in *Casablanca* (1942), this toast was accompanied by the French national anthem, *La Marseillaise*. The seventh speech was dedicated to General Van Rensselaer. The orator hoped "may he prove the best cure for

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[203] Mary Ryan, *Civic Wars: Democracy and Public Life in the American City during the Nineteenth Century* (Berkeley & Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1997), 59-60;

[204] "Public Meeting of the Friends of Canada," *Spirit of the Times*, December 21, 1837.

the King's evil." *Yankee Doodle* followed the speech. The eleventh speech of the evening was nationalistic in tone. "The American Republic," the orator proclaimed, was "The brightest star in the constellation of nations; destined eventually for a pattern to the whole civilized world." A reading of the *Liberty Tree* - a poem written by the American Revolutionary and political thinker, Thomas Paine – accompanied the toast.[205]

The evening's volunteer toasts, like the regular toasts, were bespoke with a patriotic flare. The rebellions in Upper and Lower Canada Rebellion, however, captured the spirit of the times and were a topic of praise at the seamen's New Year's celebration. The formation of public opinion is a crucial piece of the public sphere. This general sense of a public opinion, as Nancy Fraser writes, allowed the state to be "subject to critical scrutiny" through "legally guaranteed free speech, free press, and free assembly." Captain Sprague's toast hoped the cross of "St. George soon strike to the black eagle and stripes of the Patriots." J. Carpenter's toast hoped the Canadian Patriots were not obliged to "take [in sail] until they have a Constitution of their own manufacture." Even during New Years' celebrations, the Upper Canadian rebels were a topic great concern for Americans. A stream of sending well-wishes, thoughts, and prayers did nothing but offer a network of support. The Upper Canadians were still subjects of Britain and the Crown. [206]

On December 27, 1837, citizens held a "tremendous meeting" at New York City's Vauxhall Garden. John Jacob Astor (1763-1848), one of the wealthiest men in the United

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[205] In the nineteenth century, there was a continuum of unofficial national anthems. As historian Marc Ferris writes, there was a "big five" and these included: "*Yankee Doodle; Hail, Columbia; The Star-Spangled Banner; My Country, Tis of Thee;* and *Columbia, the Gem of the Ocean."* For more, see: Marc Ferris, *Star Spangled Banner: The Unlikely Story of America's National Anthem* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2014), 2, 26-28. *Oswego Palladium*, January 10, 1838.

[206] Nancy Fraser, "Rethinking the Public Sphere: A Contribution to the Critique of Actually Existing Democracy" *Social Text* no 25/26 (1990), 58-59; *Oswego Palladium, January 10, 1838*.

States, owned New York's Vauxhall Garden: "a popular pleasure ground." The committee gathered and cheered while the grievances of the Canadian patriots were read aloud. Most speakers at Vauxhall Garden advocated for the Canadian patriots. However, according to *The Reflector and Schenectady Democrat*, when a Dr. Anderson made it very clear he did not champion the patriot cause, the crowd compelled him to leave the room. A Lower Canadian, Dr. E.B. O'Callaghan spoke to the crowd and "vividly portrayed the grievances and sufferings of the persecuted Canadians… call[ing] forth the expressions of deepest sympathy, mingled with the liveliest expressions of indignation against the oppressors of his adopted country." To end this meeting, three cheers were given for Louis-Joseph Papineau, E.B. O'Callaghan, William Lyon Mackenzie, and General Rensselaer Van Rensselaer.[207]

After the rebellion broke out in Upper Canada, the city of Oswego was similarly rather active. Many of its citizens supported the Canadian patriots. On a Saturday evening in early 1838, a public meeting was called by concerned citizens of Oswego and held at the market's great hall. The townspeople of Oswego nominated M.L. Merrick to be the committee's chair. John Cochran, Esq. – a lawyer and prominent citizen of Oswego – addressed the audience and proposed a number of resolutions approved by those in attendance. One of the first resolutions passed by those at the Oswego meeting condemned foreign governments that suppress free speech and liberty. These meetings, expressed a "'[*laudable] and innocent sympathy for the Patriot Canadians.'"* Dr. J.H. Bagg of Oswego, a member of the resolutions committee introduced a number of

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[207] Elizabeth Blackmar, *Manhattan for Rent, 1785-1850* (Ithaca, NY and London, Cornell University Press, 1989), 160; "Affairs of Canada," *The Reflector and Schenectady Democrat*, January 5, 1838.

proposals unanimously adopted by the committee. The murders of American citizens aboard the *Caroline* committed by a "band of savage royalists from Canada" call for "tones of thunder for redress and retributive justice." After condemning the loss of American life aboard the *Caroline*, the meeting quickly turned to evoking the memory of the American Revolution.[208]

The Oswego committee passed the following two resolves harkening back to earlier issues in the nineteenth century. The first resolution references the violent slaughter of American life during the *Caroline* affair. According to the *Palladium*, the first resolve reads:

> That in view of that cold blooded and inhuman butchery, by sword, by fire, and the vortex of the falls of Niagara, we fell kindled in our breasts the same spirit which stimulated our forefathers at Lexington and Bunker Hill, and that we will united one and all, to avenge their deaths and defend our frontier from all similar aggressions.[209]

Lexington-Concord is one of the most well-known (and commemorated) battles of the American Revolution. The battle, immortalized by the opening stanza of Ralph Waldo Emerson's "Concord Hymn" (1836/7), was the opening salvo of the American Revolution, and remembered for the "shot heard around the world." Bunker Hill, on the other hand, was the first revolutionary location to gain a public marker. This resolution linked the attack on the C*aroline* to the British sins that propelled the U.S. Revolution.[210]

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[208] Ibid.

[209] *Oswego Palladium*, January 10, 1838

[210] Ibid; Ralph Waldo Emerson, "Concord Hymn" in *The Yale Book of American* Verse edited by Thomas R. Lounsbury (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1913), 85. Elizabeth M. Covart, "Bunker Hill Monument and Memory" *Journal of the American Revolution*, June 18, 2013, accessed July 1, 2018 https://allthingsliberty.com/2013/06/monuments-and-memory-the-battle-of-bunker-hill-debate. This was a result of Henry Dearborn's efforts to repair his public image. Dearborn, a veteran of the Revolutionary

The second resolution, passed by the Oswego committee, was overtly bigoted, hinting at fears of slave uprisings and overt race-based othering. This resolution capitalized on ideas and fears prevalent in antebellum American culture. This provocative statement unanimously adopted by the Oswego committee stated:

> That in the recent arming and exciting the negroes and Indians in Upper Canada, by the royalists, to not only hunt down the patriots, but also to murder and mutilate our defenceless inhabitants, we recognize the same spirit which characterizes the British during two wars, and justly sinks them below the Africans and Turks, in the estimation of a civilized and enlightened world.[211]

The prospect of arming freed African (and Native) Americans as well as slave revolts played a major role in antebellum American culture. This threat dates back to Dunmore's Proclamation during the Revolution and the Haitian Revolution in the 1790s. Slave revolts, according to professors and scholars of American of popular culture, Christopher Geist and Angela Nelson, persuaded whites that African slaves could be "devious and dangerous."[212]

Despite this colorful statement's racially fuelled language, the fear of an other was very real in antebellum America. This information about the enemy "other" – in this case Native Americans, African Americans, and Canadian loyalists – was by no means one-hundred percent true. This process "needs to be made clear about cultural discourse and exchange within a culture that what is commonly circulated by it is not 'truth' but

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War, had his public persona tarnished by his poor leadership in the War of 1812. However, without Dearborn's efforts, the 221-foot obelisk commemorating Bunker Hill would not exist and, perhaps, fade from public memory

[211] *Oswego Palladium*, January 10, 1838.

[212] Christopher D. Geist and Angela M.S. Nelson, "A Brief History of Black Stereotypes," in *Popular Culture: An Introductory Text* edited by Jack Nachbar and Kevin Lause (Bowing Green, OH: Bowling Green State University Popular Press, 1992), 266.

representation." Narratives such as these, according to historian and founding member of the Subaltern Studies project, Gyanendra Pandey, are used for "security and control… and situated in others." If Natives or African Americans did not exist in the region, this fear would have been transposed onto a different marginalized group.[213]

The Oswego meeting established solidarity with other civic organizations sympathetic to the Patriot cause. On January 4, 1838, Americans sympathetic to the Upper Canadian Rebellion congregated at New York's capital, Albany. According to the *Albany Evening Journal*, the meeting held was the largest in the city's history. Five-to-six thousand men and women were present at Albany and their meeting filled the Capitol building's main ball. There was such an excitement at Albany to help mitigate the suffering of the Patriot Canadians that the near 1,500 – person capacity of the building was reached nearly an hour before the meeting and according to the *Argus*, "Thousands were in the park unable to gain admission." This meeting, unlike the others, involved more prominent government officials. The meeting was headed by Teunis Van Vechten. Van Vechten, a successful lawyer, was mayor of Albany from 1837-1839 and 1841-1842 – the prime years of the Canadian rebellions. Delegates of the Albany meeting formed a resolution committee and, in due time, drafted a number of resolutions to be brought before the general audience of the meeting.[214]

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[213] Exteriority is a concept that permeates the social sciences and the broader humanities. In linguistics, the term refers to the symbolic function of human language. This topic is discussed in detail in Michel Foucault's seminal *The Order of Things* (Vintage, 1994). Edward Said, *Orientalism* (New York: Vintage, 1979), 21. Gyanendra Pandey, "Voices from the Edge: The Struggle to Write Subaltern Histories" in *Mapping Subaltern Studies and the Postcolonial* edited by Vinayak Chaturvedi (New York and London: Verso, 2012), 82.

[214] "Immense Meeting at the Capitol" from the *Albany Evening Journal* reprinted in the *Jamestown Journal*, January 17, 1838. George Rogers Howell, *Bi-Centennial History of Albany: History of the County of Albany, N.Y.*(New York: W.W. Munsell & Co., Publishers, 1886),664.

The meeting adjourned to the park adjacent to capitol building. When the resolution committee returned to read the drafted resolutions, the group carried them unanimously. The Albany committee recognized that the men and women of the Canadas had the right to form a new government. According to the committee, they "naturally sympathize with those of every clime, who seek to achieve their independence." The committee then moved to pass another statement of solidarity. This time, however, with the "Greeks, Poles, and patriots of South America, [as well as] the reformers of Canada." The committee also urged the New York State Legislature to "take immediate measures both to repel aggression and maintain a strict neutrality [in foreign affairs]." After this first series of resolves were passed the crowd at the park erupted into cheering. An eloquent speech by Samuel Stevens was interrupted. Joshua Spencer, Daniel Dickinson, and D.B. Gafeney were called upon by the crowd. Then, to close these proceedings Mr. H.V. Hart called for a "committee of four from each [city] ward to be appointed to receive contributions for the relief of the Canadians in distress." The desire for these mutual aid societies expressed the power of the people in the antebellum period. Even Alexis de Tocqueville commented on the strength of voluntary or mutual aid societies in the United States noting "There is no end which the human will [despair] of attaining through the combined power of individuals united." Tocqueville's observation rang particularly true in the antebellum period.[215]

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[215] "Immense Meeting at the Capitol" from the *Albany Evening Journal* reprinted in the *Jamestown Journal*, January 17, 1838. Alexis de Tocqueville, *Democracy in America: Volume I* trans. Henry Reeve (New York: The Century Co., 1898), 243.

Conclusion

From December 1837 into early 1838, William Lyon Mackenzie, one of the primary figures behind the ongoing rebellion in Upper Canada, took refuge in the United States. The presence of this champion of American institutions and martyr of Canadian liberty on U.S. soil sent a wave of support for the Upper Canadian rebels throughout communities in Upstate New York and the northern United States. Many New Yorkers flocked to public spaces to support the plight of their Upper Canadian brethren. Major communities in Upstate New York such as Buffalo, Albany, and Oswego witnessed these mass meetings. New York City – the nation's most populous city –saw its own meeting at the lavishly bourgeois Astor pleasure grounds, Vauxhall Garden.

Newspapers throughout antebellum New York (and the wider United States) paid particularly close attention to the meetings and the overall excitement on behalf of the Upper Canadian Rebellion. The coverage of the Rebellion was a form of popular culture in the U.S.-Upper Canadian culture area. As Isabelle Lehuu explains in *Carnival on the Page: Popular Print Media* American newspapers allowed "businessmen, entertainers, and lecturers" to use publicity in their newspapers to "enlarge their market, where as newspapers used sensational events to advertise themselves and broaden their audience." As a newspaperman, Mackenzie was keenly aware of the power of the press. However, aside from Mackenzie, Rensselaer Van Rensselaer, Thomas J. Sutherland, and the other Canadian patriots used newspapers coverage to enlarge their forces on Navy Island, acquire supplies, and increase support in the United States. While profiting from the sale of these newspapers, editors inadvertently legitimized the rebellion by publishing the

proceedings of pro-rebellion meetings, correspondences from its leaders, and updates on Canadian affairs. [216]

Despite grassroots support in the United States and an aura of idealism which enveloped the Upper Canadian Rebellion, Mackenzie's short-lived State of Canada on Navy Island ultimately failed. Mackenzie, Van Rensselaer, Sutherland, and others on Navy Island established a system of governance based on American principals. The Canadian patriots also fortified the sylvan island with munitions from the United States in order to withstand an inevitable military invasion or artillery barrage from the Crown. The rebels encamped on Navy Island lasted about a month before Upper Canadian and Crown forces repatriated the Island into the Queen's domain.

While Navy Island was fortified to withstand an attack from the Crown, an American steamer, the *Caroline*, was captured by British forces in U.S. territory, set ablaze, and sent over the treacherous Niagara Falls. The loss of the American vessel was symbolic as it was the first time since the War of 1812 a British military force entered the United States. These British soldiers destroyed the vessel and an American, Amos Durfee, died in the turmoil that ensued. The British invasion after the Upper Canadian Rebellion occurred nearly 20 years after the conclusion of the War of 1812. A number of contemporaries predicted the burning of the *Caroline* – later known as the *Caroline* affair – would lead to another war with Britain. Luckily, though, cooler heads prevailed and the Americans and British worked to quell rebellious activities along the U.S.-Canadian borderland and engaged in diplomacy to prevent another war.

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[216] Isabelle Lehuu, *Carnival on the Page: Popular Print Media in Antebellum America* (Chapel Hill & London: The University of North Carolina Press, 2000), 48.

New York, nevertheless, was not the only American state that experienced a reaction to the Upper Canadian Rebellion. The western Great Lakes region, specifically Michigan and Northwest Ohio, reacted to the rebellion as well. Like their New York counterparts, individuals in the Old Northwest supported the rebels and Patriots and due to a number of anxieties, were well aware of the very prospect of war in what was basically their sociocultural and geographic backyards.

Chapter Five

Lurking Like Thieves in the Night: Patriots, Publishers, and Hunters Respond to the Upper Canadian Rebellion and Patriot War, 1837-1841

In 1840, the "eldest Queen City of the West" bordered an ongoing rebellion.[217] On St. Patrick's Day, Detroit's Sons of Erin – an Irish-American organization – held a public dinner. A number of prominent Detroiters, including the city's mayor, Dr. Zina Pitcher (1797-1872), attended the event. Libations flowed and the evening's viands were plentiful. Aside from food and drink, attendees enjoyed music and other festivities at Detroit's American Hotel. This fete honored more than Ireland's patron saint. In one of many spirited public orations, Mayor Pitcher proclaimed: "*Liberty* – and those who died for it – … [Upper] Canada's Lount, Matthews, Moreau, Von Shoulz, Woodruff, Putnam, and others, whether on the scaffold or on the battlefield – may their blood so moisten the tree of liberty, that its branches will over shadow the earth."[218] Mayor Pitcher's proclamation, along with the night's celebratory activities, orations, and toasts, venerated the memory of the rebels and rebellions in the Canadas.

A small, but influential group of Michiganders supported the Upper Canadian Rebellion. Some citizens of the Wolverine State provided weapons and munitions and in late 1837 others volunteered to take these goods to the rebel encampment on Navy Island. Many Michiganders interacted with each other at meetings headed by civic leaders – such as Detroit's Mayor Pitcher – which stirred public opinion. With the public "on edge,"

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[217] The term "Queen City" is a rather nebulous moniker. Queen City refers to a city that is the largest city in a geographic locale, but is not that location's capital. In this context, the "eldest" Queen City of the West refers to Detroit. For context of this use of "Queen City" and more toasts which saluted Detroit, see: "The Celebration, *Democratic Free Press*, July 17, 1839.

