

# Causes, components & consequences of the 1837 - 1838 Rebellions

## Causes

### *Shared*

- Complaints of the injustices of the ruling elite (Family compact & Chateau Clique)
- Demand for change in government & to free colonies from British rule
- Supported by the republican ideas of the US
- Poor wheat yields, decline in revenues, decline in ability to pay for supplies

### *Upper Canada*

- Small British elite controlled land
- Government had little or no concern for development of roads or of the communities
- R. Gourley distributed a petition for changed and he was removed from the colony.
- William Lyon Mackenzie took his place
- Mackenzie started a newspaper criticizing the Family Compact, demanding an American style of Government

### *Lower Canada*

- English minority had the most power
- French threatened by British immigrants, cholera brought in
- Because of the lack of crop rotation, depression in wheat was even worse than in UC
- Few FC owned their land and were still paying rent to seigneurs
- Parti Canadien took 90% of the elected assembly but their ideas were vetoed (this party became the Parti Patriote lead by Papineau)
- Government raised the land taxes but did not change the taxes imposed on businesses
- 92 Resolutions were presented by Papineau's group to the governor demanding changes in the way the government was run - the Assembly was denied the rights

## Components of the Rebellions

### *Lower Canada*

- *Fils de la Liberte (Sons of Liberty) stir up trouble in Montreal in opposition to the Doric Club*
- *November 1837 - British troops gathered in Montreal*
- *November 23, 1837 - army attacked the Patriotes at St. Denis where the patriots held for 3 days*
- *Nov. 26 - army defeated the Patriots at St. Charles*
- *Dec 13, 1837 - Battle of St. Eustache, largest event of the LC Rebellion*
- *The convent at St. Eustache was the meeting place of the Patriotes*
- *Patriotes were defeated and the church was set on fire.*
- *1838 - new uprising from Vermont, defeated by LC volunteers*

### *Upper Canada*

- *Mackenzie heard the success of the Patriotes at St. Denis and launched his own strike, took over Toronto*
- *Dec. 5 1837 His army of 500 had their headquarters at Montgomery's tavern, the rebels marched into the centre of the city and were met by a group of militia (loyalists) requesting that the rebels surrender*
- *Only 200 of the men were armed, Rebels were not organized or disciplined*
- *When the militia fired, many rebels fled back to the tavern*
- *Rebels quickly defeated once the army came, the tavern was burned down*

### *Consequences*

- *Deaths*
- *1,300 arrests, 60 exiled or deported (100 sent to Australia)*
- *12 hanged in Montreal*
- *500 escaped to the US (including the leaders)*
- *British tried to maintain control using 'martial law'*
- *There was 'no taxation without representation'*
- *1839 Durham's Report*
- *1840 Union Act*
- *1848 Responsible Government*