

'UPRISING: Morant Bay, 1865 and its Afterlives'

University of the West Indies (UWI) Historian, Dr. Swithin Wilmot praised the latest exhibition of National Museum Jamaica that commemorates the 150th anniversary of the Morant Bay Rebellion.

The exhibition, titled 'UPRISING: Morant Bay, 1865 and its Afterlives' was launched on Saturday October 31, 2015 along with the publication of a fully-illustrated catalogue with essays by the leading experts on the Morant Bay Rebellion. Using original artefacts, newspapers, contemporary art work, social media and the remarkable images from Princeton University, visitors to the exhibition can come face-to-face with the historical persons and events that have shaped Jamaica today in this unique exhibition. The exhibition does not shy away from some of the more controversial issues of the history. Dr. Wilmot, who was the guest speaker at the launch at the Institute of Jamaica Lecture Hall on Tower Street, downtown Kingston had high praises for the exhibition, which explores the history of the events in St. Thomas from the post-emancipation period through the tragic events of October 1865. The exhibition also examines the various implications of the uprising for the history of Jamaica. He noted that the Morant Bay Rebellion took place only 27 years after full Emancipation and was fuelled by growing disappointment, as the better days expected with freedom by the masses were dashed away. According to Dr. Wilmot, Paul Bogle, who led the rebellion was very influential in George William Gordon's political career and was instrumental in having him elected to the National Assembly after three failed attempts. He told the gathering that Gordon was supported by three candidates, who were elected to the St. Thomas Vestry (local council), including Bogle's son-in-law, Samuel Clarke, who is also featured in the exhibition. Clarke journeyed to Kingston shortly after the rebellion to escape the Martial Law that was declared in St. Thomas. However, he was taken from Kingston to St. Thomas, where he was tried under Martial Law and executed because he was seen in Gordon's company. Opening times for the exhibition is 9:30am- 4:30pm Mondays-Thursdays and 9:30am - 3:30pm on Fridays. Saturdays openings, which is free to the public is from 10:00-3:00pm. NMJ is a Division of the Institute of Jamaica, an Agency of the Ministry of Youth and Culture.