[218] "St. Patrick's Day – Festival," *Democratic Free Press*, April 1, 1840.

these Americans readily consumed information regarding the Patriots through newspapers and participated in events which supported the Upper Canadian rebels. This information found within the U.S.-Upper Canadian culture area that surrounded the Great Lakes manipulated the emotions of the individuals who supported the Upper Canadian Rebellion and Patriot War. A wave of support permeated throughout the rapidly populated antebellum Midwest and was only one of many responses to the multi-dimensional Upper Canadian Rebellion in 1837. Michiganders, sympathetic to the plight of the Canadas, reacted to the outbreak of rebellion in Upper Canada similarly to their counterparts in the Empire State. Some Michiganders attended mass public meetings and condemned the atrocities committed by the Crown in the two Canadas. In lieu of offering their thoughts and prayers hoping the rebellion would succeed, Michiganders instead had a rough and tumble response and supported the rebellion by holding fundraisers, stealing weapons, and in some cases, engaging American, Upper Canadian, and Crown forces in armed combat.[219]

After the Upper Canadian Rebellion and in during the early years of the Patriot War, the State of Michigan was a relatively new concept. Some cities in Michigan, such as Detroit, were historic colonial outposts while others, such as Monroe, were significant during the War of 1812. What propelled Michigan to statehood was an overblown argument over the Toledo Strip. The territory was so highly sought after by Michigan Territory and the State of Ohio, the two sides went to "war" over the 400-plus mile swath of land. Decades of conflicting cartography, the uncertain landscape of the Great Lakes,

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[219] Letter to General Rensselaer van Rensselaer from [?] in Pittsford, Michigan, December 29, 1837, Father James Whelan Papers, Burton Historical Collection, Detroit Public Library, Detroit, Michigan.

and the formidable Great Black Swamp not only hindered settlement, but the ambiguous geography caused interstate conflict between Ohio and what would become the State of Michigan. In the end, Michigan did not acquire the Port of Toledo. In the long run, Michigan eventually won what was later known as the Toledo War (1835-1836). Michigan gained vast mineral and natural resource reserves in the form of the Upper Peninsula of Michigan and was later admitted into the Union as a free state which negated the short-term losses from its short war with Ohio.[220]

In this chapter I argue Michiganders who supported the Upper Canadian Rebellion and Patriot War gained a sense of enjoyment from engaging in revolutionary activities. The enjoyment these Midwesterners experienced was a sense of excitement that transcended normal means. In fact, borrowing from psychology and historians Walter Hixson and Richard Hofstadter, the excitement American sympathizers felt engaging with the rebellion temporarily relieved a psychic crisis, or, perhaps more specifically, a bout of generational anxiety a result of rapid changes in the United States – a symptom of industrialization. By engaging with an enemy abroad, real, or perhaps, "imagined," these Americans sought a panacea to ease their generational and nationalistic angst. In return, they believed liberating the Upper Canadians from British tyranny would cement their legacies in American history. This heroism, coupled with the formation of a secret society (or perhaps more accurately - a paramilitary association), the Hunters' Lodges, temporarily distracted these Americans as well as some government officials

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[220] For more on the Toledo War, see W.V. Way's *The Facts and Historical Events of the Toledo War of 1835, As Connected with the First Session of the Court of Common Pleas of Lucas County, Ohio* (Toledo: Daily Commercial Steam Book and Job Printing House, 1869); Ravi K. Perry, *Black Mayors, White Majorities: The Balancing Act of Racial Politics* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2013), 41-42.

from economic hardship, domestic and political turmoil, and perhaps most importantly, a rapidly changing world. [221]

Rumor Has It

Rumors and speculation that surrounded the Hunters' Lodges and the Patriot War spiraled out of control. From 1838 to at least 1841, these rumors proved to be a powerful discursive tool that delegitimized the rebels and their American sympathizers. Speculation provided politicians in the United States, Upper Canada, and Great Britain adequate fodder to engage in an international bout of he said, he said. According to sociologist Gary Alan Fine, rumors, such as these, often reflect the "uncertainties about procedural democracy." Opposition groups, such as the Hunters, or the U.S., Upper Canadian, and British governments, often utilized rumors, too, as they illustrate "the inchoate disaffection of citizens, diverting allegiance, but lacking any positive program of change." It was also reported many politicians, civic leaders, and other public officials – particularly from Ohio, New York, and Michigan – readily aided and were ranking members of the Hunters' Lodges.[222]

Sir George Arthur (1784-1854), the seventeenth Lieutenant Governor of Upper Canada (1838-1839), wrote to U.S. General Hugh Brady (1768-1851) the commander of Military Department number 7, Detroit. In his letter, Sir Arthur informed General Brady of a number of widespread rumors associated with the Hunters' Lodges. These rumors

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[221] Walter L. Hixson, *The Myth of American Diplomacy: National Identity and U.S. Foreign Policy* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 2008), 15. Richard Hofstadter applies the term "psychic crisis" to American populism in the 1890s. For Hofstadter's use of psychic crisis, see: Richard Hofstadter, "Manifest Destiny and the Philippines," *America in Crisis. Fourteen Crucial Episodes in American History,* ed. Daniel Aaron (New York: Knopf, 1952), 173-200.

[222] Gary Alan Fine, "Rumor Matters: An Introductory Essay" in *Rumor Mills: The Social Impact of Rumor and Legend* edited by Gary Alan Fine, Veronique Campion-Vincent, and Chip Heath (London and New York: Routledge, 2017), 5.

involved individuals holding public office. In Ohio, Arthur wrote, some local militias "declared that their arms were at the disposal of the patriots." Throughout the U.S. and Upper Canada, a widely-circulated rumor alleged that public officials aided the Hunters. After the rebellion, Arthur reported weapons caches and armories throughout the American Midwest were left laxly guarded and these arsenals "were at the disposal of the patriots." Arthur even accused the sitting Governor of Michigan, Stevens T. Mason (1811-1843), to be an active member of the Hunters' Lodges.[223]

The Canadian-born Captain Eber B. Ward (1811-1875), an early Detroit industrialist and the so-called "steamship king of the Great Lakes," corroborated Arthur's assertion that public officials aided the Hunters and the Patriots. Ward wrote that as the rebellion broke out, Americans supported the rebels. Influential Detroiters were quite active and "not only furnished provisions and pecuniary assistance to them, but their influence had induced the public officers to allow the insurgents" to acquire U.S. arms from "places of deposits." Ward asserted that public officials allegedly supported the Hunters and Patriots and allowed the rebels to violate American and international laws.[224]

In a broader sense, the general public on both sides of the border were well aware of growing speculation that surrounded the Patriots and the Hunters' Lodges. Concerned Michiganders were quite alarmed when conflict erupted in Upper Canada. In a letter addressed to his friends, Ward explained, the Patriots and the Hunters' Lodges were a

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[223] Sir George Arthur to General Hugh Brady, October 26, 1838 in *Territorial Relations, United States and Great Britain, Message from the President of the United* States (Washington D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1839), 116-119.

[224]Eber Ward was an early American steel and shipping magnate. There is a short biographical essay on Ward found in the April 1911 issue of the periodical, *The American Marine Engineer*. For more, see "Real Builders of America: Captain Eber Brock Ward," *The American Marine Engineer* vol. 6 no.4 (April 1911). Eber Ward to "Friends," January 18, 1838, MS Ward Family Papers, Burton Historical Library, Detroit Public Library, Detroit Michigan.

"universal topic of conversation from "Maine to Fort Gratiot." Ward supported the rebels and their struggle and he hoped the rebels would take "his [majesty's] dominion by force to establish a government of liberty" in Upper Canada.[225]

One individual at the heart of many of these rumors – especially those surrounding a Patriot invasion of Upper Canada– was Detroit's Dr. Edward Alexander (E.A.) Theller (1804-1859). Theller, an Irish immigrant and editor of the pro-Patriot newspaper, *Spirit of '76 and Theller's Daily Republican Advocate*, moved to Detroit from Montreal, Lower Canada. Theller came to the area between 1832 and 1836. Prior to engaging in the Patriot cause, Theller was a wholesale grocer, a doctor, and a pharmacist. Theller was quite charming and he had rather radical tendencies: a Jackson-inspired Democrat who embodied Andrew Jackson's antimonarchical ethos. In the first volume of Theller's paper, the *Spirit of '76 and Theller's Weekly Republican Advocate,* he informed his readers that he was a member of the Democratic Party.[226]

In early 1838, a particular rumor floated around the Detroit-Windsor border. Per the rumor, Theller and Dr. Charles Duncombe (1792-1867), another Detroit radical leader, planned an invasion of Upper Canada on the western frontier. In Sandwich, Upper Canada, town officials prepared to endure an attack by a "party of refugees and *American volunteers"* stationed in Detroit and Theller commanded this band of rogues. In response, leaders in Sandwich assembled a civic defense force to provide "defence against the

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[225] Anderson, to Anderson, January 24, 1838; E.B. Ward to Friends, January 18. 1838.

[226] Robert Budd Ross, *The Patriot War*: *Published in the Detroit Evening News by the Author for the Michigan Pioneer and Historical Society* (Lansing: Michigan Pioneer and Historical Society, 1890), 13; "Our Prospectus," *Spirit of '76 and Theller's Weekly Republican Advocate*, August 17, 1839. Colin Read, "Edward Alexander Theller," in *Dictionary of Canadian Biography*, vol. 8, University of Toronto/Universite Laval, 2003-, accessed September 6, 2018, http://www.biographi.ca/en/bio/theller_edward_alexander_9E.html.

incursions of the above mentioned clan." Between 200 and 300 men from all classes gathered in Sandwich as a show of force. The volunteers provided the public with a well-armed force to defend Upper Canada from the threat of the U.S.-based marauders. Sandwich, U.C.'s show of force was a temporary remedy to for its citizens to provide them with a sense of security.[227]

On January 1, 1838, *The Canadian* was published in Jackson, Michigan. The newspaper, according to its header, was "edited by [an anonymous] refugee – published by a Democrat – printed by a Whig, and read by all the world." *The Canadian* estimated there were about 20,000 Canadian refugees in the United States. The newspaper featured a lengthy letter written by "A Refugee." The letter was titled "To Our Friends & Brethren – The Refugees from Canada." A Refugee's letter addressed British tyranny in the Canadas and extended a sense of hope and gratitude toward the Americans that supported the rebels. This letter also praised the United States for sheltering the downtrodden Canadian refugees from the "storm of the dragon's wrath…" and "the jaw of the hungry devouring lion of Great Britain." The United States, to these refugees, was "a temporary shelter from the pitiless storm – that there was a land of freedom to which we could fly for safety and for succor." Following the colorful and poetic language found within the letter addressed to the Canadian refugees, the newspaper attempted to tell the correct story of the "Canadian commotion." The story would conclude in the *Canadian*'s next volume. However, it is unclear if the paper was printed for a second time.[228]

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[227] *Western Herald and Farmer's Magazine*, January 3, 1838. "The Canada Struggle," *The New-Yorker*, January 13, 1838.

[228] "To Our Friends & Brethren – The Refugees from Canada," *The Canadian*, January 1, 1838, Bentley Historical Library, The University of Michigan.

The *Canadian* is a unique newspaper. Its January 1, 1838 publication date is a bit misleading (or perhaps a typographical error). The paper was most likely published a year later in 1839. This is evident as the paper contained a letter from Elizabeth Lount (1793/5-1878) dated June 12, 1838. Lount was the wife of an organizer of the Upper Canadian Rebellion, Samuel Lount (1791-1838). The letter appeared in the *Canadian* nearly two months after Samuel Lount's execution in Toronto. Aside from Lount's letter, the *Canadian* provided its reader with a history of the rebellion, the Battle of Windsor, and the burning of the *Caroline*. The *Canadian* positioned itself as apolitical – as it was collaboratively published a Whig, a Democrat, and an Upper Canadian refugee. The editors of the *Canadian* attempted to make the Canada question transcend party politics. However, questions surrounding the Canadas and the Patriot War remained a political issue.[229]

This single-issue newspaper, the *Canadian*, is an example of how literature has the ability to appeal to a reader's emotions. The publishers of the *Canadian* thanked the U.S. for shielding the 20,000 Upper Canadians from British tyranny. The use of emotions in this newspaper is a logical fallacy. The paper's various authors strategically appealed to their readers' emotions, rather than their intellect or best interests. The use of emotion in this case may have been a way in which the authors of this newspaper "channeled their emotions" toward goals which may have included increased support for the rebels and refugees, "equality, inclusiveness, [and] the relief of misery."[230]

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[229] Ibid.

[230] Martha C. Nussbaum, *Political Emotions: Why Love Matters for Justice* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2013), 2.

Prior to the Patriot invasion of Upper Canada, General Henry S. Handy (1804-1846) was appointed Commander in Chief of the rebel forces. Originally from Illinois, Handy first gained national exposure after editing the *Annotator of News, Politics, and Literature*– a pro-Jackson, pro-Democrat newspaper published in Salem, Indiana. In 1826, Handy was described as "a sprightly little man with a remarkably prominent nose." Handy, a man who entered Salem "a perfect stranger," became a prominent and boisterous member of this Indiana community. Handy was also a cogent orator. Because he edited the *Annotator* and his exceptional speaking abilities, town officials chose Handy to commemorate would have been George Washington's ninety-sixth birthday at a civic function.[231]

Handy was not necessarily a military man. In fact, it is a bit of a mystery why Handy assumed the title of "general." In a local history Handy was remembered by its author as too "monstrous [of a] little man to be a general."[232] Or, perhaps, in the tradition of psychologist Alfred Adler, Handy may have suffered from some sort of Napoleon (or inferiority) complex. Perhaps Handy overcompensated for some of his shortcomings by using the prestigious military title. Regardless, Handy's unique personality benefitted his career. One of Handy's more marketable qualities was his loyalty to Andrew Jackson and the Democratic Party.[233]

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[231] Warder W. Stevens, *Centennial History of Washington County Indiana: Its People, Industries, and Institutions* (Indianapolis: B.F. Bowen & Company, 1916), 387.

[232] Ibid., 387.

[233] For more on Adlerian psychology and an elaboration on Adler's Napoleon or inferiority complex, see Robert W, Lundin, *Alfred Adler's Basic Concepts and Implications* (New York: Routledge, 1989), 13-18.

Handy was staunchly loyal to Andrew Jackson. President Jackson rewarded Handy and appointed him to a number of positions throughout the Midwest. In a memorandum of Jackson's appointments, it was noted Handy applied for the position of Register. Written next to Handy's name was the annotation "be careful." The vague and somewhat ominous nature of the log book's warning was a bit of foreshadowing. A number of years later, Handy and a number of supporters attacked the Upper Canadian stronghold of Fort Malden – a strategically important fortification in Upper Canada, which was essentially the British replacing Fort Detroit.[234]

To prepare for the invasion, Handy was supported by Theller and a number of other Patriots. Theller commanded "the first brigade of Irish and French troops which" the Patriot army was "able to raise." Due to the Patriots' looming presence, Michigan Governor Stevens T. Mason demanded they leave Detroit. So they did. The Patriots then made Gibraltar Island, Michigan their base. Gibraltar Island is located in the Detroit River and was close to Fort Malden in Upper Canada. Nevertheless, despite Governor Mason not supporting the Patriot army - other state officials did. Military officials left the state arsenal at Dearborn unattended, allowing the Patriots to acquire weapons to prepare an invasion to take Upper Canada.[235]

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[234] Ron Brown, *The Lake Erie Shore: Ontario's Forgotten South Coast* (Toronto: Dundurn Press, 2009), 163; "April 1829: Memorandum on Appointments" *The Papers of Andrew Jackson: Volume VII, 1829* edited by Daniel Feller, Harold D. Moser, Laura-Eve Moss, and Thomas Coens (Knoxville: University of Tennessee Press, 2007), 190; Robert M. Groceman, "The Patriot War and the Fenian Raids: Case Studies in Border Security on the U.S.-Canada Border in the Nineteenth Century," MMAS thesis., (U.S. Army Command and and General Staff College, 2007), 34-35. Stevens, *Centennial History of Washington County,* 387.

[235] Alexander Fraser, *A History of Ontario: Its Resources and Development* (Toronto & Montreal: The Canada History Company, 1907), 347.

General Thomas Jefferson Sutherland, dubbed "an unprincipled adventurer" and a number of rebel supporters from Cleveland, Ohio joined the Patriots at Gibraltar Island. Handy, Theller, Sutherland and their followers intended to invade Upper Canada. Handy learned his "presence was embarrassing to the government," he then "moved to Bois Blanc Island near Fort Malden, within British territory." Detroiters and others situated along the U.S.-Upper Canada border vehemently supported the rebellion in the Canadas. Sutherland's expedition was supported through a fundraiser at a Detroit theater. The Patriots gained so much excess capital, they purchased a schooner, the *Anne.* This schooner was armed to the teeth and was a part of "the floating [Patriot] arsenal, they were enabled, by the favor of the inhabitants, to get off from Detroit in defiance of the attempt of the State and National authorities to stop her."[236]

The purported invasion of Upper Canada gained the attention of the two top British and American diplomats in the United States. On Wednesday, January 24, 1838, the British Ambassador to the United States, Henry S. Fox, wrote to the American Secretary of State, John Forsyth. Fox's letter to Forsyth concerned the Patriot invasion of Upper Canada. Ambassador Fox had acquired intelligence that the Patriots stole weapons belonging to the State of Michigan and "overpowered both the State and United States authorities in that district." Fox admitted the information could be exaggerated; however,

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[236] "The Canadas," *The United Service Magazine,* May 1839; "Copy of the Confession of the American General Sutherland, Made a Few Minutes Before he Attempted Self-Destruction" in *The United Service Magazine*, (May 1839) 51-52; "History of the Recent Insurrection in the Canadas," *The United States Magazine and Democratic Review*, January 1838, 28.

Fox implored that the United States act to prevent the Patriots and their supporters from launching an attack from Detroit.[237]

In a response letter dated Wednesday, January 24, Forsyth wrote to Fox. Forsyth noted that aside from a letter from Governor Stevens T. Mason, no new information from Michigan regarding the rebellion reached the U.S. Department of State. Forsyth assured Fox that as a state, Michigan, like the rest of the U.S., would remain neutral in Canadian affairs. However, if the rebels and their sympathizers gained support from people in Michigan, Forsyth would implore Mason to use what power he did have to maintain peace between the United States and Great Britain. Forsyth also deployed General Winfield Scott to the Western Frontier to ensure stability along the U.S.-Upper Canadian border.[238]

Scott was a career soldier. Scott, "Old Fuss and Feathers," served in the military and fought in the War of 1812 to the American Civil War. During the Upper Canadian Rebellion and the Patriot War, Scott and his forces patrolled the border that separated the U.S. and the two Canadas. Scott dispatched two ships filled with American soldiers and other officials to keep peace on the Great Lakes. The *Barcelona* and the *Robert Fulton* patrolled the waters to prevent hostiles from embarking.[239]

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[237] Henry S. Fox to John Forsyth, in Document 181, *Territorial Relations – United States and Great Britain: Message from the President of the United States* (Washington D.C.: House of Representatives, 1839), 3.

