

# Peter Campbell – Convict Number 5123 (1828 - unknown)



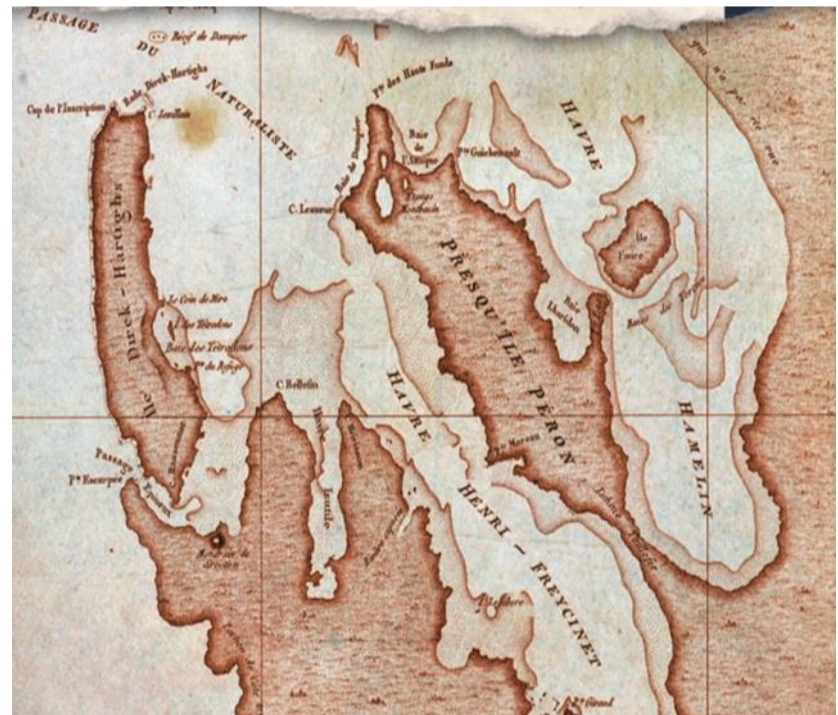
Liverpool Docks in the 1850's

Peter Campbell was the 2nd mate of the American ship *James L Bogart* which on the 19<sup>th</sup> of January 1857, was moored in the Mersey at Liverpool Docks. He had duped several sailors into boarding the ship at night telling them it was the ship, *Robin Hood*. When they discovered it was the *James L Bogart* bound for Mobile, Alabama two of the sailors (Robinson and Christie) objected and tried to leave.

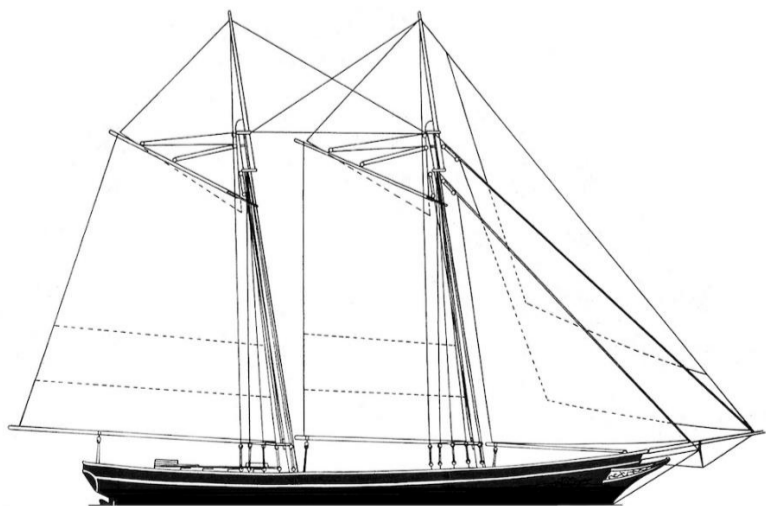
This resulted in a confrontation between the duped crew, Campbell and Charles Ferber, the other ships mate. Campbell drew a gun and shot Christie in the thigh, one of the crew then hit Ferber with a handspike. When the captain returned to the ship they were taken to hospital, Ferber died some days later from his wounds, but Christie recovered.

In January 1859 he was one of 5 convicts who escaped from the quarry they were working in near Fremantle Prison, in what reported as the 'Notorious Shark Bay Escape'. His fellow escapees were Henry Stevens, John Haynes, John Williams, and Stephen Lacey.

The convicts fled along the coast of Western Australia and what followed was an epic 800-kilometre pursuit north to Shark Bay. During the chase both police, trackers and convicts suffered many weeks of exposure to the sun, wind, and ocean. One of the convicts (Stephen Lacey) was murdered by the other 4 during the escape reportedly for drinking too much water.



Map of Shark Bay from Baudin's 1801-1803 expedition c1801, M.M.L Freycinet et Faure (1779-1842), National Library of Australia



At the end of March 1859 Campbell was taken back to Shark Bay on board the schooner *Favourite* to locate Lacey's body. After the examination Lacey's body was re-buried at the site.

Although Campbell was recognised as the leader of the group he turned Queens evidence testifying against the other escapee's and was given an unconditional pardon after the trial. He is thought to have left the area or in fact Australia shortly after due to fears for his safety.