[238] John Forsyth to Henry S. Fox, January 24, 1838 in Document 181, *Territorial Relations – United States and Great Britain: Message from the President of the United States* (Washington D.C.: House of Representatives, 1839), 3-4.

[239] Winfield Scott to Colonel C. Hughes, January 20, 1838, in Document 181, *Territorial Relations – United States and Great Britain: Message from the President of the United States* (Washington D.C.: House of Representatives, 1839), 99-101.

Peace on the Great Lakes was short-lived. Rumors surrounding possible invasions seemed endless. Prior to the conflicts at Fighting Island and Pelee Island, General Hugh Brady and his volunteer regiment – the Brady Guard - were summoned state officials north of Detroit. This was a false alarm - Brady's forces were not needed. For the Patriots, getting the Brady Guard away from their headquarters was key. With the men nearly two days away, the Patriots raided the Brady Guard's company quarters. The Patriots stole munitions and a large brass drum marked "Brady Guard." This proved to be problematic for British officials. Winfield Scott wrote to Colonel John Maitland – a commanding officer in Upper Canada. Maitland questioned the faithfulness of the Brady Guard as the brass drum was in the hands of the Patriots. Scott reassured the Upper Canadian and British officials that the Brady Guard did not aid the Patriots and by no means were they able to prevent the Patriots from stealing the supplies stored at the Brady Guard's headquarters.[240]

The rumors of a Patriot invasion of Upper Canada manifested into something greater than the sum of its whole. A looming existential threat who identified itself as loyal patriots – a mob of ragtag marauders who identified as Canadian Patriots raided Sandwich, Fort Malden, and its environs - threatened the Crown. The dangers of a Patriot incursion into Upper Canada disrupted British hegemony north of the border. The Crown searched for a way to pass the buck. They blamed American politicians and military officers for allegedly supporting the Patriots. For the British, the allure of the Patriot

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[240] Winfield Scott to Colonel John Maitland, April 17, 1838, in Document 181, *Territorial Relations – United States and Great Britain: Message from the President of the United States* (Washington D.C.: House of Representatives, 1839), 106.

cause was "a fatal attraction" which disturbed the "homeostatic balance" of power the British held in Upper Canada.[241]

The Battle of Windsor

From February 24 to February 25, 1838, the Upper Canadian Patriots and their American supporters travelled westward toward Windsor, Upper Canada. By the late 1830s, Windsor, Upper Canada (now Windsor, Ontario) was a burgeoning commercial hub across the Detroit River from Detroit, Michigan. Like its American counterpart of Detroit, Windsor has French roots. It is currently the oldest European inhabited community in Ontario. As a city, Windsor was established in 1834 and steam ferry boats "ply[ed] constantly" from Windsor to Detroit. In the 1840s, there were about 300 residents living in the city. In a time where public health issues ravaged urban centers, contemporaries hailed the city as relatively healthy. Windsor was built on a high bank of the Detroit River, about "thirty to forty feet above the river" and "about a mile in width." In the city there were military barracks which the Hunters and Patriots targeted in the so-called Battle of Windsor.[242]

Around 3:00 AM on the morning of December 4, 1838, the Patriot army invaded Windsor. Patriot General Lucius V. Bierce (1801-1876) commanded the invading force. As the Patriots sacked Windsor, local militia men discharged their rifles and pistols aimlessly into the night. To add to this chaos, the Patriots burned homes and businesses.

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[241] Slavoj Zizek, *The Parallax View* (Cambridge, MA: The Massachusetts Institute of Technology Press, 2006), 187-188.

[242] Windsor's French roots are in plain sight. There are a number of street names, such as Ouellette, that reflect this. Windsor is adjacent to Detroit, another city with French heritage. For more, see: Larry L. Kulisek, "Windsor (Ont.)" in *The Canadian Encyclopedia* accessed August 12, 2018. www.thecanadianencyclopedia.ca/en/article/windsor-ont/; William Henry Smith, *Smith's Canadian Gazetteer: Statistical and General Information Representing All Parts of the Upper Province, Or Canada West* (Toronto: H&W Rowsell, 1846), 221.

Further downstream, the Patriots razed the steamer *Thames* as retribution for the *Caroline*. The Patriots also took control of the military barracks and set them ablaze. The Patriot force took Windsor. The Patriots executed a number of Upper Canadians; however, their control of Windsor was short-lived. Nearly eight hours later around 11:00 AM, about 150 men from the Upper Canadian militia arrived from Fort Malden in Amherstburgh.[243]

Five Patriots were taken prisoner and killed by Upper Canadian militia leader Colonel John Prince (1796-1870). Prince was a recent migrant to Upper Canada from England. He came to Upper Canada and settled in Sandwich. Prior to this, Prince was a lawyer. Prince and his family relocated to North America in 1833 due to his father's legal trouble. Colonel Prince was so humiliated that he moved thousands of miles away to "escape the humiliations which he felt humankind wanted visited upon him."[244]

Prince was rather brutal, he made an example out of the Patriot invaders. There is marginal evidence that the executions were planned. In Prince's diary, he gleefully wrote that he ordered the 5 men to be shot on the spot. Prince forced the men to run before shooting them. After the act was committed, Prince shot them once more in the head to make sure the Patriots were dead. Apparently, Prince did this as there was an American

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[243] "Battle of Windsor 1838" Historical Marker, Archaeological and Historic Sites Board of Ontario, Windsor, Ontario, Canada. R. Alan Douglas, *Uppermost Canada: The Western District and the Detroit Frontier, 1800-1850* (Detroit: Wayne State University Press, 2018), 164-169.

[244] Prior to 1837, like William Lyon Mackenzie, Prince advocated for Americans to purchase land in Upper Canada. However, when Prince brought a bill to the legislature, the law was quickly thrown out. By 1840, as Captain C.B. Marriyat remarked in his diary that Prince vehemently opposed the bill and he "had quite enough of Americans in Upper Canada. For more on Prince, see: R. Alan Douglas, "John Prince" in *Dictionary of Canadian Biography,* vol. 9, University of Toronto/Universitie Laval, 2003 -- ,accessed September 7, 2018, http://www.biographi.ca/en/bio/prince_john_9E.html. C.B. Marryat, *Second Series of A Diary in America with Remarks on Its institutions* (Philadelphia: T.K. & P.G. Collins, 1840), 233.

schooner in the vicinity. Historian R. Alan Douglas describes Prince's actions rather precisely. And he was by no means "a defender of the established order of things but of a madman." Prince performed a number heinous acts. Actions such as Prince's were symbolic. These acts were symbolic they allowed Prince to "have [his] cake and eat it too." Killing the Patriot invaders allowed Prince to "to assert [his] superiority over the Other."[245] However, Prince's actions inadvertently acknowledged the legitimacy of the Patriots and the Patriot War. Killing the five rebel prisoners created a group of martyrs something in which the Patriots and others sympathetic to Canadian liberty rallied around. The Canadian Patriot resistance continued and spread westward from Navy Island to the Detroit, Michigan-Windsor, Upper Canada borderlands.[246]

Great Lakes Island Hopping: Fighting Island and Pelee Island

Fighting Island, or *Grose Isle aux Dindes* (Big Turkey Island), is the largest Canadian island in the Detroit River. The island is located about four miles away from Detroit. In the nineteenth century, the island had very little utility for Upper Canadians. Fighting Island was mostly pasture and lacked wood. Native Americans who lived in the area frequently camped on the island and planted corn in its pastures. Because of the island's proximity to Upper Canada, the Patriots launched an attack to take the island. [247]

A step in that direction was to take Pelee Island. Pelee Island is an island located in the Canadian portion of Lake Erie in Southern Ontario. Pelee Island is a part of what is

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[245] "Battle of Windsor 1838" Historical Marker. Douglas, *Uppermost Canada*, 168-169. Slavoj Zizek, "Appendix: Multiculturalism, the Reality of an Illusion" accessed September 7, 2018, http://www.lacan.com/essays/?page_id=454. Marryat, *Second Series of a Diary in America*, 233.

[246] Jan Plamper, *The History of Emotions: An Introduction* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2015), 293.

[247] Henry Scadding, *First Gazetteer of Upper Canada* (Toronto: Copp, Clark, and Co, 1876), 381-382.

today called the Put-in-Bay archipelago. The United States and Canada claim islands within this chain. The closest Canadian land, Point Pelee, is the southern most tip of Canada which protrudes into Lake Erie. While in the United States, the closest land is in Ohio near the city of Sandusky. After the American Revolution, displaced Loyalists from the newly liberated colonies flocked to the Pelee Island. The island was stolen from the Ojibway and Ottawa peoples for 999 years in exchange for three annual bushels of corn. In the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, Pelee Island was known for its timber– specifically red cedar wood. The cedar wood was so valued that in 1797, the British used this wood to build Fort Amherstburgh (Malden).[248]

On March 1, 1838, about 450 Patriots landed on Pelee Island on their way to Fighting Island. These men quickly overtook the home of a Mr. McCormick – the owner of Pelee Island. In response McCormick placed a $1,000 bounty on William Lyon Mackenzie's head, and hoped the prize led to his capture. While on Pelee, the Patriots seized other outbuildings and by March 3, there were nearly 1,300 men on Pelee Island. With the promise of an invasion of Upper Canada seeming like a reality, Americans from Sandusky, Ohio and the surrounding area, flocked to the island. Traveling through the cold and the fifteen-inch-thick ice, these spectators witnessed history in the making. Detroit journalist and historian, Robert Ross wrote, the Patriots "spent their time for two days in constant drill."[249] The insurgents, however, were quickly driven from Pelee Island by British forces.[250]

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[248] Pelee Island was first settled by Europeans in 1788. A British land agent, Thomas McKee negotiated with the Native Americans living in the region. For more, see: Brown, *The Lake Erie Shore*, 163.

[249] Ross, *The Patriot War*, 26.

On March 5, 1838, Colonel John Maitland of Upper Canada wrote to the American General Hugh Brady from the Western District Headquarters in Amherstburgh. In a cordial display, Maitland commends the kindness of both Brady and Scott. Maitland hoped the military advancements he and his forces make against the "banditti assembled on her Majesty's island… will have the result, as anticipated by General Scott of quieting both sides of the frontier." Maitland continued and hoped the rebellious rapscallions would be prosecuted to the fullest extent for violating American law. Maitland ended his communication with General Brady in a gentlemanly fashion. He regretted hearing that Scott left Detroit so hastily. However, he requested that if Brady would communicate with Scott to relay his "thanks for his polite communication."[251]

Major H.D. Townshend's report to Colonel John Maitland described the campaign at Fighting Island. Fighting Island, the largest Canadian island in the Detroit River, was in possession of the rebels. Between 6:30 and 7:00 in the morning, Upper Canadian forces fired upon the rebels encamped upon Fighting Island. Townshend gained a great deal of satisfaction and excitement knowing the actions taken by the Upper Canadian forces "was attended with the best results," the rebels were "discomposed by the precision and rapidity of the fire." Following the initial volley by the Upper Canadian Militia and Volunteers, the rebels dispersed from the island leaving a surplus of goods behind including a large gun (cannon) "which was only discharged once," weapons such

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[250] Paul Verhaghe, "Enjoyment and Impossibility: Lacan's Revision of the Oedipus Complex" in *Jacques Lacan and the Other Side of Psychoanalysis: Reflections on Seminar XVII* edited by Justin Clemens and Russell Grigg (Durham & London: Duke University Press, 2006), 34-35

[251] John Maitland to Hugh Brady, March 5, 1838, in Document 181, *Territorial Relations – United States and Great Britain: Message from the President of the United States* (Washington D.C.: House of Representatives, 1839), 125.

as rifles, muskets, pistols, and other goods. Other items Townshend and his men found included gunpowder, a barrel of crackers, and boxes of smoked herring. Townshend cheekily commented on the rebels' hodgepodge of goods. Townshend opined they "would have been contributed by a *sympathsing* public rather than by a Commissariat." Townshend, however, takes another one of his comments a bit further and noted he wished the fighting would have been more extensive to disprove the supposed American myth that the Upper Canadians would not fight the rebels. [252]

Colonel Edwin Bradley (1804-1863) of Stryker, Ohio commanded a detachment of the Patriot forces at Pelee Island. There is very little scholarship on Bradley's early life. He, however, was sickly as a child and raised an army near Sandusky, Ohio – one of the closest points in mainland Ohio that bordered Upper Canada.[253] Bradley and his troops withstood a British advance upon the island. Bradley noted, the British forces, nearly 350 infantrymen and 75 mounted cavalrymen strong, drove the Patriots from the island. The Patriots, greatly outnumbered, were bested by the British at a ratio of about three-to-one. The Patriots held their own for about a half-hour until they were forced to retreat. Captain George Van Rensselaer, a relative of the Patriot leader Rensselaer Van Rensselaer, and nine others were killed at Pelee Island. The number of British casualties was unclear.[254]

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[252] "Important from the West: Rout of the Pirates at Fighting Island, In the Detroit River," *The Albion: A Journal of News, Politics, and Literature*, March 17, 1838.

[253] For more on Bradley, see Shaun McLaughlin's short biographical blurb in *The Patriot War Along the Michigan-Canada Border: Raiders and Rebels* (2013).

[254] Colonel Edwin Bradley to Brigadier-General Donald McLeod, "Official Report of Colonel Bradley," in Clark Waggoner, *History of the City of Toledo and Lucas County, Ohio* (New York & Toledo: Munsell & Company, 1888), 75-76.

Notably during the tumult, an American, Ashley Fuller, from Cleveland, Ohio, took advantage of the British running roughshod over the Patriots. Fuller, a "well-known character of Cleveland, no doubt a camp-follower" stole fourteen horses from Pelee Island. Fuller's actions were noticed by Deputy Collector George R. Morton of Portland. Morton charged Fuller with stealing the horses and he escaped to the United States. Fuller's actions enraged the Upper Canadians and the British. The British and Upper Canadians threatened American officials over the incident and agitated that Fuller would be arrested and the horses returned to Pelee Island. This, however, became nothing more than a moot point. After the horse theft incident, Fuller disappeared from the historical record.[255]

The Hunter's Lodges

After the failures of 1837 and 1838, treasonous Upper Canadians, and some unruly Americans, fled west and took refuge in Michigan. With this mass of Upper Canadian refugees in Michigan, Charles Lindsay noted these Canadians "commenced an organization for revolutionizing Canada, comprising a much larger number of Canadians than has ever been suspected." General Handy promoted and organized an organization sympathetic to Canadian independence in Michigan. Handy appointed himself the Commander-in-chief and instructed the new members of this organization, later dubbed the Order of the Sons of Liberty – a fraternal organization harkening back to the revolutionary era - to only take orders from him and General Roberts. To pledge their

[255] D.W. Cross, "The Canadian Rebellion of 1837," *Magazine of Western History* Vol. VII no. 4 (February,1888), 363.

loyalty to Handy and the Order of the Sons of Liberty (OSL), members of the new organization took the following oath:[256]

> You do solemnly swear in the presence of the Almighty God, that you will bear allegiance and fidelity to the SONS OF LIBERTY engaged in the PATRIOT service and in the cause of CANADIAN INDEPENDENCE – that you will obey the orders of your superior officers in whatever department you may serve – that you will never communicate or in any way divulge the existence or plans of said organization. You also will swear that you will devote your time, your person, and your interest in promoting said cause, so far as may be consistent with your duties – that you will never sell, barter, or in any way alter any badge that may be bestowed upon you for the purpose of designating your rank in said association. You also will swear that you will not disclose or in any way communicate to any person the contents or purport of this Oath, and that you will not converse with any person in reference to this Oath, except in Convention with the man who first presents it to you.[257]

For these new refugees and their American compatriots, this oath sated a need for belonging - especially in a rather tumultuous chapter of U.S. history. Members pledged themselves to this secret society, creating loyalty to a common cause. Loyalty, according to sociologist James Connor, "affects the object of [his or her] loyalty by giving loyalty to the cause, while the cause responds by helping to define the individual and giving [him or her their] social cachet." Handy's new organization not only provided its members with a sense of community, it engaged them in a Jacksonian fantasy which would pit them against the British. If successful, these men would liberate Upper Canada and eliminate Britain's presence in North America once and for all. After Handy established the OSL in Detroit, subordinate members of Handy's organization travelled throughout Michigan's

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[256] Lindsay, *Life and Times of William Lyon Mackenzie*, 192.

[257] According to Charles Lindsay, this oath may have been changed prior to the Sandwich Affair (Battle of Windsor). William Lyon Mackenzie was unaware of the oath and it was read aloud by a Colonel Prince in court and published. For more, see Lindsay, *Life and Times of William Lyon Mackenzie*, 192-193.

lower peninsula and Upper Canada. While traversing this binational borderland, Handy's acolytes established branch chapters of the organization This group, however, was ill-fit to undergo such a heady task of not only committing treason for the Upper Canadians, but also shamelessly violating American neutrality laws. The OSL was short-lived. The organization eventually folded into a larger, more clandestine group, the Hunters' Lodges.[258]

The French political scientist and historian Alexis de Tocqueville observed in *Democracy in America* that during the nineteenth century, Americans established numerous voluntary societies and fraternal organizations. Tocqueville wrote, "… as soon as several inhabitants have taken up an opinion or an idea they wish to promote in society, they seek each other out and united together once they have made contact." After the burning of the *Caroline* and General Handy's "farcical expedition against Fort Malden," historian Edward P. Alexander opined, "the Patriot Uprising was in danger of becoming a joke." To continue the rebellion in the Canadas, "clever Patriots began to organize secret societies with the usual rituals, oaths, signs, grips, and codes." Different societies emerged "on both sides of the border from Maine to Wisconsin."[259]

Historians and other scholars trace the origin of the name "Hunters' Lodges" (or the Lower Canadian *Frères chasseurs* ["Brother Hunters"]) to Dr. James Hunter. The organization was also known as the "Hunters and Chasers in the Eastern Frontier" and the "Lodges of Patriotic Masons." Hunter, the Lodges' namesake, lived in Whitby, Upper

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[258] James Conner, *The Sociology of Loyalty* (New York: Springer, 2007), 78-80.

[259] Alexis de Tocqueville, *Democracy in America and Two Essays on America*, trans. Gerald E. Bevan (London & New York: Penguin 2003), 599; Edward P. Alexander, "Documents: The Hunters' Lodges of 1838" *New York History* Vol. 19 no.1 (January 1938), 64.

Canada – a town near Lake Ontario. After Mackenzie's failed rebellion at York, Hunter, an advocate for Canadian liberty and a participant in Mackenzie's rebellion, hid inside a large stove and evaded capture by the Crown. When tensions dissipated, Hunter fled Upper Canada and sought refuge in the United States. While in the U.S., Hunter joined what would eventually become his namesake organization – the Hunters' Lodges. Historian Oscar Kinchen posits a more reasonable explanation for the organization's name was "found in a pretext of the Patriots for prowling about the Canadian frontier while armed."[260]

In May 1838, Dr. Robert Nelson (1793-1873) formed the first Hunters' Lodge near St. Albans, Vermont. Nelson's father was more than likely an officer in the British Royal Navy. Nelson grew up in Montreal, Canada and studied medicine with Dr. Daniel Arnoldi (1884-1849).[261] After the Canadian rebellions, the Hunters' Lodges appealed to the male white masses. A number of men, located near the United States-Upper Canada border, joined the Hunters' Lodges. The Hunters' Lodges, like other secret societies, were organized in a hierarchical structure. Members performed rituals which emulated mainstream fraternal organizations. As historian Allan Greer explains, the rites and rituals of the Hunters' Lodges, emulated the post-Napoleonic Europe Italian revolutionary organization the *carbonari*. Although, the Hunters' Lodges rituals had rather overt "Canadian motifs." The Hunters swore an oath of initiation which promised

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[260] Ibid., 64; Oscar Arvle Kinchen, *The Rise and Fall of the Patriot Hunters* (New York: Bookman Associates, 1956), 31; Orrin Edward Tiffany, *The Relations of the United States to the Canadian Rebellion of 1837-1838* (Buffalo: Buffalo Historical Society, 1905), 61-62.

[261] Richard Chabot, Jacques Monet, and Yves Roby, "Robert Nelson," in *Dictionary of Canadian Biography*, vol. 10, University of Toronto/Université Laval, 2003–, accessed June 19, 2019, http://www.biographi.ca/en/bio/nelson_robert_10E.html.

to uphold (American-inspired)republican forms of government. Also, according to a dispatch from Sir George Arthur to General Hugh Brady, the Hunters used a series of passwords and secret signals to communicate with each other.[262]

After being blindfolded and presented in front of the Lodge, new Hunters took one the following oaths of initiation:

> "I swear to do my utmost to promote Republican Institutions and ideas throughout the world – to cherish them; to defend them; and especially devote myself to the propagation, protection, and defence of these institutions in North America. I pledge my life, my property, and my sacred honor to the Association; I bind myself to its interests, and I promise, until death, that I will attack, combat, and help to destroy, by all means, that my superior may think proper, every power of Royal origin, upon this continent; and especially never to rest till all tyrants of Britain cease to have any dominion or footing whatever in North America. I further solemnly swear to obey the orders delivered to me by my superior, and never to disclose any such order, or orders, except to a brother 'Hunter' of the same degree. So help me God."[263]

Or:

> "You swear, in the presence of Almighty God, that you will not reveal the secret sign of the snow-shoe to any, not even to members of the society. You will not write, print, mark, engrave, scratch, chalk, or in any conceivable manner whatsoever, make the shape or sign of the snow-shoe to any living being, not even to the members of this society. You, furthermore, solemnly swear that you will not reveal any of the secrets of this society, which may not come to your knowledge, though the president, vice-president, or his cabinet. You, furthermore, solemnly swear that you will render all assistance in your power, without injuring yourself or family, or to any brother or member of this society, who shall at any time make the sign of distress to you. You, furthermore, solemnly swear that you

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[262] Ibid; Alan Greer, *The Patriots and the People: The Rebellion of 1837 in Rural Lower Canada* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1993), 341. Charles Moore, *History of Michigan: Volume II* (Chicago: The Lewis Publishing Company, 1915), 1106. Sir George Arthur to Hugh Brady, October 26, 1838, in Document 181, *Territorial Relations – United States and Great Britain: Message from the President of the United States* (Washington D.C.: House of Representatives, 1839), 116.

[263] The first oath of initiation was taken from a prisoner's interrogation. It is possible there may have been other oaths. For more, see Tiffany, *The Relations of the United States,* 62.

> will attend every meeting of your Lodge, if you can do so without injury to yourself or family. This you swear, as you shall answer to God."[264]

The Hunters used these oaths, coupled with complicated cyphers in print media, specific rhythmic patterns to knock on doors, secret hand signals, and other codes to communicate with one another. These codes determined "the degree or rank of the various Lodges and as if to make more certain the secrecy of their intentions." The mystery behind the Hunters and their secret modes of communication ultimately held a symbolic function. And, in many cases, such as contemporary accounts found in correspondences between government officials, they maintained a "minimal distance towards reality" between each other and placed the Hunters and their codified language in the realm of fiction. This worked. Their secrets kept some, but not all, information out of the hands of American, Upper Canadian, and British spies.[265]

The Hunters' Lodges had four degrees: the snowshoe, the beaver, the master hunter, and the patriot hunter. To identify other members, Hunters would ask each other a series questions or perform a series of tasks. One common test, which was performative in nature, asked an individual if they ever saw a snowshoe. According to lore, the initiated members of the Hunters' Lodges knew of the signs and symbols associated with the snowshoe rank. Depending on an individual's answer, the person questioned was required to draw images associated with the snowshoe rank. If their drawing resembled a snowshoe, he was not a member. The French sociologist Pierre Bourdieu and the

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[264] "Appendix B: Hunters Lodges in 1837-1838" in *Tiffany, The Relations of the United States*, 538.

[265] Slavoj Zizek, "Superego by Default" in *The Metastases of Enjoyment: Six Essays on Women and Causality* (London & New York: Verso, 2005), 75-76. Tiffany, *The Relations of the United States*, 62-63.

American cultural theorist and philosopher Judith Butler suggest an element of performative "social magic" maintain a power relationships and "reinforce the efficacious force of authority," especially in organizations such as the Hunters' Lodges. There were also a number of handshakes and hand-gestures which identified members of the Lodges. When shaking hands, "the parties take the cuff of each other's coat between the finger and thumb." While the hand-gestures bring both hands letting them fall "carelessly in front of the body."[266]

Another question the Hunters asked to identify other Hunters included the straightforward and rather simple: "Are you a Hunter?" To identify as a Hunter, the correct answer is "Yes on Tuesday." This is because "the day following the one on which the sign is made being [is] always used." Rituals, as Butler suggests, are repeated over-and-over and in some cases, failure abide by them resulted in (as per the Hunters' oath of initiation) "ostracism and even death" which ultimately "control[ed] the [organization's] shape of production." Other questions asked include: "Do you know the Beaver to be an industrious animal?" To correctly answer this question, no verbal answer is required. However, the person being asked the question is to imitate the action of a beaver gnawing on a piece of wood. The Patriot Hunters were asked "Do you snuff *and* chew?" If the person being asked the question has a snuff box on them they are to make scratch the box three times with their nail. If they do not, they are to scratch their waist-coat.[267]

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[266] "Hunters Lodges," Ephemera, 1838 in Sir George Arthur Papers (1838.Hunters Lodges.sb), Baldwin Collection, Toronto Reference Library, Toronto, Canada. Judith Butler, *Excitable Speech: A Politics of the Performative* (New York & London: Routledge, 1997), 153-154.

[267] Judith Butler, *Bodies that Matter: On the Discursive Limits of "Sex"* (London & New York: Routledge,1993), 95. "Hunters Lodges," 1838.

Like thieves in the night, the threat of a secret, paramilitary organization the Hunters' Lodges lingered in the background of the United States and the Canadas throughout the 1830s and into the early 1840s. Canadian spies, according to the *Niles Register*, easily joined the Hunters' Lodges. The meetings were generally disorganized, a ranking member of the Hunters' Lodges took attendance at every meeting and recorded the names of the men in attendance. The somewhat haphazard record keeping allowed Canadian spies to survey number of men attended men who attended the meetings. These numbers were often exaggerated. This led to false reports being submitted to Sir George Arthur and he once mustered 40,000 Upper Canadian men to prevent an invasion by the Hunters' Lodges. According to contemporary accounts, this hoax "led the Canadian people into the great error of believing that our whole population were enlisted against them, and bent on the conquest of Canada." The mustering of 40,000 troops and Arthur's associated acts was costly. The Hunters' hoax cost the British government millions of dollars. [268]

On January 3, 1840 Upper Canada's House of Assembly made an attempt to formally address the threat of the Hunters' Lodges. After a brief description of the organization, Upper Canada's Governor General, Charles Poulett Thomson, had no pertinent information to share with the House of Assembly at the time. However, as noted in the *Journal of the House of Assembly of Upper Canada*, it was the opinion of the Governor General to dismiss the Hunters' Lodges and other secret organizations that operated on the U.S.-Upper/Lower Canadian borders. It read,"is the most desirable to allay irritation, and to calm, instead of exciting, unnecessary alarm; and nothing can more

[268] "The Hunters' Lodges," *Niles National Register*, September 7, 1839.

impede the return to tranquility, so essential to the prosperity of this Province, than any unnecessary inquiries into the past; calculated only to harass individuals, and excite the public mind." The very real threat of this secret society – whose goal was to overthrow the government of Upper Canada – excited governments in both Upper Canada and the United States. This excitement, however, led to very little action as there were limits as to what actions each side could *actually* take to combat the presence of this clandestine society. [269]

In the November 19, 1841 edition of the *Detroit Free Press,* the newspaper reprinted a sweeping article from the *Cleveland Herald.* This article published statistics on the extent of the Hunters Lodges in North America. The *Herald* estimated about 80,000 men were members of the secret society. A more detailed, state-by-state and province breakdown of the chapters listed the following: Michigan's 54 lodges, Ohio's 86, and New York's 263. In Lower Canada, the *Herald* article proclaims, "nearly the whole population are organized in lodges;" while in Upper Canada, there was a total of 84 chapters. Other states mentioned in the *Herald's* summary include: Maine (99), Vermont (107), New Hampshire (98), Wisconsin (7), Illinois (21), Indiana (17), Pennsylvania (49), Kentucky (11), Virginia (21), Maryland (16), Delaware (2), New Jersey (17), Missouri (39), Iowa (3), and Louisiana (11). According to the *Herald,* contemporaries estimated about 100 more chapters of the Hunters' Lodges existed in the states not listed above.[270]

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[269] G.S. Boulton, "Hunters' Lodges Address," January 3, 1840, *Journal of the House of Assembly of Upper Canada*, *Session 1839-1840* (Toronto: Hugh Scobie, British Colonist Office, 1840), 109.

[270] The number of chapters per state are listed next to the state in parenthesis. What is interesting about these numbers is the extent of the lodges in North America. Historians emphasize the lodges'

Historians disagree about the *actual* number of individuals in the Hunters' Lodges. Early estimates in Orrin Edward Tiffany's *The Relations of the United States to the Canadian Rebellion of 1837-1838* estimated anywhere from 15,000 to 200,000 members. When the Hunters' activities peaked in 1838-1839, there were 25,000 to 40,000 members located primarily across the northern United States and both Upper and Lower Canada. It is difficult to calculate an accurate estimate of the number of men enrolled in the Hunters Lodges. This is a result of haphazard recordkeeping. Their method of keeping records, however, did benefit the U.S., Upper Canadian, and British governments as it was rather difficult to keep their plots secret which thwarted their plans.[271]

On a more local level, in Detroit, the Hunters frequently gathered at the home of Horace Heath. Heath was the owner of the Eagle Tavern on Woodbridge Street near Griswold. Heath's contemporaries characterized him as a "liberal Patriot" and highlighted his benevolent qualities of being "warm-hearted," and "generous" to the Canadian Patriots. Heath opened his hotel to the Hunters and provided them with copious amounts of food and drink. Heath's contemporaries recalled that Heath was so charitable to the Patriot cause that he sank himself into poverty. In Detroit, the Hunters knew when Heath hosted them at the Eagle Tavern, he would allow the Hunters to pay "what they were willing and able." Heath's charity may have not been the best business plan, but it kept him in the Hunters' good favors. At Heath's home, the Hunters regularly

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northern connections – and rightfully so. The Hunters' Lodges do, however, reach as far south as Louisiana. For more, see: "Hunters' Lodges in N. America," *Detroit Free Press,* November 19, 1841.

[271] Tiffany, *Relations of the United States,* 63; Greer, *The Patriots and the People*, 342.

met. At these gatherings "inflammatory harangues" and addresses emanated from Heath's home, "some of which would have done credit to the palmist days of the era of seventy-six." These meetings, only miles away from the border, kept the international community on high alert.[272]

After their defeat at Windsor, on December 4, 1838, the Hunters at Detroit passed a series of resolutions. The resolves condemned the American military for acting on the behalf of the British crown. The Hunters believed the U.S. government violated their rights as Americans. The Crown and American forces stopped them from spreading democracy through rebellion into the Canadas. The Hunters expressed a sense of disgust toward the federal government exercising force on American citizens. The Hunters' meeting really stressed the fact they believed the government overstated its boundaries. The federal government, the Hunters opined, violated Michigan's sovereignty. Army officers, the Hunters proclaimed, act at the federal level. They "are not sheriffs or constables, but soldiers, in war to defend us, and in peace to prepare for war." The Hunters believed the federal presence along the border was unconstitutional - especially as the U.S. military opened fire upon American citizens – in peacetime.[273]

Despite the Hunters demand for a minimal military presence along the frontier, the Hunters' meeting turned to Anti-British rhetoric nationalistic fervor. The Hunters appreciated American patriotism; however, they openly condemned the actions of the

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[272] Friend Palmer, *Early Days in Detroit*, edited by Harry P. Hunt and Charles M. June (Detroit, Hunt & June, 1906), 687. Talcott E. Wing, *History of Monroe County Michigan* (New York: Munsell & Company, Publishers, 1890), 207. Robert B. Ross and George B. Catlin, *Landmarks of Wayne County and Detroit*, edited by Clarence W. Burton (Detroit, Evening News Association, 1898), 401.

[273] Appendix VI: "Resolutions of a Hunter Meeting at Detroit Following the Defeat at Windsor on December 4, 1838" in Kinchen, *The Rise and Fall of the Patriot Hunters*, 137-139.

British Empire. The Hunters presented the British as inhuman oppressors violating the sovereignty and committing atrocities against other powers. This includes:

> … the slaughter of the Turks by England and France, conjointly in Navarino Bay [Greece], while in profound peace with the Sultan; in the unjustifiable assumption, by England, in openly putting down Don Miguel, with her troops in Portugal; in the British Parliament sanctioning the legion at Sebastian, against the Spanish Pretender, Carlos; and in the unnatural and inhuman massacre of American citizens, on board of the steamboat *Caroline*, at Schlosser, while in profound peace with the United States.[274]

Following the meeting, the Hunters took to the streets. Theller attended the event. Theller claimed the Detroit meeting was "the largest ever congregation in Detroit." According to Theller's account of the meeting, the joy and excitement felt by those in attendance transcended the physical realm. Those in attendance was a "purer spirit of generous, whole-souled, patriotic enthusiasm." The event "was a glorious spectacle; one that would have made the cringing, truculent Tories of the day blush for their own recreancy" which, as a result, Theller, to add insult, called their manhood into question. The glee, pomp and spectacle would have been enjoyed, Theller concludes, by the "hovering spirits of our forefathers" which shows how some believed this crusade was ordained by some higher power – if not God, the Spirit of '76 and the memory of the revolutionary generation.[275]

The Hunters had a paradoxical concept of national identity. One aspect of this is that they were very proud to be American. In an era of sectional tension, the Hunters harped on states' rights issues and defended what they believed the United States was at home and abroad. The Hunters' form of nationalism transposed on what Zizek deems the

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[274] Edward Alexander Theller, *Canada in 1837-38; Showing, by Historical Facts, the Causes of the Late Attempted Revolution, and of its Failure* (Philadelphia: H.F. Anners, 1841), 310.

[275] Theller, *Canada*, 310-311. Ross, *The Patriot War*, 13.

"social field." Zizek writes, "We always impute to the 'other' an excessive enjoyment." The federal government as well as the British wanted to "steal [the Hunters'] enjoyment (by ruining [their] way of life) and/or he has access to some secret, perverse enjoyment." The U.S. Federal government, military and the British stood in the way of the Hunters' overarching goal of conquering Upper Canada putting an end to British thralldom.[276]

Conclusion

The defeats at Windsor, Fighting, and Pelee Islands marked the end of major conflict between the Patriots and the Crown. These losses, however, did not necessarily end the Patriot War. International relations between the United States and Britain were still strained. The American, Upper Canadian, and British forces did all they could to prevent the Hunters and Patriots from making their somewhat isolated rebellion an international conflict.

Americans, such as the enigmatic Jacksonian "General" Henry Handy and the Irish-born Detroit transplant, E.A. Theller convinced some members of the general public to join their crusade to topple British rule in North America. Handy used the strength of voluntary associations – his Order of the Sons of Liberty and later, the Hunters' Lodges. Societies, such as the Hunters' Lodges, seemingly "penetrated everywhere." The American Unitarian preacher, William Ellery Channing (1780-1842) wrote that voluntary organizations were "one of the most remarkable circumstances or features of our age… the energy with which the principle of combination or the action of joint forces, by associated numbers, is manifesting itself… This principle of association is worthy the

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[276] Slavoj Zizek, *Tarrying with the Negative: Kant, Hegel, and the Critique of Ideology* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 1993), 202-203.

attention of the philosopher, who simply aims to understand society and its most powerful springs."[277] Channing, perhaps without ever knowing, evoked a Tocquevillian reading of the Hunters' Lodges and despite this eloquent call to understand these societies and the excitement one gets joining them, this flowery rhetoric did not stop North Americans from becoming members of these organizations including the Hunters' Lodges.

The rush (or perhaps the "high") the Hunters and the Patriots experienced was short-lived. The public meetings and goodwill felt by the rebels seemingly overshadowed their losses. Regardless of their numerous defeats, the Hunters and Patriots in Detroit still gathered and critiqued the federal government. The Hunters claimed federal officials violated Michigan's state's rights and the military officials stationed along the border acted on the behalf of the British and the loyalist Upper Canadians – not the Upper Canadian rebels and American sympathizers who essentially "played soldier" on the frontier.

[277] John Lardas Modern, *Secularism in Antebellum America* (Chicago & London: University of Chicago Press, 2011), 53.

Chapter Six

Politics, Paranoia, and a Printer: Some Effects of the Upper Canadian Rebellion and Other Lingering Issues with the British into the 1840s

On September 25, 1841 President John Tyler (1790-1862) issued a proclamation which targeted the "lodges, clubs, or associations" that assembled "on the northern frontier." President Tyler's declaration defined his presidency's domestic and foreign policy concerning the border issues with the Canadas. John Tyler, a president known more for his interminable bloodline than his time as Commander-in-Chief, ordered the Hunter's Lodges and other groups sympathetic to Canadian liberty to disperse. According to Tyler's proclamation, the Hunter's Lodges and other associations along the border which separated the U.S. and the Canadas "disrupt[ed] the lives and property" of citizens of Upper Canada and was detrimental to the "public property of the British government." Tyler's decree sealed the Hunters' demise. President Tyler promised the United States would prosecute violators of American neutrality laws to the fullest extent of the law. Moreover, if these individuals *actually* crossed into Upper Canada, violating American neutrality and the sovereignty of Upper Canada, the U.S. government would not intervene on their behalf , particularly if the British arrested these invaders or worse used lethal force to eliminate the extrajudicial threat.[278]

President Tyler's proclamation was a legalistic effort to quell the Hunter's Lodges and the other rebel groups that terrorized the U.S.-Upper Canadian border and avoid war

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[278] Arguably, John Tyler was a forgettable president. Tyler assumed the presidency after sudden the death of William Henry Harrison – which was a first in U.S. history. For more on Tyler's proclamation, see: John Tyler, "Proclamation" September 25, 1841 in *A Compilation of the Messages and Papers of the Presidents*, Volume IV, edited by James D. Richardson (Washington D.C.: Bureau of National Literature and Art, 1907), 72-73.

with the British crown and the Canadas. Emotions and the spread of information throughout the U.S.-Upper Canadian culture area led numerous Americans to support the Upper Canadian rebels in the so-called Patriot War. Tyler's proclamation, however, suppressed the rebels' momentum. Tyler literally gave the Hunters the rope with which to hang themselves if they continued their illegal extrajudicial actions. Despite the optimism surrounding the Upper Canadian Rebellion and the Patriot War by its supporters, the rebellion itself was mismanaged from its very inception.

This chapter examines some of the effects of the Upper Canadian Rebellion and Patriot War. Specifically, chapter six addresses the fate of William Lyon Mackenzie, lingering border issues between the U.S. and Britain in the short-lived Maine-New Brunswick Aroostook War, and an international incident surrounding Alexander McLeod. It also pays particular attention to the work of American and British diplomats who diffused these tense situations that nearly led both nations to war. I argue an emotions and, in Mackenzie's particular set of circumstances, failure and a degree of fantasy, were at the heart of the diplomatic tension and border issues between the U.S. and Great Britain. The excitement in the U.S. and Upper Canada was palpable and diplomats in Washington D.C. and London worked to diffuse the tensions that existed between the U.S., Britain, and its Canadian colonies. While in the case of Mackenzie, the disintegration of his rebellion and patriot cause reduced the "firebrand" to an indigent writer dependent upon friends and favors prior to returning to Canada.

Under Pressure: American Neutrality Laws and the Trial of W.L. Mackenzie

In the U.S., many leaders felt that neutrality in foreign affairs was a necessity to maintain domestic and internal stability – especially after the American Revolution. As

early as 1793, President George Washington prohibited American citizens from providing aid to Britain or France during the early stages of France's Revolutionary struggle (1789-1799). According to historian Robert E. May, the U.S. government enacted various neutrality mandates between 1794 and 1838. The 1818 law was the most incriminatory for American filibusters. Perhaps the most damning aspect of the 1818 law was its sixth article. Article 6 of the neutrality law outlined a penalty which included 3-years in jail and a $3,000 fine for filibusters who engaged in armed conflict against a foreign nation "while the United States are at peace." These penalties made filibustering a costly endeavor.[279]

It was this 1818 American neutrality law that American officials accused William Lyon Mackenzie of violating. He was perhaps the person most closely associated with the Patriot War to be face trial in the United States. On June 12, 1838, Mackenzie was formally accused by the United States of violating American neutrality laws. The judges, the Honorable Smith Thompson (1768-1843) and the Honorable Alfred Conklin (1789-1874), presided over Mackenzie's case which was held at the U.S. Circuit Court of the Northern District of New York in Albany.[280] As per a contemporary account, there were

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[279] For more on Washington's proclamation, see: "George Washington, "The Proclamation of Neutrality, 1793," April 22, 1793, The Avalon Project, http://avalon.law.yale.edu/18th_century/neutra93.asp, accessed November 10, 2018; May, *Manifest Destiny's Underworld*, 7; for the Neutrality Act (1818) see: "An Act in Addition to the 'Act for the Punishment of Certain Crimes against the United States,' and to repeal the acts there in mentioned," in Charles G. Fenwick, *The Neutrality Laws of the United States* (Washington D.C.: The Carnegie Endowment for International Peace Division of International Law, 1913): 176-179.

[280] Smith Thompson was quite a notable figure. He had a distinguished career in American politics. He served as the Secretary of the Navy (1819) and, perhaps more importantly, as a Supreme Court Justice (1823-1843) during the Monroe Administration. For more on Thompson, see: Charles Elliott Fitch, *Memorial Encyclopedia of the State of New York, Volume I* (New York: The American Historical Society, 1916), 304. Aside from his career as a federal judge, the Honorable Alfred Conklin also served as the United States' Ambassador to Mexico. Despite the extant secondary literature being a bit scarce, the historian Durwood Ball makes a slight reference to Conklin serving as the U.S. ambassador in his

hundreds of witnesses in attendance at Mackenzie's trial. Not surprisingly, Mackenzie, the emboldened rebel, pled "not guilty" to the charges of having "in the year A.D. 1837, within the territory and jurisdiction of the United States, began, set on foot, and provided and prepared the means for a military expedition to be carried on from the United States against the dominions of the Crown and [U.K.]." The trial could not commence on June 12 as planned, the prosecution's witnesses were not present in the courtroom. Mackenzie then paid a bail of $5,000 – a rather sizable sum of money – and remained free.[281]

During this preliminary hearing, there was a heated exchange between Mackenzie, Mr. Nathaniel S. Benton (1792-1869), the New York district attorney, and other court officials. After Benton announced his witnesses would not be ready for trial, Mackenzie boldly proclaimed in open court:

> I never lost sight of my case for a moment. I wrote to Mr. Seymour a master in chancery, one of my bail, asking what time I would be required to appear, and he replied that I would have due notice. Accordingly I had a letter from an attorney of this court yesterday mentioning that I had been indicted for the Navy Island affair – that I had been called on my recognizance, but that application had been made to *your lordship*, and till this day allowed me to be ready for trial. How can my bail be responsible for my non appearance at this court, when I have then arraigned, have pled, and my plea is recorded by your clerk![282]

A lawyer in the courtroom interrupted Mackenzie and quipped: "We haint [sic] got any LORDS here, Mackenzie." The court then convened and was set to meet on either October 2 or October 3, 1838. Mackenzie called these "proceedings vexatious, anti-

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monograph, *Army Regulars on the Western Frontier, 1848-1861* (Norman, The University of Oklahoma Press, 2001), fn13, 232.

[281] Thomas Jefferson Sutherland, *A Canvass of the Proceedings on the Trial of William Lyon Mackenzie* (New York: Sackett & Sargent, Printers, 1840), A2; "Rebels Persecuted for Republicanism," *Mackenzie's Gazette*, June 23, 1838; Eliasen's currency converter, accessed on November 13, 2018.

[282] "Rebels Persecuted," *Mackenzie's Gazette,* June 28, 1838.

republican, and costly to the defendants." Mackenzie then commented on the constitutionality of the American neutrality laws and dubbed them "expensive libels upon democracy." According to Mackenzie, "the jury are unborn that will convict William Lyon Mackenzie."[283]

During the second hearing, Mackenzie's 17-count indictment was formally presented to the court. In an allocution near the conclusion of his October trial, Mackenzie cited the Sixth Amendment of the U.S. Constitution in his defense. The fiery rebel, with a literary command of the English language, argued he had the right to a fair, and speedy trial – something in which Mackenzie believed he failed to receive. One of the judges overseeing Mackenzie's case, Judge Conklin, told Mackenzie if he was burdened by the legal proceedings of his court, he was to present his case at another time. Mackenzie believed he should not have to do such a thing as he was already prepared for his trial. Unfortunately, for Mackenzie, Judge Conklin could not continue the trial. Conklin claimed "there was an act of Congress of last July, forbidding him to try any of the cases on the Western frontier of New York till June, 1839," where either Conklin or Mackenzie, as editor of the *Gazette*, noted "when it is to be expected that Canada will be a state of the Union" or if the trial is moved to another location.[284]

In a matter of months, William Lyon Mackenzie went from a newspaperman to a revolutionary figurehead who violated U.S. neutrality laws. The Upper Canadian Rebellion at York was fruitless. By 1839, the Patriot War and most of the rebel insurgencies had been unsuccessful and Mackenzie now faced jail time. At the time of

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[283] Ibid.

[284] "My Trial at Albany," *Mackenzie's* Gazette, October, 20, 1838.

Mackenzie's conviction, he was not a hero akin to Washington, Lafayette, or the countless others who ended British tyranny in the thirteen American colonies during the Revolution. He failed to gain international support for the Upper Canadian Rebellion and the Patriot War. Mackenzie's vision, for the time being, failed. While Mackenzie still had his supporters throughout the entire ordeal, it was soon a moot point as he still found himself behind bars. [285]

The Printer Behind Bars: Mackenzie's Imprisonment and the Caroline Almanac

Mackenzie's trial commenced in June 1839 and nearly a month later, the July 6, 1839 issue of his newspaper, *Mackenzie's Gazette*, indicated a change of scenery. Mackenzie was found guilty of violating American neutrality laws and his paper was now published out of the Monroe County Jail in Rochester, New York. Mackenzie dubbed the Monroe County Jail the "American Bastille." The original Bastille, essentially a French penitentiary, was raided by revolutionaries in 1789. The Bastille, according to scholars Hans-Jürgen Lüsebrink and Rolf Reichardt, and its symbolic storming on July 14, 1789 is emblematic of republican ideals. It, as Lüsebrink and Reichardt suggest, is a "historical paradigm for the theoretical reflection on how freedom becomes possible, and how social action comes into being from isolated actions of individuals under the pressure of a common threat." Mackenzie's deeming the Monroe County Jail as the American Bastille was somewhat fantasmic. Mackenzie may have hoped for a miracle, a raid of the so-called "American Bastille" by his fellow travelers sympathetic to his plight, but

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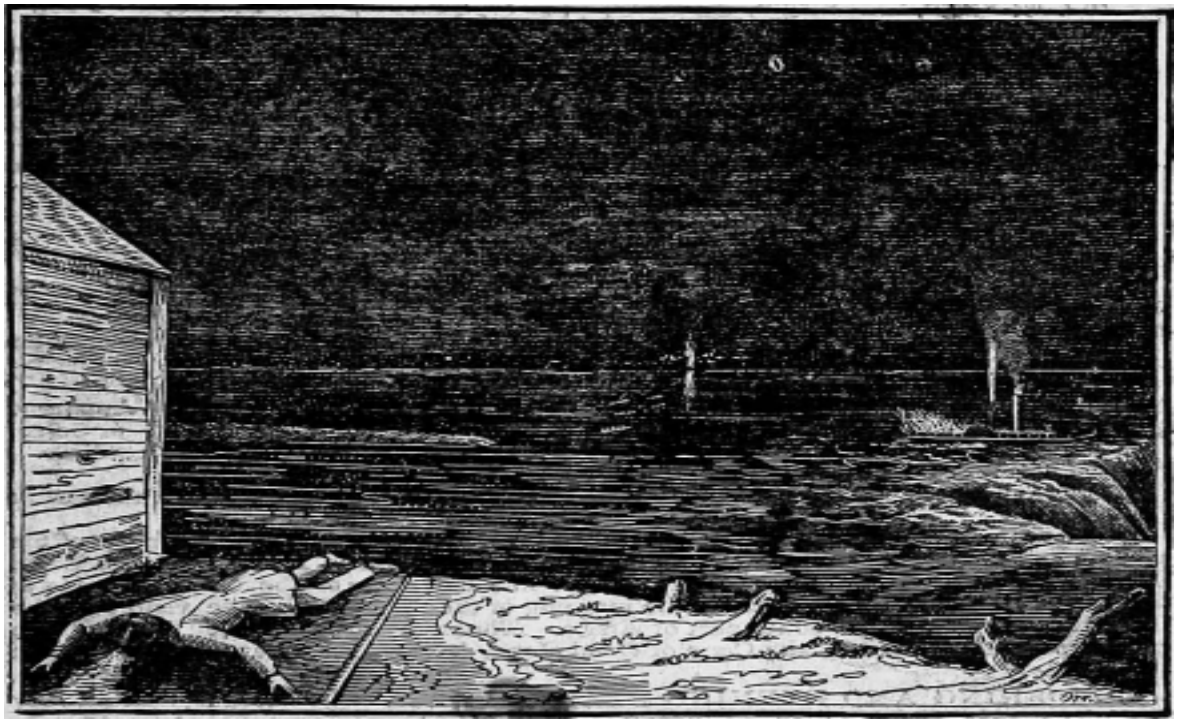
[285] Japhy Wilson, "The *Jouissance* of Philanthrocapitalism: Enjoyment as a Post-Political Factor" in *The Post-Political and Its Discontents: Spaces of Depoliticisation, Spectres of Radical Politics* edited by Japhy Wilson and Erik Swyngedouw (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2014), 113.

unfortunately, a storming of the American Bastille did not come to fruition. Mackenzie remained incarcerated and served an eighteen-month sentence. [286]

While in prison, about seven months into his prison sentence, Mackenzie edited the *Caroline Almanac.* This almanac was named after the American ship, the *Caroline* - which the British boarded, burned, and sent over Niagara Falls which nearly sparked an international conflict between the British and the United States. Mackenzie used an etching which depicted the massacre of American troops at Fort Schlosser, New York:



[Figure 4: Etching from the *Caroline Almanac,* 1841; Courtesy: Toronto Public Library]

Using this imagery, which depicted the massacre at Schlosser or the *Caroline* Affair, was an attempt by Mackenzie to rekindle interest in the issue of Canadian liberty. Also, the

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[286] *Mackenzie's Gazette*, July 6, 1839; *Mackenzie's Gazette*, July 13, 1839; Hans-Jürgen Lüsebrink and Rolf Reichardt, *The Bastille: A History of A Symbol of Despotism and Freedom: Bicentennial Reflections on The French Revolution* trans. Norbert Schurer (Durham, NC and London: Duke University Press, 1997), 1.

Caroline Almanac was a means to support his family financially while he was behind bars. Mackenzie also included the image of two men hanging at the gallows with the caption "PEOPLE OF AMERICA, TAKE WARNING BY THE PAST!" Prior to the invention of the telegraph and other forms of electric mass media, as scholar of American studies George Lipsitz suggests, newspapers and almanacs helped preserve cultural memory. Mackenzie was keenly aware of this and attempted to use these images to his advantage.[287]

Perhaps more importantly, near the end of the *Caroline Almanac* in a brief editorial pity party written by Mackenzie himself, the imprisoned newspaperman claimed his jail sentence and punishment for violating American neutrality laws was unjust. He lambasted the U.S. congress for being feckless and not coming to the aid of the "oppressed exile." While imprisoned, Mackenzie claimed he could not support his family. The editor of *Mackenzie's Gazette* and the former rebel, was locked in what he described as solitary confinement in "the receptacle for felons and prostitutes at Rochester." Mackenzie lamented that he was not able to access the common area of the prison or exercise in the yard. Yet Mackenzie could write and print a book. Perhaps Mackenzie exaggerated a bit to cement himself as a martyr. Maybe he did this to sell more almanacs. Or perhaps the editorial was some sort of catharsis since Mackenzie

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[287] William Lyon Mackenzie, *The Caroline Almanac and American Freeman's Chronicle for 1840* (Rochester, NY: Mackenzie's Gazette Office, 1840), 3, Baldwin Collection, Toronto Reference Library, Toronto, Ontario, Canada.; George Lipsitz, *Time Passages: Collective Memory and American Popular Culture* (Minneapolis and London: University of Minnesota Press,1990), 6.

claimed he was ill for most of his confinement. The editorial ended with Mackenzie urging his readers and their friends to press Congress and the President for a pardon.[288]

With Mackenzie imprisoned, the Patriot War and the quest for Canadian liberty seemed as if it was a lost cause. Despite this, there was still a sense of optimism among Mackenzie's followers. This is perhaps most notable in the case of Thomas Jefferson Sutherland. Sutherland, an ally of Mackenzie from Navy Island, and an attorney, wrote an appeal to President Martin Van Buren (1782-1862). Sutherland believed the U.S. judicial system had railroaded Mackenzie. Sutherland's petition to Van Buren claimed that given the material presented in court, Mackenzie was wrongfully convicted. Sutherland continued, and informed those reading his petition, now that Mackenzie is imprisoned, he is suffering through an "imprisonment under and illegal and irregular condemnation."[289]

Through the advocacy of Sutherland and through Mackenzie's own writing, the now imprisoned "firebrand" positioned himself as a martyr for Canadian liberty. Coupled with the belief he was wrongfully convicted, Mackenzie exclaimed being in prison prolonged his suffering. The platform Mackenzie used to communicate with the masses – his newspapers – was a degree of separation from his reader. This separation established that he suffered while imprisoned. Mackenzie transformed this deep-seated

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[288] Mackenzie, "*The Caroline Almanac* – Companion to Ditto – *Mackenzie's Gazette* – His Imprisonment – Rates of Postage" *The Caroline Almanac,* 120-121.

[289] Sutherland, *A Canvass of the Proceedings on the Trial of William Lyon Mackenzie*, 17.

pain with a degree of optimism, he continued to push his supporters to lobby officials for his freedom and continue the campaign against British tyranny in the Canadas.[290]

Sutherland also opined that the men who supported the Upper Canadian rebels did so because they loved "REPUBLICAN INSTITUTIONS – and the desire they entertained that all America should be free!" Sutherland suggested Mackenzie's American supporters did not necessarily need him. Sutherland argued that the American love for republican institutions was so strong that "American people with American principles, require not the agency of a stranger of a refugee to move them to act in such a cause." Mackenzie was thus the figurehead behind the rebellion, and now a martyr. Philosophers Marcus Pound and Slavoj Zizek suggest, the experience is more important – not necessarily the figurehead (i.e., in this case, Mackenzie) himself. Someone may have taken his place. However, without Mackenzie's melodrama and his newspaper which advocated for a free Canada, interest in the Upper Canadian Rebellion, especially in the U.S. would have faded rather quickly.[291]

While Mackenzie served his jail sentence, The *Oswego Palladium* – among other papers throughout New York - reported his mother, Elizabeth, passed away at the age of 90. Mackenzie and his mother suffered economically when his father died. The death of Mackenzie's mother was a major turning point in his life. This is reinforced in an account by Mackenzie's early biographer, Charles Lindsey. According to Lindsey, "Till the death of his mother, the family never suffered want; but after that event, the gaunt spectre

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[290] Emma Gatland, *Women from the Golden Legend: Female Authority in a Medieval Castilian Sanctoral* (Suffolk and Rochester: Tamesis/Boydell & Brewer, 2011), 76-77.

[291] Sutherland, *Canvass of the Proceedings,* 53. Pound, *Zizek: A (Very) Critical Introduction*, 132; Zizek, *Tarrying with the Negative*, 200.

sometime threatened to enter the door." Prior to his mother's death, Mackenzie was allowed six hours with her. Although Mackenzie spent some time with his mother while she was on her deathbed, he was unable to attend her funeral.[292]

Mackenzie's tribute to his mother in his *Gazette* highlighted his struggle to be granted permission to see his mother. According to Mackenzie, his mother's health – as well as his very own health – deteriorated over the term of his jail sentence. When Mackenzie realized his mother was near the end of her life, he wrote to the President of the United States and other officials to be granted permission to see her one last time. Mackenzie was under the assumption he would be unable to be with his mother, but the sheriff and jailer furloughed Mackenzie and allowed him to travel to his home in New York. Mackenzie was eternally grateful to those who allowed him to be with his mother. Through this ordeal, Mackenzie suffered through a great deal of pain – among other emotions – as he wrote the following. On the day of her funeral and internment, his mother's remains:

> Will be carried to Mount Hope for interment tomorrow, Wednesday, by strangers, herself a stranger in a land of strangers. I may see the hearse pass but dare not accompany it. This is unjust and cruel in the government, which acts by partial not by general law; but it is strong and I fear too regardless of high principle, and I am weak and feeble, having for the last fortnight been afflicted by a wasting fever, a natural consequence of the painful confinement I am enduring, so foreign to my previous habits of life, and so unsuitable to my advanced years. – Tuesday Dec. 24 [293]

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[292] *Oswego Palladium*, January 8, 1840. Lindsey, *The Makers of Canada: William Lyon Mackenzie (1908)*, 457-459.

[293] "Died," *Mackenzie's Gazette*, December 28, 1839.

Mackenzie's mother, a stranger in a strange land was buried without her son by her side. Nevertheless, despite the relative degree of suffering, tragedy, and lack of success endured by Mackenzie – especially after the Upper Canadian Rebellion – he still had his supporters. In the July 13, 1839 edition of the *Mackenzie's Gazette* it was noted that Solomon Southwick (1773-1839), a fellow New York newspaperman, purchased a year of Mackenzie's paper and equated Mackenzie's offense to that committed by George Washington during the American Revolution. Hiram Carmichael, a Philadelphia shoemaker, sent Mackenzie a pair of Moroccan slippers and wished Mackenzie "may walk the streets of Rochester in them long before the expectations of your enemies." Luckily for Mackenzie, by early 1840, and due to his celebrity, his conditions gradually ameliorated.[294]

On January 14. 1840 William Lyon Mackenzie appealed to the Governor of New York William H. Seward (1801-1872). Seward, a future American secretary of state and a member of President Abraham Lincoln's so-called "team of rivals" gained a great deal of political experience as governor of the Empire State. Mackenzie's appeal to Governor Seward was successful. Governor Seward, in return, wrote to the sheriff of Monroe County, New York to make Mackenzie's imprisonment more tolerable. According to Charles Lindsey, "the rigour of his punishment was now abated and Mackenzie was allowed to take exercise as prescribed in the sheriff's orders." On March 12, 1840 Mackenzie was even allowed to celebrate his birthday. Mackenzie celebrated his forty-

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[294] Letter to William Lyon Mackenzie from Solomon Southwick, *Mackenzie's Gazette*, July 13, 1839; Benson John Lossing, *The Empire State: A Compendious History of the Commonwealth of New York* (Hartford: American Publishing Company, 1888), 447; "The Shoemakers," *Mackenzie's Gazette*, July 13, 1839.

fifth birthday with a dinner in his prison cell and was accompanied by many of his close friends.[295]

While Mackenzie's conditions improved, there were members of the American public who lobbied for his release. In early January, the *Utica Democrat* reported a letter circulated in Congress that advocated for Mackenzie's release. According to the letter, "Americans are no longer disposed to lend any assistance to the patriots, *Mackenzie can do no harm."* Mackenzie's only wish, according to the letter, "was to pursue a quiet life." Supporters participating in Pittsford (New York) Debating Society pledged their support for Mackenzie. The group passed the following resolution: *"Resolved, That the immediate liberation of Wm. L. Mackenzie is demanded alike by justice and humanity."* Mackenzie's plight captured the hearts and minds of so many Americans. Freeing Mackenzie became a popular cause. At its peak, nearly 300,000 signatures filled a petition demanding Mackenzie's release. [296]

Mackenzie's supporters challenged President Van Buren and his administration. Petitions that demanded Mackenzie's release flooded the White House. Uncertainty arose. Would the President of the United States acknowledge the will of the people and release this revolutionary whom his followers compared to the Founding Fathers? Or, would Van Buren stand firm, acknowledge this was a states rights issue, and wash his hands of the situation? In his biography of Mackenzie, Lindsey suggested the former. He writes, "the President, adverse to a release to the last, felt himself unable to resist the

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[295] Lindsey, *William Lyon Mackenzie*, 458. For more on the "team of rivals" moniker, see Doris Kerns Goodwin popular and cinematically-adapted tome *Team of Rivals: The Political Genius of Abraham Lincoln* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 2005)

[296] "Mackenzie's Release," *Utica Democrat*, January 21, 1840; Charles Billinghurst to William Lyon Mackenzie, January 17, 1840 in *Mackenzie's Gazette*, January 25, 1840; Lindsey, *William Lyon Mackenzie*, 458.

demand of three hundred thousand petitioners." Sometime around April 12, 1840 the U.S. Secretary of State John Forsyth determined Mackenzie would be released. Only a select few were privy to this information and nearly a month later, on the evening of Sunday, May 10, 1840, Mackenzie was released from the American Bastille never to set foot into the prison again.[297]

Following Mackenzie's time in the Monroe Country Jail Mackenzie once again travelled the United States. He claimed that his health improved after stopping in the Catskill Mountains. Mackenzie also travelled to Washington D.C. and interviewed a number of U.S. senators. Mackenzie opined the antebellum industrialized North was soon to split with the agricultural South. And, after observing the "condition of the society here, [I] have lessened my regrets at the results of the opposition raised to England in Canada in 1837-8. I have beheld the American people give their dearest and most valued rights into keeping of the worst enemies of free institutions." Mackenzie condemned the United States. Mackenzie's attitude toward the U.S. drastically changed following his imprisonment. Prior to the Rebellion, he looked toward the United States and its institutions as a source of hope, perhaps a blueprint for a sovereign Upper Canada. However, with his revolution rejected, Mackenzie found himself in a web of despair, yet somehow managed to procure employment throughout upstate New York. [298]

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[297] Lindsey, *William Lyon Mackenzie*, 458.

[298] *Mackenzie's Gazette*, December 23, 1840; Lindsey, *William Lyon Mackenzie,* 460; Yannis Stavrakakis, "Democracy in Post Democratic Times," in *The Lacanian Left: Psychoanalysis, Theory, Politics* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 2007), 265.

Law, Pride, Honor, and War? The McLeod Case and the Aroostook War

While the Mackenzie saga unfolded, two additional issues strained relations between the U.S. and Great Britain. The first was the case of Alexander McLeod. Sheriff Alexander McLeod was an Upper Canadian lawman who served in the Niagara Region and had taken part in the *Carolina* affair. Prior to emigrating to Upper Canada, McLeod, a Loyalist, was a member of the British army during the Napoleonic Wars (1803-1815). After his service to the Crown, McLeod moved to Upper Canada sometime in the 1820s. During William Lyon Mackenzie's failed Upper Canadian Rebellion in late 1837, McLeod helped protect the city of Toronto from Mackenzie's rebels. In normal circumstances, McLeod's story and heroism would have been prototypical: McLeod was an everyday lawman who maintained order in Upper Canada during an extraordinary time. This, however, was not the case. On November 12, 1840, McLeod was arrested by American officials in Lewiston, New York for allegedly taking part in the *Caroline* Affair. It was alleged by American officials that amidst a drunken barroom confession, McLeod bragged his sword "tasted the blood of two men on board the *Caroline*" in late 1837. McLeod, coupled with a healthy dose of liquid courage, admitted his involvement in the *Caroline* affair. This slip, or perhaps to the Americans who arrested McLeod, a factual admission of guilt, was all the information the Americans needed to send this perpetrator away to prison. For the Americans, McLeod was a scapegoat and his arrest was a symbolic effort to redeem the loss of life – specifically the killing of Amos Durfee

– when the American steamship, the *Caroline,* was set ablaze and sent over Niagara Falls in December 1837.[299]

For both the British and the United States, the McLeod case came at an inopportune time. Prior to the McLeod case tensions between the U.S. and Britain were gradually cooling. Both the Upper Canadian Rebellion and the Patriot War were essentially over. The McLeod Case however, only added tension to the ongoing U.S. – U.K. dispute over the Maine-New Brunswick border. This short spat is better known as the Aroostook War (1838-1842). The border between the U.S. and New Brunswick – a then British colony – had not been resolved after the American Revolution. The nebulous and conflicting boundary line led to a bitter dispute between the United States and Great Britain.[300]

The conflict first began in 1837. Tensions between Maine and the British came to a boil when officials in New Brunswick arrested Maine's land surveyor who attempted to conduct a survey in the contested territory. Two years later, lawmakers in Maine did not forget that New Brunswick arrested the state's land surveyor. As a result of this, Maine militarized its border with New Brunswick. The colony's lieutenant governor, Major General Sir John Harvey (1778-1852), followed suit and sent militia men to his side of

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[299] J.E. Rea, "Alexander McLeod" in *Dictionary of Canadian Biography, vol. 10,* University of Toronto/Université Laval, 2003–, accessed December 1, 2018, http://www.biographi.ca/en/bio/mcleod_alexander _10E.html; Donald A. Rakestraw, *Daniel Webster: Defender of Peace* (Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield, 2018), 52; "Opinions by Forsyth, Hoffman, Richmond, O'Sullivan, Culver, &c.," *The Volunteer*, May 1, 1841

[300] Like the Patriot War – the term "war" when referring to the Aroostook War is a bit of a stretch. The Aroostook War or the "Pork and Beans War" –was a result of left over "unfinished business" from the American Revolution. For an explanation on the "Pork and Beans" name, see Peter Black, "The Pork and Beans War," *Press Republican* (Plattsburgh, NY), November 15, 2013.

the border. Both sides made arrests. Many of those arrested were later released in a prisoner swap. Despite the dwindling of hostilities, historian Donald Rakestraw writes, "In Washington, Van Buren promised support of Maine should events escalate into hostilities." Luckily, there was no need for an armed military campaign on the Maine-New Brunswick frontier.[301]

As the sitting U.S. president, Van Buren's proclaimed he would support Maine if armed conflict occurred. This was no real surprise. Although, behind closed doors and through various diplomatic channels, Van Buren and his emissaries worked tirelessly in order to prevent conflict between the United States and Great Britain. Van Buren frequently communicated with the British Minister to the United States, Henry S. Fox, and hoped Fox would convince the British forces assembled along the New Brunswick-Maine border to disband. General Winfield Scott was dispatched to maintain peace in the region. General Scott and his troops marched to Augusta, Maine and were "especially charged to maintain the peace and safety of the entire northern and eastern frontiers." To maintain this peace, Scott acted as a diplomat. Scott's friendship with New Brunswick's Lieutenant-Governor Harvey helped to thoroughly convince Maine's legislature and governor John Fairfield (1797-1847) to settle for a compromise, diffusing the rather tense situation.[302]

In 1839, Henry Clay (1777-1852) "The Great Compromiser" and sitting U.S. Senator representing the state of Kentucky weighed in on the Maine-New Brunswick

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[301] Rakestraw, *Daniel* Webster, 53.

[302] Ibid, 53; Sophia Miriam Swett, *Stories of Maine* (New York & Cincinnati: American Book Company, 1899), 259-260.

border issue. On March 1, 1839, Clay announced his support for a four step proposal to end the Northern border squabble. Clay's outline included four resolutions. According to Clay, the United States government:

> (1) Denied the existence of any Anglo-American 'explicit agreement' supporting British territorial claims of 'exclusive jurisdiction' in the border area; (2) supported the actions of Maine in having expelled from the disputed area 'lawless trespassers' engaged in cutting timber there; (3) vowed retaliatory military operations if Britain moved troops into the disputed territory; and (4) resolved that should Britain refrain from the use of force and should Maine 'determine to settle the controversy for herself by force… [that the Federal government will have] no obligation imposed on it to support her military.[303]

Clay and the Whigs did not want war - especially if that meant dragging 25 other states into Maine's conflict with the British. War would be costly to the United States (as well as the British) which would result in significant debt and the loss of life. While Clay worked to iron out a compromise in Washington, General Scott was in Maine repairing diplomatic relations with the British in New Brunswick.[304]

The process of reaching the compromise took quite sometime – especially in Maine. On the other side of the border, General Scott convinced Lieutenant-Governor Harvey to accept a compromise rather than Maine's more bellicose stance. Scott and Harvey's friendship dated to the War of 1812. During the war, Scott had captured the personal effects of Harvey. After the war, General Scott, in an act of gentlemanly honor, returned Harvey's property and the two had respected each other since. Prior to the Maine-New Brunswick border spat, a correspondence between the former adversaries

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[303] Henry Clay, "Comment in Senate," March 1, 1839 in *The Papers of Henry Clay Volume Nine: The Whig Leader, January 1, 1837-December 31, 1843*, edited by Robert Seager II and Melba Porter Hay (Lexington: The University Press of Kentucky, 1988), 294.

[304] Ibid., 294-295.

informed one another that their sons had died. General Scott and Lieutenant-Governor Harvey exchanged sympathies. The camaraderie between the two men was integral to the peace process. Scott emphasized that, as historians Howard Jones and Donald Rakestraw write, "the maintenance of honor was essential" which ensured a peaceful solution to the Maine-New Brunswick border question.[305]

In the case of Maine, Scott had to charm the state's soldiers and legislators. To do this, Scott, played the part of a travelling soldier turned diplomat. General Scott, the soldier and now peacekeeper, with his formal military uniform and accolades in tow, utilized his role as a military hero. Scott wooed politicians and veterans of the War of 1812 during a series of formal galas and banquets across Maine. General Scott's gallivanting paid dividends for the U.S. and solved the Maine-New Brunswick border issue. Maine's government agreed to "back off from their bellicose stance and embrace a policy of conciliation." In the end, Maine removed its soldiers and because of Scott's friendship with Lieutenant-Governor Harvey, Scott was ensured that Britain "would not take advantage of that concession." The Maine-New Brunswick border issue was put to rest on August 9, 1842 with the Webster-Ashburton Treaty. Ending the so-called Aroostook War was easier than remedying the fallout from the McLeod case. Despite a relative degree of excitement in the United States to rekindle war with Britain, diplomacy prevailed.[306]

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[305] Allan Peskin, *Winfield Scott and the Profession of Arms* (Kent, OH & London: Kent State University Press, 2003), 109-110; Howard Jones and Donald Rakestraw, *Prologue to Manifest Destiny: Anglo-American Relations in the 1840s* (Wilmington, DE: Scholarly Resources Inc., 1997), 17-18.

[306] Peskin, *Winfield Scott*, 110; Rakestraw, *Daniel Webster*, 53.

General Scott's diplomatic prowess resolved Maine's border issue with New Brunswick. Despite this, some members of the general public cried for war. In the U.S., the panic and anxiety surrounding the McLeod case was quite palpable. Anglophobia ran rampant. Newspapers across the United States sensationalized the McLeod case. Men in Boston, according to David Rakestraw, "curled their whiskers and sported mustaches as licenses to hold forth the honorable word, 'War! War!'" In New York, officials went as far to suggest hanging McLeod. Remedying the hawkishness to go to war with Britain was featured in a speech by the American elder statesman and member of the U.S. House of Representatives from Massachusetts, John Quincy Adams (1767-1848). Adams, formerly the sixth President of the United States, and a (then) sitting member of Congress, dispelled the notion of a war with Britain. Adams opined that Britain would not go to war with the U.S. over something as trivial as jurisdiction. Adams added that Britain would not go to war if McLeod was released from prison. The question Representative Adams asked was: *who* was going to send McLeod home? The answer was found somewhere in a cacophony of politicians clamoring states rights issues. Adams said, in short, that despite the legal issues surrounding the McLeod case, it was a matter of fact that McLeod would be released. McLeod's release was designed to appease the British and a measure to avoid further political strife between the two nations.[307]

It was a forgone conclusion that McLeod would be released from prison, Representative William Orlando Butler (1791-1880) of Kentucky opined. Morally, Representative Butler was against releasing McLeod from prison, and he suggested that

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[307] Rakestraw, *Daniel* Webster, 53; John Quincy Adams, *Speech of Mr. John Quincy Adams, On The Case of Alexander McLeod. Delivered in the House of Representatives, September 4, 1841* (Washington, D.C.: Gales and Seaton, 1841), 6-8; 10-11.

about nine-tenths of Americans would agree with him. Butler's address to the House of Representatives, like the Maine-New Brunswick border issue, was quite political in nature. In his speech, Butler not only defended his political party - the Democrats - from what he deemed an assault by the Whigs, but also, condemned the State of New York, members of the U.S. government (mainly Whigs) and British officials. As the speech continued, Butler made his case clear: the United States should not get drawn into a hypothetical war with the United Kingdom. The issue was between the State of New York and a company of malcontents working for the Crown; which, in a roundabout way, was being swept under the rug to appease the British while preventing war.[308]

Despite the legal opinion of a prominent American congressmen, most of the work behind diffusing the issues associated with the McLeod case came from the efforts of the U.S. Secretary of State Daniel Webster (1782-1852). Webster frequently communicated with the British Ambassador to the United States Henry S. Fox. In a communication dated March 12, 1841, Ambassador Fox demanded the release of McLeod from American custody. Fox essentially argued that McLeod had acted in the name of Her Majesty (Queen Victoria) in a public service capacity, and thus could not be held liable for violating American law. Fox's statement continued and noted that the response of setting the *Caroline* ablaze and sending the vessel over Niagara Falls was a

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[308] William Orlando Butler, *Speech of Mr. William O. Butler, of Kentucky, on the McLeod Case: Delivered in the House of Representatives, September 1, 1841* (Washington, D.C.: Blair and Rives, 1841), 8-10, 12-16.

justified use of force to repel the British (Upper Canadian) rebels and the so-called "American pirates" who were permitted to arm themselves in the U.S.[309]

In a rather scathing response to Ambassador Fox, Secretary Webster quickly rebuked Fox. Ambassador Fox claimed that the U.S. government permitted the rebels to arm themselves on American soil. Webster refuted that, writing,

> The President cannot suppose that Her Majesty's Government, by the use of these terms, meant to be understood as intimating that these acts, violating the laws of the United States and disturbing the peace of the British Territories, were done under any degree of countenance from this Government, or were regarded by it with indifference; or, that under the circumstances of this case, they could have been prevented by the ordinary course of proceeding.[310]

Then, Webster continued and addressed a few questionable positions in Fox's initial letter. First, Webster notes, because of the large border that separates the United States and the British possessions in Canada, "… irregularities, violences [sic], and conflicts should sometimes occur, against the wills of both Governments." Webster noted that these outbursts should be expected in the United States as the nation did not maintain a large standing army during peacetime.[311]

Perhaps most importantly, Webster rebuked the somewhat slanderous accusations lobbied by the Crown at the United States with a relative degree of wit. He insisted that the U.S. government by no means acknowledged "the propriety or justice" of the

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[309] Henry S. Fox to Daniel Webster, March 12, 1841, in David Urquhart, *Case of McLeod, Tried as an Accomplice with The Crown of Great Britain for Felony* (London: Longman and Co., 1841), 164-165.

[310] Daniel Webster to Henry S. Fox, April 24, 1841, Henry S. Fox to Daniel Webster, March 12, 1841, in David Urquhart, *Case of McLeod, Tried as an Accomplice with The Crown of Great Britain for Felony* (London: Longman and Co., 1841), 165-168.

[311] Ibid., 166-167.

declaration by the British that the American sympathizers who helped the Canadian rebels were pirates. Webster wrote, "they were certainly not pirates… [nor can it] hasten the accommodation of national difficulties, so to denominate them." Webster then reinforced American neutrality. He scolded the British for being involved in revolutions and civil wars across the globe and deemed the actions the British took a gross violation of international law to ignore these relations "can properly be established or changed only by nations themselves." Webster ended his letter by challenging Fox to provide him with evidence that justified the destruction of the *Caroline*.[312]

Webster's challenge of the Crown's designation of American sympathizers as "pirates" is particularly unique – especially for the 1840s. Pirates were frequently romanticized in nineteenth century American literature. In her monograph, *Fugitives, Smugglers, and Thieves: Piracy and Personhood in American Literature* scholar of American studies Sharada Balachandran Orihuela notes the pirate archetype served as a dispossessed agent taking ownership against the state –which dispossessed them. While the Patriots did have pirate-like qualities, they were not pirates. This was an aspect "lawless fantasy" and if the American officials agreed with the British and deemed the Patriots "pirates," the U.S. may have inadvertently legitimized the Upper Canadian Rebellion and the Patriot War which would have led to an increase in Americans supporting the Patriot cause along the U.S.-Canada border.[313]

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[312] Ibid., 167-168.

[313] Sharada Balachandran Orihuela, *Fugitives, Smugglers, and Thieves: Piracy and Personhood in American Literature* (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 2018), 1-3; 102-103.

Alexander McLeod's case was a thorn in the side of both American and British diplomats. Domestically, in the United States, Upper Canada, and Great Britain, the case elicited a great deal of excitement among the general public. Historian Robert A. Coakley writes, in the U.S. and Upper Canada, "Rumors began to circulate of an attempt by the Hunters [Lodges] to capture and kill McLeod, something that might easily precipitate war." There were other rumors, Coakley continues, which "predicted an attempt by the Canadians to rescue him." For readers of the *Philadelphia Public Ledger*, as author Walter Stahr writes, the British demand for McLeod's release "should be met with 'resistance to the last.'" The *London Times* suggested that if McLeod was to be executed that all British men call for war. With these rumors, it was no surprise that the nations were seemingly at the brink of war.[314]

Other rumors, such as those found in *Case of McLeod* (1841) written by the Scottish diplomat and politician David Urquhart (1805-1877), insinuated that the Russian government attempted to play the U.S. and British governments off of one another and if war did indeed break out between the two nations, in the ensuing tumult, the Russians would swoop in capitalizing off of the conflict and expand its empire. Urquhart was a critic of the British Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, the Lord Palmerston Henry John Temple (1784-1865). According to Urquhart, waging a war against the U.S. would be especially dangerous for the British. He mentions that if the U.S. and Britain would go to war, the Russians could swoop in and take British possessions. Urqhart writes, "Russia could aim at the existence of England would be the convulsion of her colonies, so is the

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[314] Robert W. Coakley, *The Role of Federal Military Forces in Domestic Disorders, 1789-1878* (Washington D.C.: U.S. Army Center of Military History, 1988), 119; Walter Stahr, *Seward: Lincoln's Indispensable Man* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 2012), 77.

man who speaks of the benefit that would accrue to England for her colonial loss, the worst enemy of his country." In an anonymous letter in the *Case for McLeod*, Urquhart maintained that the Russians allegedly gave the "[British] Government" adequate notice that if there was a "rupture with England" the United States would provide Russia with "Naval aid" in a campaign against the British.[315]

Near the end of the McLeod controversy then President John Tyler made a controversial statement. It was widely assumed that anything other than a release of McLeod would result in war – especially if the U.S. executed the accused Upper Canadian sheriff. One step the British would take – prior to war – would be to recall its Ambassador Henry Fox. When Tyler heard this, Tyler made a bizarre threat to Fox: Tyler would revoke his passport and essentially hold him hostage under house arrest in the United States. This was uncharacteristically bold for Tyler and it was contrary to proper conduct in nineteenth century diplomacy. Tyler's actions, as historian Edward Crapol explains, "puzzled Queen Victoria and Prime Minister Peel." [316]

Tyler's were pragmatic and perhaps partially motivated by fear. He knew the United States could not defeat the British in an armed conflict. Tyler was quite Anglophobic. The British possessed a far superior and technologically sophisticated navy. In the late 1830s and into the 1840s, Britain expanded its empire and dominated the sea. By November 1840, the British demonstrated a substantial feat against the

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[315] "David Urquhart," in *Dictionary of National Biography Vol. XX Ubaldini-Whewell,* edited by Sidney Lee (New York & London: Macmillan Company & Smith, Elder & Co., 1909), 43-45; David Urquhart, *Canada Under Successive Administrations* (London: James Maynard, 1844), 68; "Anonymous letter" in Urquhart, *Case of McLeod*, xvi-xvii.

[316] Edward P. Crapol, *John Tyler, The Accidental President* (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 2006), 91.

Egyptians: Crapol writes, "the first time in maritime history, steam warships had been successfully used in a coordinated sea and land campaign." This was damaging to the national ego. The momentum the British had threatened the United States. Britain became the world's hegemonic power and its progress undermined American "national discourse." It was invested in a "modern fantasy" that portrayed the U.S. as deficient. Tyler would not let the United States fall to the British over the McLeod case – especially an issue in which the federal government had no jurisdiction over. [317]

Despite the storm of rumors surrounding armed conflict and increasing British military might, McLeod's trial began on October 4, 1841. McLeod's lawyers "brought a petition for habeas corpus on McLeod's behalf before Justices Samuel Nelson, George C. Bronson, and Esek Cowen of the New York Supreme Court of Judicature." According to the Historical Society of New York Courts, the letters between Secretary of State Webster and the British Ambassador to the U.S. Fox were entered into evidence. McLeod was defended by Joshua A. Spencer, a U.S. attorney from New York. McLeod's trial was short lived. Eight days later, and after the jury deliberated for no more than 20 minutes, McLeod was found not guilty. McLeod was formally acquitted that day on October 12, 1841. [318]

Policymakers in Washington D.C. worked to prevent another McLeod case. They came to a solution in 1842 and passed the Remedial Justice Act. This legislation gave

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[317] Ibid., 92-93; Mihnea Panu, *Enjoyment and Submission in Modern Fantasy* (London and New York: Palgrave-Macmillan, 2016), 99-100; Jane Gallup, *Thinking Through the Body* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1988), 123.

[318] Historical Society of the New York Courts, "People v. Alexander McLeod," accessed January 3, 2019, http://www.nycourts.gov/history/legal-history-new-york/legal-history-eras-02/history-new-york-legal-eras-people-alexander-mcleod.html; Gould, *The Trial of Alexander McLeod*, 355-358; Crapol, *John Tyler*, 91-92.

officials in Washington D.C. jurisdiction over cases that had serious diplomatic consequences such as McLeod's. The Remedial Justice Act dictated that individuals who acted on the behalf of foreign powers could petition federal courts to have criminal charges they faced dismissed. This new ruling strengthened the federal government while its critics, such as Senator James Buchanan (1791-1868) of Pennsylvania, claimed the act would "prostrate the State sovereignties in the dust."[319] The Remedial Justice Act drove a wedge between States Rights advocates such as Buchanan and the federal government. Nevertheless, the Webster-Ashburton Treaty and the Remedial Justice Act maintained peace between the two of the largest English speaking countries in the world. Talks of war between Britain and the U.S. subsided; while domestically, a roadmap to civil war was slowly etched upon the sociopolitical landscape of antebellum America.

The Pauper Publisher: William Lyon Mackenzie's Later Literary Endeavors

On April 17, 1841, from Rochester, New York, William Lyon Mackenzie turned out another newspaper, *The Volunteer*. When he published *The Volunteer*, Mackenzie and his family were in dire financial straits. This newspaper, according to Mackenzie's biographer Charles Lindsey, was "printed when the means to print them could be obtained." *The Volunteer* was an attempt by Mackenzie to rekindle interest in Upper Canadian liberty, which, at this juncture, was a theme engrained in his oeuvre. *The Volunteer,* however, was short-lived and only lasted nineteen issues until it ceased publication on May 10, 1842. [320]

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[319] James Buchanan, *Speech of the Honorable James Buchanan of Pennsylvania, On the Bill to Provide Further Remedial Justice in the Courts of the United States, Monday May 9, 1842* (Washington, D.C.: The Globe Office, 1842), 5.

[320] Lindsey, *William Lyon Mackenzie*, 467.

The masthead, or the top, upper portion of Mackenzie's *Volunteer*, featured an etching of two key features of the Upper Canadian Rebellion and the Patriot War: On the left portion of the image is Navy Island. Planted upon Navy Island is a flag with the word "LIBERTY" flying above what was seemingly Mackenzie's short-lived Republic of Canada. On the right side of the image is the *Caroline* ablaze and nearly falling over Niagara Falls. And perhaps the most interesting portion of this image is near its center, with the body floating in the river. The body of may perhaps be that of the *Caroline's* deceased crewmember Amos Durfee. It may also be symbolic memorializing those who were lost during the Rebellion and Patriot War. A facsimile of the masthead from Mackenzie's *Volunteer* is found below:

[***Figure 3: Masthead Etching from the first issue of Mackenzie's Volunteer, April 17,1841]***

Mackenzie's new paper reengaged in topics found earlier in his newspapers and other publications. And, as was the case with his other papers, Mackenzie and his writing, were once again at the center of attention in Upper Canada.

At least for the time being, Mackenzie's new newspaper kept the Patriot cause alive. Historian Lilian F. Gates writes Mackenzie's "*Volunteer* had not been welcomed"

in Upper Canada and little could be done "to help its circulation." Gates continues, in the 1840s, "People were either loyal or afraid, and no one had any principles about the kind of 'organic change' the *Volunteer* advocated." The overture to Mackenzie's *Volunteer* urged his "Patriotic readers" to resist "every measure of retaliation that might be proposed in the winter, whether in the shape of burnings, invasions, threats, or any form." Mackenzie argues this, in a private letter, to stave off any "complaints against the exiles to the federal [United States] government." While in exile, the Mackenzie notes that loyalists replaced his allies - Charles Duncombe and John Rolfe - in Upper Canada's colonial government. Yet, as Mackenzie notes, although these new appointees held these positions, they did not represent the people they were supposed to serve.[321]

Among many issues, Mackenzie's *Volunteer* advocated for Upper Canadian liberty and chronicled the situation of American and Upper Canadian political prisoners sent to the prison colony of Van Diemen's Land (present day Tasmania). Change, however, was on the horizon. The April 25, 1842 edition of Mackenzie's *Volunteer* dropped Mackenzie's name in its title and was printed as the "*Rochester Volunteer* by W.L. Mackenzie." Mackenzie also solicited the help of his loyal readers to make his newspapers more interesting. In the same plea to his reader, he also apologized for the *Volunteer*'s irregular printing schedule and nearly two weeks later, the *Volunteer* ceased publication.[322]

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[321] Lilian F. Gates, *After the Rebellion: The Later Years of William Lyon Mackenzie* (Toronto & Oxford: Dundurn Press, 1988), 92; "To the Patriotic Reader," *The Volunteer*, April 17, 1841.

[322] "The Volunteer," *Rochester Volunteer*, April 25, 1842.

On June 10, 1842, Mackenzie and his family left Rochester and moved to New York City. Upon reaching the city, one of Mackenzie's first of many jobs was at the New York Customs House. Mackenzie met President Tyler's son and Tyler's son recommended him for the position as an inspector. Federal government officials initially rejected Mackenzie's position because of his status as a British criminal. However, a temporary position opened for a clerk in the archive office. While working at the Customs House's archive office, Mackenzie compiled *The Sons of The Emerald Isle, or Lives of one Thousand Remarkable Irishmen.* This volume Mackenzie produced is an encyclopedia of biographies of famous Irishmen. In the introduction to *The Sons of the Emerald Isle*, Mackenzie gives a brief family history noting he himself is of Celtic origin and then mentions how Irishmen were central to American liberty during the American Revolution. Mackenzie once again reminds his readers that he, like many Irish veterans of the Revolution, gave everything for a cause he believed in which resulted in a jail term and impoverishment.[323]

In *The Sons of the Emerald* Isle, Mackenzie also commented on the rise and conduct of nativist associations. Numerous changes in antebellum America, coupled with an increase in Catholic immigrants, led to Know Nothingism and a rise in anti-immigrant sentiment by the late 1840s. Historian Tyler Anbinder explains, some Protestant Americans did not "feel safe in Catholic neighborhoods." Also, Anbinder adds that in some locales, such as Boston, the native born populated decreased while the immigrant

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[323] Mabel G. Olney, "William Lyon Mackenzie: Rochester Newspaper Man," *The University of Rochester Library Bulletin* Vol. 18 no.2 (Winter 1963), 28; Lindsey, *William Lyon Mackenzie*, 470; William Lyon Mackenzie, *The Sons of the Emerald Isle, or, Lives of One Thousand Remarkable Irishmen* (New York: Burgess, Stringer, and Company, 1844.), iii-iv; for more on Irish Americans in the American Revolution, see Phillip Thomas Tucker, *How the Irish Won The Revolution: A New Look at the Forgotten Heroes of America's War of Independence* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 2015).

population increased by over 100 percent.[324] Moreover, to subjugate the new immigrants, white Anglo-Saxon Protestant (WASP) Americans "denounced the settlers from Europe, as if they were an inferior, degraded race… [to] treat them as serfs and bondsmen…" and attempt to deprive them of basic rights – coming short of calls for deportation. Mackenzie noted the actions of the native-born Americans were contradictory; they had nothing better to do. Perhaps they should critique themselves as they were once immigrants, too.[325]

While in New York, Mackenzie befriended the owner-editor of the *New York Tribune*, Horace Greeley (1811-1872). In 1846, the very year Mackenzie met Greeley, he published *The Life and Times of Martin Van Buren* – a political hit piece. Mackenzie's disdain for Van Buren stemmed from his defeat at Navy Island.[326] This book, according to Charles Lindsey, "dealt Van Buren his political death blow. He never rose again."[327]

Mackenzie and Greeley were friends and had a degree of respect for each other. As a result of this, Mackenzie later worked for Greeley's *Tribune* as a correspondent in Albany to the New York State Constitutional Convention. Mackenzie remained employed with the *Tribune* editing almanacs until 1848 when Thomas McElrath (1807-1888), Greeley's partner at the *Tribune*, grew tired of Mackenzie and his writing style. Although Mackenzie walked away from the *Tribune,* a major change was on the horizon

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[324] Tyler Anbinder, *Nativism and Slavery: The Northern Know Nothings and the Politics of the 1850s* (New York & Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1992), 32

[325] Mackenzie, *The Sons of the Emerald Isle*, iv.

[326] Patrick R. Carstens and Timothy Sanford, *The Republic of Canada Almost* (Bloomington, IN :Xlibris,2013), 211.

[327] William Lyon Mackenzie, *The Life and Times of Martin Van Buren: The Correspondences of his Friends, Family, and Pupils* (Boston: Cooke & Co., 1846). Lindsey, *William Lyon Mackenzie*, 472-475.

in the Canadas. In a matter of years, the rebel would be pardoned and return home to Toronto.[328]

Conclusion

Throughout the late 1830s and into the 1840s, the United States and Great Britain were on the verge of war. This hypothetical conflict, for both nations, would have had dire consequences. For the U.S., defeating the British – the world's hegemonic power – would have been an insurmountable task. In the late 1830s and into the 1840s, the British Empire was rapidly expanding. Britain's technologically superior navy, especially after defeating the Egyptians – would have decimated American forces and U.S. officials, including President John Tyler, were well aware of this. And, for Great Britain, waging a war against the U.S. would have weakened Britain's growing empire and paved the way for other Europeans powers, such as the Russians, to step in and challenge British paramountcy in global affairs.[329]

William Lyon Mackenzie, the main Anglophone figurehead behind the Upper Canadian Rebellion and heavily involved in the so-called "Patriot cause" was imprisoned in Upstate New York for violating American neutrality laws. Mackenzie's fantasy – a Canada free from British tyranny with responsible government – which governed much of his life post-rebellion, did not manifest itself in reality, at least initially. These fantasies provided Mackenzie with what Slavoj Zizek dubs, a mythical narrative which, in turn, created Mackenzie's reality. The fantasy Mackenzie engaged in showed "the

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[328] Lindsey, *William Lyon Mackenzie*, 290.

[329] Although this may seem counterfactual, the fear of going to war was a major concern for both nations. For more on these rumors, see Urquhart, *Case of McLeod*, xvi-xvii, Crapol, *John Tyler*, 40; 92-93.

letter of the law" and resulted in year-and-a-half prison sentence. At the beginning of Mackenzie's time behind bars he was under heavy restrictions and the Other (his jailers and New York government officials) restricted Mackenzie's freedoms and a tragedy of losing his mother, Elizabeth, dampened his spirits which effected his overall well-being while jailed at the American Bastille. [330]

The diplomatic challenge of resolving the Maine-New Brunswick border conflict took a great deal of political maneuvering by American and British officials. Luckily, though, cooler heads prevailed. Winfield Scott used his political clout and engaged in dinner diplomacy to convince political figures in Maine that a war against Britain was not the proper response to the border dispute. On the other side of the border, it was Scott's friendship with New Brunswick's lieutenant governor that eased tensions in the British colony. Maintaining a relative degree of honor between British and American negotiators led to a peaceful resolution to the border issue. Despite excitement on both sides, the ratification of the Webster-Ashburton Treaty clarified the border between the U.S. and Britain's North American landholdings. [331]

The case of Alexander McLeod briefly complicated issues between the U.S. and Great Britain. McLeod allegedly took place in the *Caroline* Affair. McLeod was a scapegoat. Whatever punishment McLeod was set to receive was to redeem the life lost when the *Caroline* was set ablaze, zigzagged down the Niagara River and was sent over Niagara Falls. As the State of New York contemplated McLeod's fate, the U.S. federal government stepped in and attempted to convince then Governor William Seward to

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[330] Zizek, *Plague of Fantasies,* 10; 29.

[331] Peskin, *Winfield Scott*, 100.

pardon McLeod. The McLeod issue was the closest the U.S. and Britain were to war. McLeod was found not guilty by a jury of his American peers and the United States passed the Remedial Justice Act to ensure an issue such as McLeod's would not occur again.

Finally, as tensions between the U.S. and the Crown over the Canadas came to an end, William Lyon Mackenzie searched for employment. After his release from the Monroe County Jail in Rochester, Mackenzie worked a series of jobs for the New York City newspaper magnate Horace Greeley. Greeley, Mackenzie's friend, provided him with employment to support his family. While working for Greeley, Mackenzie still engaged in political topics and published a number of books – one of which led to the downfall of Martin Van Buren's political career. However, by the 1850s, the firebrand grew tired of his life in the U.S. and returned to Canada.

Chapter Seven

Conclusion: The Patriot War as a Distant Memory

The Patriot War remains one of the more obscure events in American history. A looming question is why? Historian Andrew Bonthius demonstrated the event is scarcely mentioned in university-level history textbooks; and, when it is, the information about the Patriot War, the Upper Canadian Rebellion, and the burning of the *Caroline,* is often misrepresented or factually inaccurate.[332] Does it have anything to do with its connection to Canada? It must. Other border-issues, such as the gastronomically titled Pig and Potato War in the Northwest (1859) and the Fenian Raids (1866-1871) after the Civil War, are equally obscure. To many Americans, Canada is often the butt of jokes in popular culture (i.e., *South Park*) and per a 2017 article published on the *Toronto Globe and Mail*'s website, some Americans see Canada "as an extension of the United States."[333]

I side with the results of the *Globe and Mail's* article. For many Americans in the U.S., Canada (especially Anglophone Canada) seems too American; it is not "exotic" or "foreign" like Quebec where there is a cursory language barrier and a distinct Francophone cultural heritage. The U.S.-Ontario culture area – especially in urban centers such as Toronto – mirrors life in a major U.S. city. For example: One of the largest Canadian cultural exports Americans regularly consume is in the form of Canadian franchises of American sports organizations. Recently, in 2019, "the Six"

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[332] See Andrew Bonthius's article, "The Patriot War of 1837-1838: Locofocoism with a Gun," fn.6, 12-13.

[333] Chris Hannay, "Talking to Americans: Canada 'Just an Extension of the United States,'" January 20, 2017, *Toronto Globe and Mail*, https://www.theglobeandmail.com/news/politics/politics-briefing/article33681948/.

(Toronto) rejoiced when the Raptors won the NBA Championship. However, from a casual glance at headlines, Americans were seemingly more concerned with the Golden State Warriors failing to "three-peat" or if the team would visit Canada's Parliament Hill in Ottawa or the White House in Washington D.C. making the organization seem if it was an extension of the U.S. and not something that is distinctly Canadian.[334]

The contemporary *Jurassic Park* (1993)- inspired sports franchise from the "North" notwithstanding, American historians ignoring or misrepresenting the Patriot War – a significant, transnational event – allows Canadian historians and other scholars to monopolize and write the story's narrative (which, given the lack of scholarly interest in the U.S., is not necessarily a bad thing!). Apparently, the story is not sexy enough for U.S. historians to glom on to. The story of the Upper Canadian Rebellion and the Patriot War is temporally lapsed by topics with larger, more historiographically defined literary canons. Although the Patriot War excludes well-known historical figures that makes topics – like the Mexican-American War (1846-1848) and Civil War (1861-1865) – more alluring to study, the cast of characters entangled in William Lyon Mackenzie's melodrama are quite enigmatic and well-worth historians to consider future historical scholarship.

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[334] The head coach of the Raptors alluded that the team would visit Trudeau (which they should, they're a Canadian team!); however, when asked about it, the U.S. President Donald Trump welcomed a visit from the Raptors. For more, see: "President Donald Trump Open to Raptors visiting White House," The Associated Press, June 20, 2019, accessed June 20, 2019, https://www.nba.com/article/2019/06/20/trump-open-raptors-visiting-white-house. For more on the Warriors "three peating" see Sean Gregory, "The Golden State Warriors Revolutionized the NBA. Now They Plan to Keep the Dynasty Dream Alive," *Time*, June 19, 2019, accessed June 20, 2019, https://time.com/5608475/golden-state-warriors/.

Publically, there is lack of historical markers in the U.S. that mention or commemorate the Patriot War by name. For example, on the American side of the bi-national tourism hotspot Niagara Falls, there is little evidence of the *Caroline* Affair. Across the border in Niagara Falls, Ontario, historic markers pepper the city and its environs. Interestingly in the area in the 1940s, a few miles away from the city, Navy Island, the site of Mackenzie's short-lived Republic of Canada, was a proposed site for the United Nations. This land situated between the U.S. and Canada represented a fitting location that symbolically represented ongoing peace in the region. Unfortunately, the surrounding area, notably the city of Buffalo, "was not sufficiently a cultural center" and U.N. boosters eventually settled for its current location, New York City.[335]

A lack of historical knowledge, misunderstandings, and markers to commemorate events in the U.S. are all telltales sign that Americans actively forgot the Patriot War especially as the more notable war with Mexico and the iconoclastic American Civil War bookend the event. Moreover, because the rebellion was unsuccessful, more cynically-minded scholars tend to downplay or outright dismiss the events' significance in early American history. In the historical profession, failure (or some degree of failure) – such as the Upper Canadian Rebellion and Patriot War – is worth studying. Historians define their careers with dissertations, conference presentations, journal articles, and monographs dedicated to events that were by no means successful.

This dissertation examines how Upper Canadian rebels and their American supporters justified a rebellion against the British and the Family Compact. They did so by situating their conflict in an idealized vision of the past within a geographically

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[335] Charlene Mires, *Capital of the World: The Race to Host the United Nations* (New York: New York University Press, 2013), 137.

defined U.S.-Upper Canadian culture area. The Upper Canadian Patriots, their American supporters, and their various auxiliary organizations – such as the Hunters' Lodges – engaged in a degree of fantasy by evoking the memory of the American Revolution and the War of 1812. The potential glory associated with the rebellion's success drove these men to do very extraordinary things: to free the Upper Canadians from British rule. National borders held little meaning. The media coverage of the event transformed participation in freeing Upper Canada into an interactive form of popular culture. The press, in short, drove the rebellion. These men, however, were unsuccessful; many of whom were lost to time and faded into obscurity with William Lyon Mackenzie as a notable exception.

In his lifetime, William Lyon Mackenzie, a Scottish-born newspaperman and immigrant with political and revolutionary aspirations, failed to free Upper Canada from British thralldom. Mackenzie, fueled by an American ideal espoused by many in Jacksonian America, published pro-U.S., anti-British material in his newspapers. Mackenzie later committed treason in December 1837. However, the "late rebellion" at York, was doomed from its inception. Bad luck and poor planning plagued the firebrand's campaign for freedom. He then fled to the United States shortly after and was embraced by a number of like-minded individuals across the U.S.-Upper Canadian border in Buffalo, New York. While in Buffalo, Cyrenius Chapin provided Mackenzie with food, shelter, and an audience.

The excitement in Buffalo and throughout Upstate New York was palpable. Americans marched in the streets, held fundraisers, cheered, toasted, and provided other well-wishes for the rebels in Upper Canada. These events showcased a sense of

patriotism and excitement in which these individuals experienced was quite dangerous and caused a great deal of trouble for government officials in the United States and Upper Canada. Americans hoped U.S. institutions would spread north while the Upper Canadians hoped for redress from the Family Compact. Others joined Mackenzie and his short-lived Republic of Canada in the Niagara River. Another event, the burning of the *Caroline*, an American steamer, quickly eclipsed Mackenzie's Republic of Canada.

The burning of the steamship *Caroline* nearly drove the U.S. and the British to war. Upper Canadians violated American sovereignty, boarded the steamer, and set it ablaze sending it over Niagara Falls. This act was immortalized in the battle cry "Remember the *Caroline*" these events were captured in an excerpt from the song, "Canadian Yankee Doodle:"

The steamer, bound for Navy Isle,
Left Buffalo one morning
For to assist Mackenzie's band
Britannia's thunder scorning.

But when the lion shook his mane,
And looked a little grim, sir,
He said 'twas not a Texas game
That they could play with him, sir.

A party left the British shore,
Led on by gallant Drew, sir,
To set the *Caroline* on fire,
And beat her pirate crew, sir.

The Yankees say they did invent
The steamboat first of all, sir;
But Britons taught their Yankee boats

To navigate the Falls, sir.[336]

One person perished in the tumult from the *Caroline* forcibly navigating the Falls and Alexander McLeod was at the heart of a trial in which American officials attempted to make an example out of this Upper Canadian lawman.

In the Detroit-Windsor area, Americans in the "eldest Queen City of the West" rallied around the memory of the American Revolution and the martyrs who lost their lives in the name of Canadian liberty. From Detroit, the Canadian Patriots, their supporters, and the Hunters' Lodges invaded Upper Canada. The charismatic and eclectic personalities of Henry Handy and E.A. Theller inspired Detroiters sympathetic to the struggles in Upper Canada to risk their lives. In Detroit, the Canadian Patriots had a great deal of support. Not only did these men raise enough money to purchase a steamship, but they also invaded Upper Canada and their invasion was quickly quelled by the British.

While the Patriot War ended after John Tyler's presidential proclamation, there were a series of issues that lingered in the U.S. and Upper Canada throughout the 1840s. Winfield Scott's handling of the Aroostook War showcased his diplomatic prowess. On the other hand, William Lyon Mackenzie served a jail sentence for violating American neutrality laws. While in prison, Mackenzie hit a nadir. When on trial, Mackenzie defended himself and presented "more witnesses than could be brought to court."[337] When Mackenzie was imprisoned, his health quickly deteriorated and he became

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[336] "Canadian Yankee Doodle" in John H. Thompson, *Jubilee History of Thorold Township and Town: From the Time of the Red Man to the Present* (Thorold: The Thorold Post Printing and Publishing Company, 1897-1898), 56-57.

[337] *Mackenzie's Gazette,* June 15, 1839.

increasingly disenchanted with the United States. Mackenzie's political stance became increasingly conservative and critical of Martin Van Buren and his administration, and compiled one of the first edited collections of Van Buren's papers. Mackenzie claimed Van Buren was a pawn of the British monarchy because Van Buren refused to become involved in the rebellion. Mackenzie's book helped end Van Buren's political career.

After his short stint in the United States, Mackenzie returned to Canada. Despite his unsuccessful rebellion and American neutrality in the conflict, the Province of Canada, which was formed in 1841, gained responsible government. Mackenzie initially toured Canada in 1849 and in the 1850s, Mackenzie returned to Canada fulltime. Many of Mackenzie's ideas were radical, but prior to his death, he still believed in the idea of United States annexing Canada. Mackenzie died after a seizure in 1861. After his death, Mackenzie became, to some, a hero while remaining a controversial figure in the eyes others. Six years after Mackenzie's death, Canada underwent Confederation while his grandson, William Lyon Mackenzie King (1875-1950), perhaps overshadowed Mackenzie's legacy as Mackenzie King (as Canada's Prime Minister) led Canada for nearly two decades uniting Canadians during a rather tumultuous twentieth century.

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